



# FAITH: A FRESH TAKE



November 7, 2013

## God, Faith Inspire, Direct Nurse

My name is Tom Ziegler. I live in Columbia, Ill., and am a member of Immaculate Conception Parish in the same town. When asked to contribute to a faith reflection to The Messenger, I



thought to myself, "This will be simple." But then I spent hours upon hours, even days of staring at a blank computer screen, "Well, guess this is going to be harder than

I thought." Having faith and explaining your faith are quite different from each other. The best I can do is share with you all an insight of how I chose profession, nursing.

I grew up in a strong Catholic family, grounded by strong, loving grandparents, parents and even my brother and sister. From a young age, I was taught the value of involvement and volunteering, which I took to heart. This helped give me the support of my faith early on. Volunteering in hospitals, helping around the parish with my father, volunteering through my Catholic grade school and high school, mission trips, and even working on the Belleville diocese's Executive Youth Council all helped keep me grounded in my faith. Then high school graduation hit, and on to college I went.

Growing up in today's world youth with faith are up against quite a wide variety of obstacles, distractions and challenges. It definitely not only makes it hard on one's faith but also on the path of growing up and walking the journey of life.

I originally graduated from Illinois College with a business administration degree, sociology degree and a minor in finance. I had added a few more years to my age, but had not grown up and was not happy where I found myself in life.

By moving closer to home, soul searching, and lots of praying and putting my faith in God, I was able to grow up in life and in my faith.

During this time, I was constantly being reminded in my head of Matthew 25:35-40, specifically, "For I was sick and you looked after me ... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did

for me."

In addition to many discussions with my parents pertaining to everything I was involved in when I was younger, nursing school became a goal for me.

My love of people, my ability to connect with all walks of life, my upbringing and the values inspired by my grandparents and parents, and my faith from early on all started to direct me to this field of work. Once I started to rely on letting God show me a path in my life, I looked forward, emerged myself in nursing school and in God, and instantly started to grow personally, in maturity and in my faith.

From nursing school, I moved into working at Barnes-Jewish Emergency Department. I was making leaps and bounds in life, and was seeing what God had in store for me. I saw the good I was doing in such a stressful, scary, and intense environment. In a place where life and death seem to always be in a battle with each other, I felt I was able to bring a sense of hope, comfort, help and love in every situation, whether life won that day or death was the end result. I now currently work for AirEvac Lifeteam as a critical care/trauma certified flight RN. I went from an urban/inner city ER in St. Louis to one of the most dangerous civilian jobs in the United States.

Nursing school and the ER helped bring me back to my faith and now flight nursing is strengthening me as a person and in my faith. When I am working, it is almost always those patients' and their families' worst day of their lives.

Going back to the bible verse, I feel there is a reason I am meant to be in that helicopter. I am there to extend a hand of hope, comfort, help and love in every situation.

I am truly happy that I am able to do this job. My faith is stronger because of this journey, and yet my faith is what helps me step into the helicopter on every flight. I feel I am there to be an extension of God looking over the patients, and I am comforted by the fact that at the same time God is looking over me during my flights. Faith is what brought me to this point, and faith is what is keeping me here. Sometimes God just wants us to wonder a bit to find what He wants us to look for.

— Tom Ziegler



## Pope Francis Has Favorite Saints

A group of young adults gathered at the Newman Center in Carbondale recently.

They would be talking about the saints, those that were special to them.

Father Steven Beatty, administrator of St. Kateri Parish in Gallatin County, attends the group's gatherings as well.

Father Beatty began the discussion with Mary as the mother of God. "We don't worship Mary," he said. "We ask for intercession through Mary and the saints."

Sometimes, those who are not Catholic confuse intercession with worship.

Ella York, an attorney, said one of her favorite saints is St. Thomas More, an English attorney in Henry VIII's court.

"He fought for justice and the poor," Ella York said. "He believed in educating women at a time when that was not so popular." He lived from 1478-1535. He was beheaded.

Her sister, Emily York decided to research St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks since that is the patron saint of her parish and recently canonized.

"Our church was named on the day she was canonized," Emily York said.

Since everyone has favorite saints, it's no surprise that Pope Francis also has a few favorite saints.

During an interview with the pope a journalist discovered some of the pope's favorite saints.

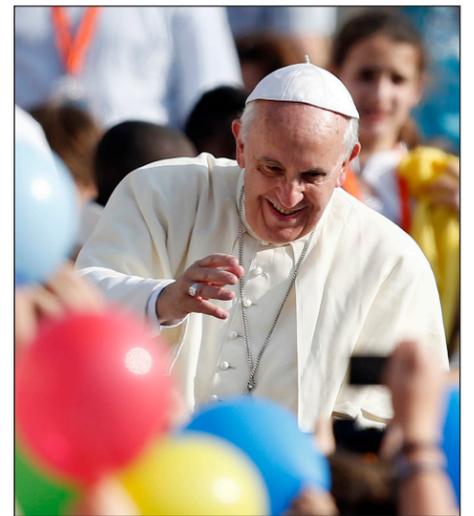
- St. Augustine: This fifth-century church father and theologian is a favorite of retired Pope Benedict XVI and for his successor.

Pope Francis said Christians must follow St. Augustine's example and refuse to become "anesthetized by success, by things, by power," but let themselves be restless for God.

- St. Francis of Assisi: The pope took his name after this 13th-century Italian friar.

"He's great because he is everything. He is a man who wants to do things, wants to build, he founded an order and its rules, he is an itinerant and a missionary, a poet and a prophet, he is mystical. He found evil in himself and rooted it out. He loved nature, animals, the blade of grass on the lawn and the birds flying in the sky. But above all he loved people, children, old people, women. He is the most shining example of that agape," that is, to love one another as Jesus loved, the pope told La Repubblica.

- St. Paul the Apostle: "St. Paul is the one who laid down the cornerstones of our religion and our creed. You cannot be a conscious Christian without St. Paul. He translated the teachings of Christ into a doctrinal structure that, even with the additions of a vast number of thinkers, theologians and pastors, has resisted and still exists after two thousand years,"



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he told La Repubblica.

In a May homily, the pope said St. Paul is a model for pastors because he worked with his own hands and "didn't have money in the bank." The apostle explained that priests and bishops must serve the flock with tenderness and love, helping them grow and protecting them from danger, Pope Francis said.

- St. Ignatius of Loyola, the 16th-century founder of the order the pope comes from, the Society of Jesus.

"Jesuits were and still are the leavening – not the only one but perhaps the most effective – of Catholicism: culture, teaching, missionary work, loyalty to the pope." Ignatius, he said, "was a reformer and a mystic," which is critical for the church because "a religion without mystics is a philosophy."

- St. Benedict: This sixth-century Italian monk is most famous for his rule for living, working and praying in community, which still guides the lives of Benedictine abbeys around the world.

While Pope Francis has not spoken more in-depth about this saint, the Benedictine spirituality seeks a balanced way of living with prayer, work and rest that does not ignore the primacy of God. It is also about living out the Gospel by being faithful in the little things of everyday life.

- St. Therese of Lisieux: The pope used to keep a photo of this 19th-century French Carmelite nun on his library shelf when he was archbishop of Buenos Aires. He told Rubin, "When I have a problem I ask the saint, not to solve it, but to take it in her hands and help me accept it, and, as a sign, I almost always receive a white rose."

In a recent homily, he said St. Therese displayed patience, trust in God and a "spirit of humility, tenderness and goodness," that God "wants from all of us."

For more information about topics and young adult gatherings, please call Emily York at 618-841-9076.

### This page for and about young adult Catholics

This is an online-only page dedicated to young adult Catholics, their interests, their needs, their challenges and their faith.

We're tapping into young adults who have been active in their parishes and who have reached out in faith to begin lives of their own.

To make sure this page is about you and what you want to see, we need your input. Send us your story ideas, your concerns, your hopes and your stories of faith.

Email us at [cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org](mailto:cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org) with questions, suggestions or for more information.

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