

OPEN WIDE *the doors* TO CHRIST



Reflecting on the legacy of St. John Paul II

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH ACUSHNET ~ 2017-2018

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ST. FRANCIS XAVIER ADULT EDUCATION SERIES 2017-2018

September 24:

Movie - "Nine Days that Changed the World"

St. John Paul II made history when he was elected in 1978 as the first Polish Pope. He made history again the next year during his first visit back to his homeland in which he helped prepare the way for the downfall of the Soviet Empire. This special movie event will help us to reflect on one of the most important contributions that St. John Paul II made to the history of the world.

October 15:

"The Spirituality of St. John Paul II" - Challenges, Decisions, & Developments | Steve Guillotte

By exploring various spiritual developments in the life of St. John Paul II we hope to achieve insight into a practical plan of faith for ourselves. The experience of St. John Paul II is truly authentic in that it encourages each of us to commend a resolute spirituality to all our daily decisions especially in times of adversity. St. John Paul II teaches us that in every challenge before us we are called to strive ever forward toward Jesus Christ.

November 5:

"What We Can Know about the Mystery of the Trinity & What that Means for Us" | Deacon David Pepin

This class will present what we can understand about the nature of God as three persons with one divine nature and what that means for us as persons made in God's image and likeness. We will use as our primary sources St. John Paul II's encyclicals on the Father ("Rich in Mercy"), the Son ("The Redeemer of Man"), and the Holy Spirit ("The Lord and Giver of Life").

November 19:

"Jesus - The Reason for the Season" | Edward Trendowski

"Jesus Christ is the answer to the question posed by every human life..." St. John Paul II declared these words in his apostolic journey to the United States in 1995. Jesus provides the answer to the questions "why am I here?" and "what purpose does God have for my life?" Come get a deeper understanding about who Jesus is through the reflections of St. John Paul II.

January 7:

"Why Be Good? Morality & the Joy of Living a Good Life" | Fr. Riley Williams

One of St. John Paul II's greatest contributions to the life of the Church was his work in the renewal of moral theology. He helps us to understand not only how Jesus Christ shows us what true goodness is, but also why this is so important for the full flourishing of human life. In a time when morality is seen as a shackle on human happiness, we will reflect on how morality, in truth, illuminates the path to happiness.

January 28:

"The Theology of the Body - A Theological Time Bomb" | Philip Martin

In his book, *Witness to Hope*, George Weigel suggests that St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* is a "theological time bomb set to go off, with dramatic consequences, sometime in the third millennium of the Church." The goal of this talk is to discuss St. John Paul II's teaching "Theology of the Body" and how it can help us to better understand God by reflecting on the way that he made us as male and female. This talk helps to make sense of some hard teachings on the topics of love, marriage, and family by reflecting on what it means to be made in God's image and likeness.

February 25:

How "the Gift of God" (Jn 4:10) Helps Women Discern their Dignity & Vocation | Janine Hammarquist

The vocation of woman may begin with Eve but finds its fulfillment in Mary. Such genuine, feminine holiness is a gift from God which no woman could claim to gain on her own. In this session we will seek out the "Genius of Woman" as proposed in the teaching of St. John Paul II. Our purpose is to gain for ordinary women a deeper appreciation of their dignity and vocation gifted by God.

March 11:

"Building a Civilization of Love & Life" | Peter Shaughnessy

St. John Paul II taught that the dignity of the human person should be at the center of our social life, economy and politics. According to St. John Paul II, we are transcendent in nature, and as disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to build a civilization of solidarity, love and life. This talk will explore these themes and their practical implications for the current social and political situation in our country.

April 29:

"Living Stained Glass Windows" | Anabela Shaughnessy

Saints are bearers of light, and love, and life. God's light shines through them in their way of life as brilliantly as the sun shines through a stained glass window. St. John Paul II was a saint in our midst throughout his life, but what is worth noting is that he also recognized the virtuous lives of many, canonizing 482 people during his pontificate! Scripture tells us that we should persevere in running the race before us, because we are "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses." (Hebrews 12:1) This class will focus on the inspirational lives of 4 great saints who were canonized by St. John Paul II...ordinary people diverse in background, yet extraordinary in their virtue and consistent in how they came to love Christ. The goal of the class is to walk away with hope for our own diverse journeys, and an increased hunger in this life for communion in our heavenly society!