

IDEOLOGIES, IDEAS, IDOLS AND INSANITY

By Father Dwight Longenecker

It seems to me that the only thing more commonplace than religion is false religion, and the most convincing form of false religion is an ideology. What is an ideology? An ideology is a good idea believed as the only idea...

Everyone wants something to believe in. We all want a cause to live for and we naturally seek an explanation for all that is—especially ourselves. The Catholic faith provides that, but the Catholic faith, like life, is messy. There are uncertainties and rough spots and sinners and not everything fits and matches all the time. The Catholic faith is like a big family with crazy uncles, stupid adolescents, eccentric aunties, darling mothers, strong funny fathers and cool cousins.

The Catholic faith provides an overarching belief system and way of life that is possible. This is what a true religion offers. An ideology, on the other hand, offers an easy way out of the messy reality of the Catholic faith. It offers the comfort of a single idea that rules everything. This idea is a god that looks good, but it is a false god, and as we know, all false gods must be thrown down. False religion must be named and shamed, and not only named and shamed, but damned.

This big idea then becomes an interpretative grid through which the person filters Christianity. It begins as an interesting aspect of Christianity, but eventually it comes to dominate and it twists the Christian faith into something different. In other words, the dominant idea becomes an idol.

This happens when the “good idea” becomes more important than the encounter with Christ, and the Christian religion is made to serve the “good idea.” The “good idea” that replaces Christ could be most anything. It could be some plan for peace and justice. It could be a new educational program, an exciting spirituality, devotion to a particular liturgy or a new evangelization gimmick. It could be dedication to a person, religious order or institution. Whatever it is or who it is, you can be sure that it will appear to be shiny, wonderful, terrific and absolutely the super duper, answer to all the problems in the Church and the world.

This good idea becomes an ideology when everything else in both the religion and the world revolve around it. Let us propose a bizarre example: Let us say that someone has the idea that red headed people are better than everyone else. Before long they have a list of all the red heads down through history who have been brilliant and accomplished. They collect IQ scores of all the red heads to prove their point and when the statistics don't quite match up they alter them or explain away the inconsistencies. Furthermore, they begin to collect evidence that blondes, brown and black haired people are inferior. They promote red headed political candidates and promote red hair dye for all people. They chronicle the persecution of red heads through history and suspect the brown hairs of plotting against them. They see statistics that red heads are dying out and conclude that there is a secret conspiracy against them... You get the idea.

And the crazy, eye rolling, hair pulling frustration of it is that you cannot argue or have a discussion with these people. They have all the answers. Of course they have all the answers. They have selected their evidence (and ignored the rest) They have worked out the logic, and once you have accepted their starting premise (that all red haired people are superior for example) then of course everything else fits, and if the evidence doesn't fit they force it to fit or they ignore it or—if your bring it to their attention—they resort to a personal attack.

Furthermore, the ideology snowballs. It must grow or be seen to be growing. That is the mark of its truth. So the ideology soon attracts people of the same personality type or social class who all believe in this one cause, person or institution. Consequently a “group” will be formed. Some will be “in” and others will be “out”. Tests of orthodoxy will develop and this group will demand total dedication and that you give 100%. Of course you must give 100% and do so with a kind of uncritical obedience. After all, that is what religion is all about right? 100% commitment?

Soon those who do not belong to the ideology or dare to criticize the group must be targeted, bullied, excluded, vilified and excluded. It will be considered a good thing among group members that this is so. They will congratulate one another on the brilliance of their exclusion and vilification of the ones who do not join the group.

This sort of false religion is all around us, and this is why non believers simply consider Catholicism (as well as other forms of Christianity) to be no more than another man-made ideology. That is because too often we have done exactly that: we've twisted Catholicism into our own ideology—or “idiology” if you like.

But it is not that. It is, instead, the most unique and brilliant religion the world has ever seen. It is first and foremost a mystical immersion into the person of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son. Following that it is an unpredictable adventure in which we walk in grace by faith not by sight. This roller coaster of faith always takes us to the edge. Constantly curious and forever full of faith, we are always on the move—a pilgrim people.

The ideologue, on the other hand, turns this adventure into no more than the enforced implementation of a good idea, and the worst thing about the worship of this idol is not only that it is insane, but that it is simply too dull for words.

Reprinted from Fr. Longenecker's blog. Read the original at www.dwightlongenecker.com/ideologies-ideas-idols-and-insanity

"A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him saying, "You are mad, you are not like us."

St. Anthony, Abbot Feast Day - January 17



The Baptism of the Lord

PARISH PRIEST

Fr. Joseph Totton
Phone: 816.294.9841
Email: fathertotton@gmail.com

PARISH SECRETARY

Penny Harrison

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Jim Adams
Jim Ingle
Rosalie Ingle
Tony Kauzlarich
Julie Moran
Jordan Roth
Mike Roth
Wayne Weipert
Michael Fisher

CEMETERY BOARD

Ed Fisher
Mike Roth
Steve White

HALL RENTAL

Call office at 816.473.2011 or
email:
stjosephchurch@centurytel.net

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday 8:00 a.m.

CONFESSIONS

Sunday 7:30 a.m.

MISSION STATEMENT

We the members of Saint Joseph Catholic parish, will strive to be the reflection of Jesus in this particular time and place.

St. Joseph Church

P.O. Box 197—107 North Shortridge, Easton, MO 64443

Office Phone: 816.473.2011

Email: stjosephchurch@centurytel.net

Website: www.stjosepheaston.org

January 13, 2019



You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.

TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN: REPORT ABUSE

OMBUDSMAN: Jenifer Valenti – 816.812.2500

DIOCESAN VICTIM ADVOCATE: Kathleen Chastain, at 816.392.0011 or chastain@diocesekcsj.org

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday January 13
8:00 a.m. Mary Curtis † by Nancy Roth

Sunday January 13
8:00 a.m. Helen Roth † by Roth family

Please remember in prayer those who have died.
Grant them eternal rest and peace, O Lord!
† Denotes Deceased

January Birthdays

Brenda Cantrell January 13
Kelsey Houser January 18
Kathy Barton January 19

And Anniversaries

Michael and Victoria Kempf
January 13



2019 Annual Catholic Appeal

We have an opportunity to commit our support to diocesan programs and ministries that no single parish could provide on its own. Our theme, "The community of believers was of one heart and mind" Acts 4:32, appropriately recognizes our unity as the people of God to work together for the betterment of all. Our goal is 100% participation. No gift is too small. Please join our efforts. The goal for St. Joseph's parish is \$5,775. Our total so far is \$4155.00. Thank you for all your help and support of the 2019 Annual Catholic Appeal.

Parish Registration

If you are new to our Parish, we encourage you to register: Please introduce yourself to Fr. Totton after Mass, come to the Parish Office on Tuesday or Thursday, or log on to our Parish Website at: www.stjosepheaston.org and register.



DONUT SUNDAY

The 2019 Sign Up Sheet is on the back bulletin board.
Please sign up!

WEEKEND MINISTRY SCHEDULE

January 13 - 8 a.m. Mass

Greeter: Richard LaFollette
Lectors: Doug Ottinger, Jan Pottier
Ministers: Jim Ingle, Mary Lou Euler, Paul Pottier
Counters: Paul and Jan Pottier

January 20 - 8 a.m. Mass

Greeter: Hubert Gregory
Lectors: Bonnie Gregory, Jan Pottier
Ministers: Jim Ingle, Doug Ottinger, Wayne Weipert
Counters: Eddie and Debbie Fisher

Weekend Collection - January 6, 2019

Envelopes: \$ 1445.00
Plate: \$ 204.00

Total Parish: \$ 1,649.00

Fiscal Year Budget July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

January-to-Date: \$ 1,649.00

Year-to-Date: \$ 61,862.50
Year Budget: \$ 90,600.00

Thank You for your continued support of St. Joseph Parish.

Second collection next week, January 20th
Catholic Home Missions Appeal



Our Lady of Guadalupe Church • 4503 Frederick Avenue • St. Joseph, MO
BAND OF BROTHERS! Be a Man Who is Holy! WEEKLY MEETINGS WEDNESDAYS AT 6:30AM
• Free Breakfast • Bible Study • Fellowship • Special Guests

SAVE THE DATE!!! THE BAND OF BROTHERS CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE

Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Joseph, on Saturday, March 23, 2019 - 7am-5pm - \$25. A Day of Spiritual Growth & Inspiration. Featured speakers: Bishop James Johnston, Fr. Richard Rocha, Dave DiNuzzo, Sr., & Dr. Scott Sullivan. Purchase tickets at EventBrite.com, 2019-band-of-brothers-catholic-mens-conference-ticket. Information: David Hurst (816) 262-3950 or dhurst032204@yahoo.com.

Mark your Calendars—Parish Events

Parish & Finance Council
Tuesday, February 12 at 6 p.m. in Rectory

Altar Society
Parish Hall after Donut Sunday

Hand Linens
January/February: Jan Pottier

Donut Sunday - February 3

Knights of Coumbus Council #5067
Jay Pflugardt, Grand Knight
1st & 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m.
Rosary 3rd Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

Recitation of Rosary
2nd Sunday of month beginning at 7:40 a.m.

Cursillo Weekend



Every 6 months a 3-day Cursillo retreat takes place. Men and women in the parish are invited to take part. Several parishioners have made one and would be willing to sponsor a new member. If you want to find out about it please call Richard or Diane Hon 816.6823839.

Is your marriage going down the right road or is it a little off track?

Life can be difficult, and so can the challenges you face in marriage. Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Looking for a better way? Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. Retrouvaille is a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy and heal, just as they have done in their own marriages. Retrouvaille is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, but welcomes couples of all faiths as well as non-religious couples. Retrouvaille can help get your relationship back on track. For more information about the upcoming Retrouvaille Weekend contact registration team: Local Telephone @ 800.470.2230 or visit our website: HelpOurMarriage.com.



Prayer Corner

"To everything there is a season and time . . .

for every purpose under heaven."

—Ecc. 3-11



" . . . a time to heal . . . "

Ron Kretzer, Bob Everett, Mildred Ottinger, Lori Redmond, Nancy Totton, Bubba Miller, Amy Dobrowansky, the elderly and infirm, the chronically ill and their caregivers. For those who attend to the dying and grieving; for medical professionals and first responders; for the homeless and those lost in this world; for those who harbor hatred and especially for those who have no one to pray for them.

For our home bound parishioners:

Rosemary Ingle, Carolyn O'Brien, Josephine Jackson, Delores White, Eileen Grier, Brent LaFollette

Please notify the parish office of any new intentions or of any names that should be removed.



Please keep the protection of innocent life in your prayers this month; the elderly, the poor, the disabled, immigrants and the unborn.

Bishop Johnston's
Prayer Intention for this month:
"My January intention is for the homeless and those who have no immediate family to help them."

Prayer intention from Pope Francis for January
That young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.

Let us pray to the Lord...

The Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph is committed to combating sexual abuse in the Church. If you are a victim of sexual abuse, or if you observe or suspect sexual abuse:

1. Call the Missouri Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.392.3738 (if the victim is currently under the age of 18), and
2. Contact your local law enforcement agency or call 911, and
3. After reporting to these civil and law enforcement authorities, report suspected sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult to the Diocesan Ombudsman, Jenifer Valenti, at 816.812.2500 or JeniferValenti@att.net, if the abuse involves a priest, deacon, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph.

The Diocese has a sincere commitment to providing care and healing resources to victims of sexual abuse and their families. Please contact Victim Advocate, Kathleen Chastain, at 816.392.0011 or chastain@diocesekcsj.org for more information.