



Teaching From The Heart



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Writing the Good News

One of the great blessings in my life is being called to write sermons—notice I didn't say *preach* them, but write them!

I do all sorts of research, read the texts over and over, carry the words in my heart the whole week—in short, I do an intensive bible study every week I'm assigned to preach. And the discoveries are amazing. I had no idea that a chance meeting with a recovering alcoholic would completely crack open a scripture lesson for me, or that the research of a Lutheran pastor in Minnesota would give me brand new insights on a familiar text (ahhh, the internet!) It's like I get to put on my "God spectacles" and see the world filtered through God's word. What a blessing!!

God is so gracious when we engage him through his word—and because of that, much of this newsletter is spent talking about bible study options and methods for all ages.

Look in the next issue for suggested bible resources that will help you dig into scripture, pronounce the names right, define theological terms and understand the context of what you read in scripture. Be aware that it would be impossible for me to produce an exhaustive list of bible studies—do any of you get the Christian Book Distributors catalog every month there are *hundreds* of bibles and resources (www.christianbook.com)—, so I've just chosen a few that are really good, and I've included websites where you can browse so you can choose the best bible study for your group.

(What's our teen bible study group using this year? We're using a series called "Thinking Theologically" and we're watching Nooma videos in between 6 week sessions. Thinking Theologically is a series offered by Abingdon Press. We're studying issues related to Money, Pop Culture, Haves and Have Nots, and Body Image. Each one is a 6 week session, and so far so good!! All Nooma DVDs are available from my office for lending, and samples of the study are too.)

Got suggestions? E-mail me at LGRohr@albanydiocese.org



Upcoming Events

Walk Thru the Bible New Testament

Trinity Church,
Potsdam, NY
October 27, 2007
9 am to 3:30 pm
Cost: \$25 per person
Or BOGO—Buy One,
Get One Free!
Register two people for
\$25!!!

Register on-line at:
www.albanydiocese.org

Women's Advent Retreat

November 30-December
2, 2007

Theme: Mother/
Daughter retreat
Cost: \$109 per person/
double occupancy
Please note that this is a
subsidized rate, and is
not the regular rate!

Sign up on-line at
www.albanydiocese.org
and click on "Events"

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ABUSE PROTECTION

Although we may be uncomfortable talking about it, it's important to know the signs of potential abuse because an incident of abuse rarely happens without warning signs. In our analysis of more than 3,000 cases of abuse in organizations, we've learned that **boundary violations** often forewarn of an incident of abuse. Watch for these common boundary violations:

1. Too much physical contact.

Watch for employees or volunteers who always seem to be hugging, touching, rough housing or wrestling with minors.

2. Too frequent communication.

Watch for employees or volunteers who communicate with minors too often; at times or places away from authorized events; behind the scenes using private e-mails or social networking sites like MySpace or Facebook; or about issues not related to the legitimate purpose of their relationship.

3. Too few differences.

Watch for employees or volunteers who try to act like the kids ("Oh, he's just like one of the kids!") by using their language; routinely preferring the company of minors over that of their peers; or swapping personal information, like how they spent their free time or who their best friends are.

4. Too much special attention.

Watch for employees or volunteers who single out a favorite child for preferred activities, time alone, or excessive compliments, or who become a child's confidante and portray that only they can truly relate to a child.

5. Too many personal questions.

Watch for employees or volunteers who ask minors personal questions about their relationships with their boyfriend or girlfriend, about their physical development, or about their sexual curiosity, development or orientation.

6. Too few limits.

Watch for employees or volunteers who won't set limits with minors, who instead allow the minors to make the rules about everything from what activities to do, to who does what when, to how minors may interact with each other.

Information graciously provided by Praesidium, Inc, a professional abuse-prevention company. Visit their website for info on abuse prevention including background checks, on-line courses and other information at www.praesidiuminc.com



Bible Study Info for All Ages—you know you asked for it!

Elementary aged:

1. **Hands-On Bible:** contains lessons, experiments and kid-friendly graphics
2. **The Sunday Paper:** written by Episcopal educator Gretchen Wolff Pritchard, these Sunday bulletins are great quick studies for classroom or pew.
www.the-sunday-paper.com

Middle School/High School:

1. **Student Life Bible Study:** a Six-Year plan for helping kids learn about: Christ, Character, Community, Covenant, Consecration and Commission
<http://www.studentlifebiblestudy.com/>
EVEN BETTER—this program is priced for by the *size* of the group attending, so small churches pay the least!
2. **Serendipity Bible for Students:** 120 lesson plans in 8 categories such as relationships and discipleship. Also contains ice-breakers and activities. *Also available in an adult study bible—great for Sunday morning bible study!* www.serendipityhouse.com
3. **Submerge:** Scripture Union's newest daily bible reading program for kids and youth groups. www.scriptureunion.com
4. **Group Publishing and Youth Specialties** offer TONS of studies for kids. To browse their stuff, go to www.goup.com and www.youthspecialties.com

Adult:

1. **NEW!! Life Bible Study Program:** a three-year plan for studying scripture. All resources available on-line as downloads. The first module is “Yahweh” and it covers the Old Testament. The next module, ready in June of 2008, will be “Christos” and the final, due in 2009, will be “Ekklesia”. Prices are geared to the size of your group
<http://www.lifebiblestudy.com/>
3. **Willow Creek's Bible 101:** A series of six booklets that cover topics such as Foundations, Themes and Parables. Willow Creek also offers a **Jesus 101** series. For all Willow Creek bible studies, go to www.willowcreek.com/resources/biblestudies/
4. **NavPress:** more bible studies than you'll know what to do with!!
<http://navpress.com/BibleStudies/>
5. **Intervarsity Press:** more than **800** bible studies available. www.ivpress.com and search for “bible studies” in the search box.

Any age:

Essential 100: Read through the “Essential 100” verses of scripture to get an over view of the whole bible. <http://scriptureunion.gospelcom.net/>

Scripture Union also publishes the bible study guides “Discovery” and “Encounter with God”—both recommended by Bp. Love.



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Inductive Bible Study 101:

- ✦ **Who?** Who are the main persons involved in the passage? Who wrote it? Who is it written to or about? Who else does it refer to or mention?
- ✦ **What?** What is taking place? What is taking place immediately before or immediately after this passage? What is the main message or point being made? What words are repeated, omitted, or emphasized? Are there any actions that should be taken? What can I learn about God, Jesus, sin, redemption, or man?
- ✦ **Where?** Where is it happening? What places are referred to? Is there any importance to the location?
- ✦ **When?** What time of day, year, etc...is this passage taking place? Is there any significance to the timing of a particular event?
- ✦ **How?** Does it state how something was done, right or wrong? Does it state how something is to be done?
- ✦ **What Now? (application)** What does it mean in today's language? What does it mean for my life? How does this passage apply to my life? What do I need to do about it?

Use this for Sunday Lectionary studies, home bible study, teen bible study—whatever bible study you've got planned!

Disciples Making Disciples

