eNEWSLETTER NO. 14 | The Quarterly Newsletter of Walnut Grove From the Prelate ~ Opus Dei Formation from Rome s fall begins and anxiety about COVID remains in the air, there is a palpable President's Letter sense throughout the world of, 'Where

do we go from here?, What do we do now?' A quote from St. Josemaría seems tailored for these times: "Does it matter that you have to curtail your activity for the moment if afterward, like a spring which has been

dreamed?" (The Way, 12)

Greetings!

Summer breaks have

ended, and campuses

are coming back to

life. There is much

talk about how parents

can best prepare their

children for returning

the change they have

There is no substitute

for in-person learning,

to school after all

experienced.

compressed, you will reach incomparably farther than you ever Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, the Prelate of Opus Dei, may have had those words in mind when he wrote *The Work of the Future*, an article published by Aleteia (https://aleteia.org/). Regarding screens having replaced face-to-face work in the past months, Monsignor Ocáriz notes that, "human beings need real relationships, not virtual ones, in order to share what each of us harbours in his or her heart." He observes that "...work offers us the opportunity to... welcome and be open to others... to reach beyond ourselves... to help and be helped." The Prelate continues, "When work makes room for

ur summer picnic was indeed a celebration of family, freedom, and fun! After a long break from such activities, old friends and new gathered with gratitude and joy, taking advantage of the opportunity to celebrate the season together. Letty Ibarra's peaceful and picturesque front yard provided an idyllic landscape for the fête. Clustered around a gurgling fountain, under umbrellas and shade trees, families competed to fashion the most unique personalized picnic site. Using portable furniture, coordinated linens, fresh flower centerpieces, and even festive mood music, each group picnicked with panache. Pitchers of citrus-infused ice water and a fun snow-cone maker helped keep everyone refreshed and cool. Under the leadership and direction of older kids,

little ones created hand-decorated fans and

connected with card games and soccer.

competed in potato sack races and cornhole. As adults relaxed and conversed, teenagers

Jenny, a mom who attended the picnic with

her family, appreciated the event – "It was

such a nice time! We got to talk more with

A debt of gratitude is owed to Letty Ibarra

for generously offering the use of her home, giving families a memorable afternoon to

reconnect with one another and forge new

It was a great day! Thank you!"

friendships as well.

some families that we see at church regularly.

~ Jennifer Nieva

Welcome to the CIO Faith & Reason Classes September 4, October 9 (note this is the 2nd Saturday), November 6, December 4, 2021, ...So Little Time In keeping with our theme on school, books, and all things literary, in this **Mornings for Moms** issue, WIT profiles the Catholic Information Center, a Catholic bookstore located in the heart of Washington, DC. A bookstore, yes, but it is also so much more. https://www.walnutgrovecenter.org/mornings-for-moms An entity of the diocese of Washington, DC entrusted to the care of Opus Dei, the CIC offers a plethora of Christian formation including lecture **Opus Dei Women's Recollections** series, book launches, panel discussions, and Catholic education programs, J. Serra Catholic High School, Orange County not only for people working in our nation's capital, but for anyone in the country, thanks to the internet. The CIC also provides spiritual formation through the Chapel of St. Josemaría Escrivá, proudly billed as the closest tabernacle to the White House. There, bustling Washingtonians can attend recollections or go to https://www.walnutgrovecenter.org and hover over "activities" for the recollections page daily Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, confession, and spiritual direction, just blocks from work.

Perhaps the most intriguing of the CIC's programs, at least, in light of

that to heart. The Plan presents the teachings of the Catholic faith and

a treasury of spiritual reading, with books organized in three categories:

titles to last a lifetime of reading, the Plan is available for free on the

To learn more about the CIC and its Lifetime

Reading Plan, go to https://cicdc.org/

Learning the Faith, Living the Faith, and Loving the Faith. With enough

WIT's current focus on educational pursuits, is its Lifetime Reading Plan. St. Josemaría said, "Reading has made many saints," and the CIC takes

So Many Books...

CIC website.

bookstore/

areas to share their research, experience, and resources with our community of moms. During three monthly evening meetings, guests are invited to bring a snack or drink to share, and the gatherings take on a "mom's night out" feel with wine, simple hors d'oeuvres, and a meat and cheese platter, often serving as a light dinner for moms rushing out the door to attend, once their husband comes home from work or their kids are put to bed! These evenings have been a fantastic opportunity for Catholic women to spend time with and encourage each other, and the fellowship that results is a real joy. ~ Kristen Bright Year of St. Joseph

can be helpful to reflect on St. Joseph as teacher.

"do all things well," as is noted in the Gospel.

Pope Francis proclaimed this to be a Year of St. Joseph, knowing that the richness of St. Joseph's soul would provide depths of growth for us throughout the year. So many facets of St. Joseph's life are valuable to us – his life as father, as spouse, as worker. During these weeks when many families are focused on getting back to school, it

St. Joseph taught Jesus his trade, so Jesus would have the means to meet his material needs. Just as we need to prepare our children for life as working adults, St. Joseph shared with Jesus the skills he used to provide a livelihood for his family. He must have taught him to

St. Joseph taught Jesus about his Jewish faith. Imagine what courage he needed to complete this task, in light of his humble recognition that he, a mere man, was being called to teach the very Son of God how to know and love God. We, also, can sometimes feel that we are not up to the challenge of passing on the faith to our children in today's society. St. Joseph most likely used parables and examples from everyday life in his teaching, thus influencing how Jesus would teach others, and how we receive the faith to this day.

And finally, St. Joseph reaches through the span of ages to teach us with the example of his life in the Holy Family how to live our lives while being immersed in God. St. Josemaría called him the "master of the interior life." As such, what better teacher could we find to show us how to live with and love God while we live with and love others, to find holiness at home? Pope Francis, in his proclamation about the Year of St. Joseph, has this to say: "Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even

through our fears, our frailties, and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture." How true that was in St.

The series is a way to keep up formation activities and maintain friendships during the summer months, enabling women who have expertise in particular

World", and speaker Noelle Mering on her book <u>Theology of Home II: The Spiritual Art of</u> <u>Homemaking</u>. Past topics have included a review of the book <u>Bringing Up Bebé</u> by Pamela Druckerman, "Homemaking 101", "Making Your Marriage Fun", and "The Four Temperaments."

> matters. They should be

season. This timely collection of spiritual resources for the new school year is packed with articles, podcasts, and devotions with families like yours in mind. To access the Spiritual Backpack, go to https://stjosemaria.org/a-spiritual-backpack- inspiration-for-returning-to-school/ Follow t

Organized

over 20 years

ago, Pathfinder Summer

girls entering grades 5 - 9 enjoyed a week-long adventure in the San Bernadino Mountains,

experiencing the great outdoors while deepening their Catholic faith and having loads of fun

Camp has been delighting campers for almost a generation, and 2021 was no exception. This July, 85

~ JR

Are you feeling overwhelmed by all that's required to get ready for school again? If gearing up for a more structured fall schedule after the relaxed days of summer – buying school supplies, arranging carpools, completing paperwork - seems daunting, we have just the solution for you. The St. Josemaria Institute has assembled A Spiritual Backpack: **Inspiration for Returning to School** to help families integrate their faith journeys with the

to Pathfinder

first day, I made a lot of new friends. Then, the second day, I made more friends!" Noelle, from Ratatouille, reported that while she really enjoyed the challenge of the high ropes, her favorite aspect of the camp was, "how it was

swimming in the lake, also mentioned the leadership talks - "I felt like I was growing closer to God with every talk

that they gave." Felicity, from the Finding Nemo cabin, had the following advice for

potential campers who might be anxious about leaving home: "Make sure you remember your parents will never

> forget you. You also will have a lot of fun with every single thing you do."

From all accounts, Pathfinder Summer Camp 2021 was a tremendous success. Campers are already looking forward to next year, meeting up again with old friends and making many new ones. If you know a girl looking for adventure, spiritual growth,

and friends, keep Pathfinder in mind for

Catholic, that the counselors really cared about people's faith and what they believe." Sidney, one of the junior counselors, noted that, "Having leadership talks makes you want to be a better person for everyone year-round." Emilia, whose favorite activities were cooking and

Reaping Treasure from the Opus Dei Website

Commenting on the value of making children because children have constructive suggestions, the article continues, "...it will always be the right to an education that will develop their potential. possible to encourage teachers and It goes administrative personnel to strive on to observe that the parents' right "...to educate their own to ensure that the school transmits children [is] in keeping with the human virtues and love for noble noble goals they themselves have values and beauty." chosen for their own lives, and that they consider enriching for their For further information on parents' progeny." Noting that education is role in education and to read this more than providing information article in its entirety, go to https:// and knowledge, the article states, opusdei.org/en/article/the-parents-"When a new child is born, the right-to-educate-their-children-i. parents receive a new divine calling. Improved Girls, Glub is Rapino to co,

I am a former attendee of Pathfinder Summer Camp and several Girls' Clubs run by the faithful of Opus Dei and their friends over the past 10 years, so I have experienced from multiple perspectives the benefits of Christian formation for young girls. As I was growing up, I always seemed to take those regular Saturday morning club meetings for granted, but now I can see how helpful they were for me! This past summer I was a counselor at Pathfinder Camp and I saw firsthand the hunger for formation even among the youngest campers. Not one wanted her relationship with God or friends to stop at the end of that special week. When our local girls' club took a long break from monthly meetings this past school year (thanks to that little "friend" called Coronavirus), the club girls often approached me at school to ask when Girls' Club would start up again. They really missed it! They had to go the entire school year without their beloved club.

Now with the help of a team of high school students as counselors and moms as administrators, we will carry on with Girls' Club in 2021/22 even stronger than before. For the younger girls, we will continue the traditional monthly meetings with games, an activity, and a virtue talk. For the middle school girls, we'll start a new Walk and Talk

~ Lucy Brady

friendship, and physical human dignity and encounter with others... [it] helps to overcome activity. Isolation differences and promotes mutual understanding." can adversely affect children's mental Keeping in mind St. Josemaría's compressed spring analogy, health. In addition, these current times can be our opportunity to actively focus on parents need to teach pouring compassion into our relationships with others, at work children about the and elsewhere, in ways that we couldn't when our lives were power of friendship, more restricted. The Prelate adds, "Work is... a 'place' where we encouraging them to can all contribute something... to 'recreate' the world of human begin making friends relationships." Reflecting on the fact that the dignity of work outside the home once springs from love, he ends by quoting St. Josemaría: "Work is born more. "Friendship of love; it is a manifestation of love and is directed towards love." teaches them empathy (Christ is Passing By, 48) and compassion, how to trust, and how to be To read the Prelate's article in its entirety, go to https://opusdei.org/ vulnerable. It teaches en/article/the-work-of-the-future/ them how to treat others, how to be openhearted, and how to create safe boundaries for themselves, too," says Dr. T. Baxley, parenting coach. As a working mom who raised four children, now successful professionals, I can share that what I found most helpful was participating in Family **Enrichment Programs** (Educhild, as it was called in my country then). From those workshops, I learned the importance of following a family schedule, with Celebrating Summer = set times for homework, recreation, and creative reading. There is value in living order—having a designated study space with notebooks, books, paper, and pencils accessible for homework; cleaning up afterwards; and organizing the school bag for next school day. I also learned that the best way to teach our children is by our example. When the kids are studying, we can also work. When they are reading, we too can read, perhaps material related to our professional work. Eventually, these family routines will help them

The best formation and legacy we can give them is Faith, because Faith and Knowledge are true wisdom. Keep in mind this quote from a wise mom: "My job is not to get my kids into Harvard, but to help them get into heaven." As St. Josemaria admonished, "It is good to see you put such determination into your study provided, of course, you put the same determination into acquiring interior life." (The Way #341) ~ Cynthia Abesa Opus Dei Women's Activities upcoming

Offered both in person and online,

https://www.walnutgrovecenter.org/faith-and-

In person: September 11, October 9,

November 13, 2021, 10:00a – noon

St. Andrew's Pastoral Center, Pasadena;

Holy Innocents Church, Long Beach

St. Mary Magdalen Chapel, Camarillo

Opus Dei Women's Retreats

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, San Diego For details, go to https://www.walnutgrovecenter.org/

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW

first Saturdays of the month:

2:00p - 3:30pFor Zoom link, go to

reason-classes

For details, go to

Preview of 2022

• March 11 – 13, 2022

realize that the skills

they are learning now

are what they will be

A word of caution,

the future.

practicing as adults in

though. As parents, we

can focus too much on

academic excellence,

on getting our kids

accepted to the best

the more important dimension of character

Christian faith. And

of forming them in

universities, forgetting

formation rooted in our

on us parents rests this

important responsibility

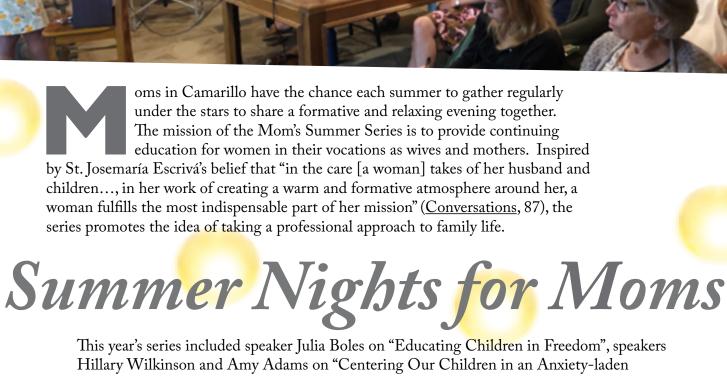
the truths of our faith,

responsible and loving members of society.

in human virtues so

that they become

• April 8 - 10, 2022 • October 21 – 23, 2022 • November 11 – 13, 2022 Mary and Joseph Retreat Center Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275



Joseph's life, and it is in ours as well. The Quotable Saint – Holiness in Ordinary Life The parents are the first persons responsible for the education of their children, in human as well as in spiritual

conscious of the

To fulfill it, they need prudence,

understanding, a capacity to love, and a concern

for giving good

St. Josemaría Escrivá, Christ is Passing By, 27

Interior Freedom by Jacques Philippe

If we want to find God in our everyday lives, our need for Christian formation never ends. We should grow spiritually every day, and spiritual reading is a vital part of that. Spiritual reading provides us with fuel so our souls can grow, stretching us to love more and love better each day. WIT joyfully welcomes you to our newest column, "Book Nook", where we share the spiritual books that have helped us the most. Read on, read

A friend asked me a while ago to recommend a book for her to read to make sense of the coronavirus situation, and that got me thinking. I suggested <u>Interior Freedom</u> by Jacques Philippe. Fr. Phillipe has an

example.

Book Nook:

the books, and enjoy!

with him! 🙂

extent of their responsibility.

extraordinary gift of being able to explain profound spiritual ideas in clear, easy-to-read language. With Interior Freedom, he talks about accepting the situation in which we find ourselves, and not letting exterior restrictions on our lives restrict our interior freedom. He also discusses living in the present moment, letting today's troubles be sufficient for today. A great quote, particularly pertinent to the coronavirus: "Being free also means consenting to what we did not choose." In the spirit of full disclosure, I am a *huge* fan of Fr. Phillipe. I once drove to New Mexico with a friend to hear him speak. I even have a photo Aurumn Boost for Your Soul

with their fellow campers, too. Comments on the camp were uniformly positive, ranging from "a lot of fun," to "really fun," to "really, really fun." Each year, the camp is organized around a particular theme, and this year's theme was Pixar films. Campers were grouped by age in theme-related cabins, and several campers shared their experiences with WIT. Megan, from the Toy Story cabin, was pleased with how easy it was to make friends. Jessica, from Monsters, Inc., echoed her sentiments, recounting, "The

On Education

The Opus Dei website, https://

opusdei.org/en-us/, is an extensive

resource to help us grow in our

spiritual lives and our relations with others. The site offers videos,

articles, news, and testimonials

on a variety of topics, all aimed at

strengthening our relationship with

Christ and with those around us.

In this Back-to-School issue, WIT considers "The Parents' Right to Educate Their Children," one of a series of articles in the section titled, Family Life. The article starts with the premise that parents have the right and duty to educate their

next summer!

God expects them to educate each

child in freedom and love, teaching

them to freely direct their lives

towards him... Therefore... this

right and duty [to educate] forms

part of the parents' respect for the

divine calling each child receives in

The article recommends that parents

view the school as...an extension of

their home," by becoming involved

in school activities and decision-

making processes, attending open

and getting to know the teachers.

and curriculum nights,

Baptism."

houses

Girls' Club Corner

program, where the girls and counselors can walk together downtown after school. There, the counselors can meet with the middle schoolers one-on-one to help them make resolutions based on the virtues they have been learning about. This method offers a more independent learning style for the girls in a safe setting. I would've loved this formational hangout time when I was in middle school, and I know these girls will love it too! We are ready for the most successful year of Girls' Club yet!

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