



THE WAY

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MY CHRISTMAS

To Help Someone Crossover

A friend of mine told me a story about his experience on one hot Friday afternoon. He told me that commuters were rushing, after work hours, hoping to beat the traffic heading down the shore, and on a cross-lane, stood a blind man, who, because he slept off in the bus, passed his usual bus stop. Now he was in an unfamiliar territory and needed to crossover to the other side of the road, so as to catch a bus heading back to the right bus stop. He stood there and repetitiously called out: "Please someone help me crossover". People were either so tuned into their own needs that they did not hear the plea of the blind man or they just didn't care about this man's call for help. When my friend saw what was going on, he said to the man "Yes, I will help you crossover". He went on to walk the blind man across the busy street, got with him into another bus that brought them back to the right bus stop. The blind man, now in a familiar territory, was able to get on his way and continued his journey.

Isn't this story what Christmas is all about: God coming down to us, in human form, to help us crossover; to crossover from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light; from the disgrace of sin to the grace of redemption; from condemnation unto death to salvation into life?

The true spirit of Christmas, therefore, lies in helping someone crossover; to crossover from failure to success, from hopelessness to hopefulness, from despair to encouragement, from starvation to satisfaction, and from disempowerment to much empowerment. Christmas is about giving people hope that tomorrow will be a better day. The true spirit of Christmas is to become "Emmanuel—God with us" for someone out there, to create holy moments of grace that make new saints in our world, so that on the last day, we may be among those to whom the Lord will say, "Come into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world, for I was hungry you gave me food, I was naked, you clothed me," etc.

May our Christmas be fulfilling and rewarding, not for what we got, ate, and drank but from what we were able to do for others to better their lives.

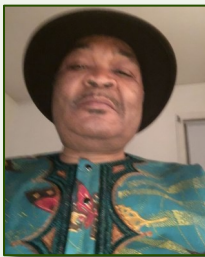
By Msgr. Anselm Nwaorgu Ph.D.

OUR MINISTERS & MINISTRIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Meet Our Catechist

Born in Nigeria to Catholic converts, catechist **Okezie Patrick Ukaegbu** came to the USA in 1983. He attended Mass at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Basilica and Blessed Sacrament Church in Newark.



When he moved to Union in 1994, he came upon St. Michael's Music Ministry and soon became a member of the choir.

Okezie is married to Linda and they are parents to two girls and a boy. He started teaching CCD over fifteen years ago and his daughter, who is now a chiropractor, was in his eighth grade class. His son, a recent MPA graduate, also attended St. Michael's CCD. Okezie is inspired to keep returning to teach the children each year as they show a very keen interest in the Faith he seeks to impart and share with them. Okezie holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a master's degree from Seton Hall. He currently is employed by the State of New Jersey where he assists eligible citizens obtain Social Security Benefits. He recently celebrated his 30th anniversary at this job.

Clare Andriola

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Alfano, Michael (Deacon), Andriola, Clare (Mrs.), Dziedzic, Christina (Ms.)

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CYO

Introducing the Executive Board

Hello! My name is Cristian Simms and I am this year's CYO Vice President. There are so many things that make CYO special, but the most amazing thing we do is our annual retreat every year in November. The retreat will be held back at Camp Lebanon from November 19th-21st, and the theme this year is to "Live Like You're Loved."

I have attended the retreat ever since I first joined as a freshman in high school, and each one of them holds a special place in my heart. However this year's retreat is uniquely special to me because I will be giving a very important speech centering around our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I have always wanted to give a speech ever since my first retreat after listening to the seniors pour their hearts and souls into words that moved the audience.

I, as well as the other speech givers, have been working long hours for the past several weeks to make sure our speeches are authentic and true to ourselves.

I won't give any spoilers, but I know that it is going to send a heartfelt message to all who



By Cristian Simms

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

A Call to Evangelization



On December 1st 2021, St. Michael's Church family will formally launch the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Prayer Movement in our parish. On the eve of Pentecost, in 2004, St. Pope John Paul II had this to say: "Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, a multitude of Christians, men and women, young people and adults, have rediscovered Pentecost as a living reality in their daily lives. I hope that the spirituality of Pentecost will spread in the church as a renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation". It is our joy, therefore, to join over 155 million Catholics, all over the world, to respond to the renewed call for evangelization.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Prayer Group originated from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, USA, in February 1967, when some faculty members and students prayed for a revisit of the Pentecost experience, as recorded in the 2nd chapter of Acts of the Apostles. After experiencing an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, during their weekend retreat, the spiritual movement spread to Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana; the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor, Michigan; and to many other states in the USA and other countries of the world. According to Pope Francis, "the group was born as a current of grace in the church and for the church" which is very similar to St. Pope John Paul II's description of the Charismatic group as "a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Catholic Church."

In establishing the Charismatic Renewal movement at St. Michael's parish, Msgr. Anselm hopes to provide an opportunity for us to reactivate the spirit that we received at confirmation; to rediscover Pentecost as a personal experience; to renew our commitment to prayer by establishing a personal relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; to discover our own spiritual charism/talent and use them to further the work of God's kingdom in this Church.

The group is open to all and our prayer time is spent in praise and worship, in Bible reflections, and in intercessory and devotional prayers. We are inviting all Church members to come and experience the impact of the Holy Spirit in our personal lives as we build a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. God is knocking at the door of your heart (Revelation 3:20), let Him in and you will be grateful that you did.

By Victoria Anaedu

WORD SEARCH

Advent Wreath

Be Ready

Birth of Christ

Blessing of the Manger

Candles

Evergreen Boughs

Gaudete Sunday

Promise of God

Lamb of God

Messiah

My Soul in Stillness Waits

Nativity of the Lord

New Liturgical Year

O Come Emmanuel

Prepare for Christmas

Promise of God

Purple

Second Coming of Christ

To Come To

Waiting and Longing

D S R M D G C C I B E R E A D Y B P B E M A
 I H U T E A Z O Q M O H N O M A L U G Y Y B
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SAINTS & US TODAY

St. Lucy - "Santa Lucia"

Saint Lucy, or "Santa Lucia" as she is known in her native country of Italy, lived her life with a great love for the Christian Faith and the poor. This led to her being venerated as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. Her traditional feast day, known in Europe as Saint Lucy's Day, is observed during Advent on December 13th. St. Lucy chose to be a Christian when being Christian was illegal. She came from a wealthy family but wanted to give up all her wealth and devote her life to the poor. She herself became a victim of oppression and persecution. For her defense of the Christian Faith, she was denounced and tortuously executed. She teaches us that life in Christ's light is worth devoting your life to—even dying for. My Great Aunt Lucy loved praying to St. Lucy. On occasion, she would gather our family together in prayer to ask St. Lucy to pray that God would use us to help and be charitable toward the poor. Saint Lucy always had a special place in her heart for the poor. She is a model saint for the Season of Advent. We should follow St. Lucy's example and look for opportunities to be charitable to the poor in our community and world with attentive care and love.

By Deacon Michael Alfano

CALL FOR EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

If you have a reflection or questions you want clarified about our faith, Catholic traditions and practices or you have a witness write up about what God has done in your life, and would like to share this in our newsletter, please send it to the editorial board at dziedzicc@comcast.net. We would love to publish your story.

