

# CATHOLIC PROFESSIONAL and BUSINESS CLUB OF MODESTO

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF STOCKTON

September 2013

## A word from our President

Members and Friends of the Modesto Catholic and Professionals Business Club, I want to thank all of you for making our first meeting a success. Our large attendance was impressive and it was good to see faces from the past and meet new members. We were privileged to have Michael Nader to speak on employment and its relationship in how we live our Catholic faith. We, again, are blessed to have yet another fantastic speaker for October. Brian Kravec, a prison guard in Merced County, will speak.

Brian Kravec, a prison guard with the California Department of Corrections who has worked with some of the most violent and historically infamous men and women, will share his testimony of integrating work and faith. He's a 4th Degree member of the Knights of Columbus and contributing writer for Catholicmom.com. Come early to network with other club members.

We have made some adjustments to the menu and seating arrangements in the room to facilitate the breakfast service. Also, all are welcome to join us for our board meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, 7-8AM, at Catholic Charities in downtown Modesto.

I also want to thank Fr. Sam for offering Mass at 6:30AM, just prior to the meeting at St. Stanislaus, 709 J St. It's a great way to start the day.

Mass: 6:30 at St Stanislaus Church, 7th & J St.;

Networking 7 am

Breakfast and Speaker 7:15 AM at the Old Mill Café, 600 9th St. in downtown Modesto.

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We look forward to seeing all of you on October 8<sup>th</sup>!  
Cathy Pietanza



Michael Nader, our September speaker, with two of our CCHS student guests.



## From our spiritual director, Father Sam

Originally for this month's article, I wanted to continue explaining the stages in the spiritual life through which a soul progresses to reach union with God. However, since there has been so much chatter about Pope Francis' recently published interview for a Jesuit magazine, I thought I would offer a perspective on what our dear Holy Father said. After being approached by several people about the interview, which they heard of through the secular media, I was a little unsure how to respond from what was portrayed in the "sound bits" reported. But, now that I have had a chance to read the article myself and think about the Holy Father's responses, I found his words to be inspiring, and I am excited about what his leadership will bring to the Church's ongoing mission to evangelize an increasing indifferent and hostile world. I can truly see the Holy Spirit working in the Church and am greatly comforted by the fact Jesus is with His bride. My hope is that this brief reflection may also help some of you who have been confused on how to answer your family, friends, or colleagues when asked your opinion of what our Pope's remarks could mean for the future of the Church.

First off, it is important to recognize Pope Francis has NOT said anything essentially new regarding the teaching of the Church. Of course, his way of talking about the Faith is different, or "new," when compared to previous Holy Fathers. Although, I think this point can be over exaggerated as well. Nevertheless, the content of what he has said is very much the same as Pope Benedict XVI. Some people seem to be misinterpreting, or even in some cases misrepresenting, the meaning of what Pope Francis said in such a way as to lead some to predict that the Holy Father was going to change some perennial moral teaching of the Church. For example, the Holy Father's comment on needing a different approach, or a "new balance" as he puts it, in presenting the beauty of the Gospel message that goes beyond *only* repeating the clear prohibition on immoral behaviors, has been so quickly and erroneously interpreted, especially in the press, as the Pope saying the Church needs to change her teaching on foundational moral issues. This could not be further from the truth. Taking an honest look at the actual text from the article, and not just highlighting a few the "trigger" phrases, clearly does not support this interpretation. The Holy Father responded to a question about how to minister to those "who live in situations that are irregular for the church or in complex situations that represent

open wounds." The interviewer, Antonio Spadaro, S.J., said he asked about "the divorced and remarried, same-sex couples and other difficult situations. What kind of pastoral work can we do in these cases? What kinds of tools can we use?" Part of Pope Francis' response included the following:

*"We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods. This is not possible. I have not spoken much about these things, and I was reprimanded for that. But when we speak about these issues, we have to talk about them in a context. The teaching of the church, for that matter, is clear and I am a son of the church, but it is not necessary to talk about these issues all the time."*

*"The dogmatic and moral teachings of the church are not all equivalent. The church's pastoral ministry cannot be obsessed with the transmission of a disjointed multitude of doctrines to be imposed insistently. Proclamation in a missionary style focuses on the essentials, on the necessary things: this is also what fascinates and attracts more, what makes the heart burn, as it did for the disciples at Emmaus. We have to find a new balance; otherwise even the moral edifice of the church is likely to fall like a house of cards, losing the freshness and fragrance of the Gospel. The proposal of the Gospel must be more simple, profound, radiant. It is from this proposition that the moral consequences then flow."*

Pope Francis is not criticizing in anyway the Church's consistent and definitive teachings on abortion, same-sex marriage, or contraception. He plainly states, "the teaching is clear," and he wholeheartedly supports the teachings by saying he "is a son of the Church." What he is doing here is simply commenting on how we may have, at times, let these issues over shadow the real message of the Good News, which can prevent people from experiencing "the proposal of the Gospel," who is Jesus Christ. When looking at what previous Popes have said regarding HOW to present the gospel in today's world, we can see that Holy Father Francis is repeating the recent call to evangelize in a new way. This call has been referred to as "the new evangelization," which can be traced back to Paul IV and was vigorously promoted and advanced both by Blessed Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

From posts on Facebook, I came across this interesting quote from Pope Benedict XVI in November 2006 in an address to the Bishops of Switzerland:

**"I was asked to give interviews and I always knew the questions in advance. They concerned the ordination of women, contraception, abortion and other such constantly recurring problems...If we let ourselves be drawn into these discussions, the Church is then identified with certain commandments or prohibitions; we give the impression that we are moralists with a few somewhat antiquated convictions, and not even a hint of the true greatness of the faith appears. I therefore consider it essential always to highlight the greatness of our faith – a commitment from which we must not allow such situations to divert us..."**

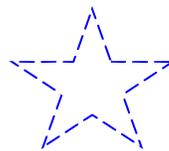
**...I think that this is the great task we have before us: on the one hand, not to make Christianity seem merely morality, but rather a gift in which we are given the love that sustains us and provides us with the strength we need to be able to "lose our own life". On the other hand, in this context of freely given love, we need to move forward towards ways of putting it into practice, whose foundation is always offered to us by the Decalogue, which we must interpret today with Christ and with the Church in a progressive and new way."**

It sounds a lot like what Pope Francis just said in the interview. Both Pope Francis and Pope Benedict are pointing out that being overly focused, or "obsessed," on the evils in the world can distract from the "freshness and fragrance of the Gospel." In sharing the Gospel, if we are "insistently" speaking *ONLY* about these moral issues, then we "transmit" the Gospel in a way that seems "imposed," or forced. In doing so, the true message of the Gospel loses "the essentials," which is God's love for each person as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. Also, the teachings, or "doctrines," which are meant to lead to a deeper relationship with Christ, are not properly understood, or are "disjointed" if not seen as part of the whole message of salvation. With this in mind, just because confusion, and even alienation, is possible as a result of the "wrong way" of talking about these moral issues, does not change the fact that any behavior or action that has always been and presently is morally wrong, will always continue to be wrong, therefore, a sin. Actions or behaviors, which are evil in and

of themselves, called intrinsically evil acts, will always continue to be evil.

[Pope Francis beautifully explains that the Church is a "field hospital."](#) which is completely open to everyone who seeks healing and desires freedom from the ruin of sin. He uses this image to remind us the mission of the Church is to bring God's infinite mercy, the good news of salvation, to all people. The radiant message of salvation cannot be reduced as only "related to abortion, gay marriage, and the use of contraceptive methods." However, the message of salvation includes the call to conversion and repentance, a turning away from ALL sin, and turning toward a merciful God. The "essentials" of the Gospel is God's love and mercy for each one of us, without which all the other teachings make no sense. Christ is the *ONLY* one who "fascinates and attracts more, what makes the heart burn." So, we need to preach and live a relationship with Christ. God's love and mercy, made incarnate in Christ, is "the proposal" for each and every human person and is the ground from which the moral conduct of a person can freely "flow." In any moral issue, what is at stake is a person's salvation, his or her relationship with the Risen Christ. The message we preach, and live ourselves, should always build-up a person to live out the dignity and freedom for which they are created by bringing them closer to Christ. The radiance of the Gospel is shown in Jesus who offers each of us an intimate relationship with Him in spite of our sinfulness. In fact, the interview begins by the Pope acknowledging that he is a sinner in need of salvation. All of us, including those who criticize the Church, can learn something from the Pope's example of humility. We need to ALL admit we are sinners in need of God's mercy.

Much more could be said on this fascinating interview including the important subject of the dignity and role of woman in the Church. I encourage you to read it in its entirety. You can find it at the following link: <http://www.americamagazine.org/pope-interview>. We continue to pray for our Pope. We ask through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary that the radiance of the message of her Son's love for each and every person be received in the hearts of all. God bless.



## Central Catholic High School

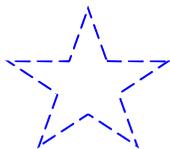
### Fall Open House

Wednesday, October 16 - 5:30 pm

- Campus tours with students
- Crazy Classroom activities
- Free progressive dinner offered throughout the school
- Visit with teachers and coaches

Join us for the fun, family event! For more information call Jodi Tybor at 524-9611 or [tybor@cchsca.org](mailto:tybor@cchsca.org)

Central Catholic High School will host 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Day on Friday, November 15, from 9 a.m.-1:00 p.m. All eighth grade students in public and private schools are invited to attend. The day will include a rally, a lunchtime dance, visits to the classrooms and a free pizza lunch. Please contact Jodi Tybor at 524-9611 or [tybor@cchsca.org](mailto:tybor@cchsca.org)



#### *Mission Statement*

"As Catholic professional business men and women, we are called to live our Christian ethics not only on Sunday, but throughout our daily lives at home and at work."

Our goal in the Catholic Professional and Business Club, an unincorporated association (CP&BC), shall be to gather to share with others who seek a more ethical business environment.

Each of us shall strive to achieve a co-mingling of our ethical and professional obligations, in demonstration of the fact that ethics and business need not be mutually exclusive terms.

## Parish and School News from around the city and county

