



# The Open Door

Open wide the door to Christ! - St. John Paul the Great

AUGUST 2019

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"We exist to joyfully worship God and carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit." - Mission Statement of Christ the King

## Alpha or RCIA?

*Which one should you invite a friend to?*

*It depends on where they are at in their journey to Christ*

by Jessica Dudek

**You have a friend** who you want to help come closer to the Lord Jesus in the Catholic Church. Maybe they have no Christian background. Maybe they already have a strong relationship with the Lord in another Christian tradition. How do you decide the best way to help them along on their journey?

When considering a friend's journey to Christ, it's important to recognize that

bringing them to Mass or encouraging them to sign up for RCIA (the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) might not be the right first step for them. The Catholic Mass is steeped in culture and tradition, which blesses and aids our faith. But for those not used to liturgy, it may be awkward at best and completely isolating at worst.

**RCIA is a time** of specified formation in exploring

Catholicism. If a person does not have a relationship with Jesus, then we can't expect them to honor and uphold the Eucharist. Rather, it is best to consider where a person is at in their journey to Christ and meet them there.

The journey of evangelization is completely dependent on the person, but there are a few marked similarities. As Sherry Weddell noted in her

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# With Christ joy is constantly born anew

by Pope Francis

1. The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. ...

## **I. A joy ever new, a joy which is shared**

2. The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades. This is a very real danger for believers too. Many fall prey to it, and end up resentful, angry and listless. That is no way to live a dignified and fulfilled life; it is not God's will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of the risen Christ.

3. I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus

***I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ ...***

***I ask all of you to do this unfaithfully each day.***

***No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord."***

Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfaithfully each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord".<sup>[1]</sup> The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time to say to Jesus: "Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me

once more into your redeeming embrace". How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another "seventy times seven" (Mt 18:22) has given us his example: he has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfaithful love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards!

*This has been taken from the opening paragraphs of Pope Francis's Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium: On the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World. It is available on the Vatican website. Go to [w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html) and click on "Apostolic Exhortations."*



Pope Francis was elected Supreme Pontiff on March 13, 2013. You can read his official biography and other works on the Vatican website, [w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html).

Photo of Pope Francis by Günther Simmermacher from Pixabay, [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com).

<sup>1</sup> Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete in Domino*, (9 May 1975), 22:AA567 (1975), 297.

## Alpha or RCIA?

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book, *Forming Intentional Disciples*, most people go through five stages of conversion:

1. **Trusting a Christian**
2. **Curiosity about the Faith**
3. **Willingness to Change**
4. **Seeking the Truth**
5. **Embracing the Kingdom**

The difference between the second threshold—being curious about the Faith—and the fourth threshold—seeking the truth—is the work that happens in a person's heart in becoming willing to embrace change.

Change is extremely difficult and often severely painful. Those living apart from a relationship with Jesus may have much to give up in order to live as His disciple. Many times, relationships have to be adjusted, bad habits and coping mechanisms need to be relinquished, and entire lifestyles may have to be altered. If it's hard to understand, ask yourself how you would feel if you had to end your closest relationship, quit your job, form a whole new group of friends, and cut out your main media sources in order to join a church. Granted, those of us who know the fullness of a relationship with Christ know that we are inviting someone into joy and satisfaction. But for the non-converted, change is terrifying.

To truly support those entering the Faith we need to look on this journey, especially the third



threshold, with empathy. We must be gentle and caring with those whose journeys will require a lot of shifting in their lives and approach our brothers and sisters with graciousness, patience, and compassion.

Here are a few examples of how you might approach someone at each of these thresholds:

### Threshold #1: Trusting a Christian

Help build trust by inviting your friend over for dinner. Talk about the things that pertain to their life, allowing faith to enter the conversation when you share about yourself. But don't press your friend to discuss faith if they don't seem excited by the prospect.

### Threshold #2: Curiosity about the Faith

- Invite your friend to your Connect Group or Bible study. Provide them with a low key space to ask questions.

- As their curiosity builds, invite them to Alpha and go with them.

### Threshold #3: Willingness to Change

- Sit down and have an intentional conversation, sharing your conversion story and asking your friend to share where they are at in their faith exploration.
- Invite your friend to Mass, preparing them ahead of time with what to expect and debriefing with them afterwards on their experience.
- If they have already completed Alpha, invite them to RCIA or a Connect Group.

### Threshold #4: Seeking the Truth

- If they are not yet pursuing Alpha, join Alpha!
- If they are already in Alpha, continually invite your friend to ask questions.

*To truly support those entering the Faith, we need to look on this journey, especially the third threshold, with empathy. We must be gentle and caring with those whose journeys will require a lot of shifting in their lives...*

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*The process of evangelization asks those who are already following Jesus to take a posture of humility. In doing so, we mirror Christ's sacrifice.*



Jessica Dudek is the Director of Evangelization at Christ the King.

## Alpha or RCIA?

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- If they have already completed Alpha, invite them to RCIA or a Connect Group.

### Threshold #5: Embracing the Kingdom

- Ask your friend if they are ready to give their life to Jesus.
- Invite them to RCIA or a Connect Group.

You may wonder why I continually press the invitation to Alpha as an early point for joining the Church. To answer that, let's consider the latest Barna study.

**The Barna Group** recently did a study on global evangelization and published the results first to Alpha USA. Among their findings were a few things that non-believers are looking for in a conversation with a Christian.

Those elements are:

1. **To be listened to without judgement.**
2. **To be allowed to draw their own conclusions.**
3. **To not be forced to draw conclusions.**
4. **For the Christian present to be able to confidently express their beliefs.**

Alpha is a place where these elements are most aptly met. People can freely ask the questions they need to ask without judgement and are given space to make decisions while the Gospel is clearly and unapologetically proclaimed. Alpha gives the foundation of the Catholic faith and directly invites people into forming a relationship with Jesus. Alpha is a tool well-designed to meet the needs of non-believers today. It covers the first season of RCIA called "Inquiry."

**The process of evangelization** asks those who are already following Jesus to take a posture of humility. In doing so, we mirror Christ's sacrifice. Jesus did not ask us to rise to His level, but rather He laid Himself down for us.

Jesus' route of salvation was to leave His throne and give us His very flesh. Now, He is asking that we do the same. Like Jesus, we must leave behind our preferences and biases and adopt patience and servitude in our evangelistic efforts. Rather than expecting someone to rise to the occasion of Catholicism, let us extend our hospitality to the furthest corners of the earth and become all things to all men so that some may be saved.

## Fall Discipleship Groups starting soon

**Although we may want** to grow in holiness and our walk as disciples, it might not be clear how to do that, especially given the busyness of our lives. CTK Discipleship Groups are designed to help parishioners grow in holiness. They are on a wide variety of topics and include teaching, catechesis, Bible study, and fellowship.

Three Discipleship Groups are currently planned for this fall:

- **Catholic Biblical School of Michigan** In cooperation



### Discipleship Groups at CTK

with CBSM, we'll be offering classes on Thursdays that are broken into three 8- to 10-week sessions with no commitment to attend all three sessions each year. Classes start Sept. 12. *Registration deadline: Aug. 21.*

- **Walking with Purpose**
- **Women's Bible Study**
- **Opening Your Heart** is a 22-

lesson Bible study that will meet on Mondays starting Sept. 16. Your choice of afternoon or evening session.

- **Oremus** This popular 8-week study program teaches the essentials of an effective and fruitful prayer life. *Oremus* begins on Wednesday, Sept. 25.

For more information about these Discipleship Groups and to register, go to [www.ckkcc.net/discipleship](http://www.ckkcc.net/discipleship).

## Alpha/RCIA Testimony

## Will and Kirsten Warren

*Will and Kirsten Warren entered the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil in April 2019 after first attending Alpha in Fall 2017. We asked them to share with us a little of their journey.*

**You participated in Christ the King's first Alpha in Fall 2017. Why did you join Alpha at Christ the King?**

We were interested in exploring churches as we had a desire to find one we could attach ourselves to. We attended the Christmas Vigil Mass in 2016 at Holy Spirit in Brighton and recalled hearing a man's testimony of how Alpha converted him from a non-believer to a believer. We started attending CTK because Will has co-workers who invited us. We loved the energy, so we kept attending! When the chance for us to attend Alpha at CTK arose, we jumped on it.

**Did you have any thoughts or expectations going into Alpha?**

**Kirsten:** I didn't expect that it would have a significant effect on me as I was already a believer in Christ.

**Will:** I was hoping to get a better idea of the Christian life.

**Did your experience of Alpha match your expectations? If not, in what way was it different?**

**Kirsten:** It inspired me and filled me with more passion.

**Will:** I was inspired to allow myself to draw closer to Christ. It

also confirmed our decision to join RCIA.

**What did you most like about Alpha?**

**Kirsten:** I loved having the same small group each week and forming the friendships.

**Will:** I liked being able to enjoy a meal with others, and I enjoyed the videos more than I expected I would. I really liked Nicky Gumbel. If it was up to me, he would be in all the Christian video series.

**Was there anything about Alpha that you found particularly challenging?**

**Kirsten:** Sometimes it was hard to fully grasp things only seeing the videos once.

**Will:** Although it was uncomfortable sometimes, I really enjoyed the discussion afterwards.

**What happened after Alpha?**

**Kirsten:** We had to wait about 8 or 9 months to start RCIA, which was too long for me! ☺

**Will:** We started attending Mass more regularly. The people at CTK were very friendly and welcoming, but we still felt a little more like outsiders. We attended some of the church events and parties, which helped us feel more involved since it was



such a long wait between Alpha and RCIA.

**When did you join RCIA?**  
Fall of 2018.

**What was your experience of RCIA like? In what way did it confirm you in your desire to enter the Catholic Church?**

**Kirsten:** For me, it was interesting to learn more about the history of the Bible and why the Catholic Church follows certain teachings. It became more of a truth in history instead of just a belief in my heart.

**Will:** By then, I had realized that when we weren't able to make Mass on Sunday, I would feel guilty whereas I wasn't before. When I listened to Fr. Ed's homilies, it was easier to apply them to

Will and Kirsten Warren—shown here with their son Jackson—entered the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil after Will and Kirsten went through Alpha and RCIA at Christ the King.

*I loved having the same small group each week [at Alpha] and forming the friendships.*

Kirsten Warren

*I liked being able to enjoy a meal with others, and I enjoyed the videos more than I expected I would. I really liked Nicky Gumbel.*

Will Warren

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## Alpha/RCIA Testimony

## Will and Kirsten Warren

*I found the video series [used in RCIA] was a great way to learn for me. ... If you have not seen these videos yet, please check them out!*

Kirsten Warren

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my own life. I got to know more about the Christian life and learned that it was ok not to have all the answers. I still knew I wanted to have a better relationship with God. The only way to do that was to stay on the path I was on.

**Was there anything about RCIA that you found particularly helpful or challenging?**

**Kirsten:** I found the video series was a great way to learn for me. The challenge was staying awake since we met at 8pm! ;-)

**Will:** The Catechism we received was helpful. Kevin [Lynn], our catechist, was particularly helpful. He always took the time to make sure I understood the answers he had to all my questions. It helped me know how to apply some parts of the teachings to my own life.

**Looking back over your journey of the last two years, is there anything that stands out for you?**

**Kirsten:** The Easter Vigil by far was the biggest thing. I felt so much energy that night and so full of the Holy Spirit. It was very special!

**Will:** The friendliness of the church and the people I have met and how much my son

*I definitely think that making sure you truly get involved in the Church instead of only going to Mass on Sunday really helps your relationship with the Church and God.*

Will Warren

has changed and enjoys church and the Christian life.

**If you could say just one thing to the parishioners of Christ the King about your experience of entering the Catholic Church through RCIA and Alpha, what would it be?**

**Kirsten:** If you have not seen these videos yet, please check them out! I found a lot of value in them.\*

**Will:** Overall, it was a great experience. It was a lot easier than I expected entering any religion would be. I think the reason it was so great was due to the people that supported us through the process. The long wait for getting on the schedule was the only bump in the road. We both work full time and

have our 4-year-old, so scheduling was difficult.

**Anything else?**

**Kirsten:** I just want to say that our godparents, Tina Tarrant and Steve Gendreg-ske, our catechist, Kevin Lynn, and Jessica Dudek were all so great—knowledgeable and supportive!

**Will:** The Easter Vigil was a great experience despite how nerve-wracking it was. I definitely think that making sure you truly get involved in the Church instead of only going to Mass on Sunday really helps your relationship with the Church and God.

*\*The video series used in RCIA, Symbolon, is available to all Christ the King parishioners through the parish's subscription to FORMED, [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org). For the parish access code, contact Sharon in the parish office (734-929-0975 or [smessiter@ctkcc.net](mailto:smessiter@ctkcc.net)).*



# New RCIA format meets diverse needs

by Jessica Dudek

**We live in an age** where we have access to a world of knowledge at our fingertips. Merely a click of a button on our phones and anyone can explore what the Church teaches or read an article about someone's thoughts on theology.

Culturally, we see a vastly decreased interest in attending talks because we can do our own research and soak up facts in so many other ways. People in society today are tired of being simply told what is what.

Yet, in this highly digital age where we have a world of information readily available to us, we are sorely lacking in interpersonal relationships. Social media provides a false sense of being known as we share intimate yet filtered moments of our worlds. The counter-intuitive result of this seemingly interconnected world is that we see an increase in depression and feelings of isolation as we long to be deeply known. We desire to be seen in our strengths and our weaknesses. We need to be appreciated for who we are yet challenged for who we could become.

True, evangelization requires learning and obtaining knowledge of the Faith. We cannot consider our work to be evangelistic if there is not a proclamation of the Gospel. Yet the need for evangelization today is marked, not by acquiring facts, but by the profound longing for relationships.

**Last year, CTK embarked** on a new format for the RCIA (Rite of

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Christian Initiation for Adults) program. Previously, those seeking to enter the Church would share a classroom experience once a week, beginning in September and going through to the Easter Vigil. A rotating team of catechists would present the material to the group throughout the year.

Christ the King has a wealth of gifted teachers, so last year, rather than using their gifts in a classroom, we transitioned them into a mentorship-based RCIA model. Now, when someone inquires about or is invited to join RCIA, that person is matched with a catechist who will meet with them individually throughout the year and take them through the process of joining the Church.

Catechist Michèle Green recommended we test out *Symbolon* as our curriculum. *Symbolon* is a video and discussion series made by former students of CTK's retired Director of Religious Education, Barbara Morgan. It is a privilege to



see Barbara's legacy carrying on! The catechists and RCIA attendees have access to the video series via CTK's Formed subscription; this allows RCIA participants to re-visit the teachings as desired. The role of the catechist is then to guide the discussion, fostering space for the RCIA participants' individual questions to be answered.

Catechist Kate Schoenle has taught under both formats. She says, "This new approach has many advantages. It allows the catechist to meet the particular needs of the person in RCIA and to dig deeper into topics that he/she might have questions about. It also allows the inquirer and the catechist to set their own schedule and meet at the most convenient time for both of them."

Candidates and catechumens still come together as a group for occasional fellowship, celebration of First Reconciliation, and a Lenten retreat. Moving

*This new approach has many advantages. It allows the catechist to meet the particular needs of the person in RCIA and to dig deeper into topics that he/she might have questions about.*

Catechist  
Kate Schoenle

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Photo: Image by William Iven from Pixabay, pixabay.com.

## CTK hosts Divine Renovation Open House

by Theresa Hofer

On July 11, more than 50 pastors, staff, and senior leaders from 17 parishes and other organizations in and around the Diocese of Lansing came to Christ the King for a Divine Renovation Open House. The day-long open house gave the attendees an opportunity to learn more about the Divine Renovation Network (DRN) and Christ the King's experience with it.

The DRN was established in 2016 as a way of sharing with other parishes the lessons learned by Fr. James Mallon and his staff at St. Benedict Parish in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as they worked to move their parish from "maintenance to mission." Christ the King was one of the first parishes to join the DRN. (For more information about the DRN and why Christ the King decided to join, see the articles in the March 2018



and April 2018 issues of *The Open Door*, available online. Go to [www.ckcc.net](http://www.ckcc.net) and select Newsletter under the Quick Links.)

**The open house** featured videos by Fr. Mallon and one of his key staff members, Ron Huntley, on the foundations for parish renewal and how to sustain parish renewal. Break-out sessions with members of the CTK's Senior Leadership Team focused on creating a leadership culture and a culture of evangelization using Alpha. During lunch, Fr. Ed met separately with the

priests to share his "take" as a pastor on the DRN.

In the afternoon, CTK's Senior Leadership Team participated in a panel discussion, moderated by Mike Cusick of Mission Pathways, during which attendees were able to ask specific questions about Christ the King's experience with the DRN. The day ended with the parish staffs discussing at their tables what they had learned and what steps they would like to take next. Those interested in joining the DRN were given a special offer of 50% off the membership fee to thank them for attending the open house.

To learn more about the Divine Renovation Network, go to [divinerenovation.tv](http://divinerenovation.tv).



Theresa Hofer is editor of *The Open Door*.

## New RCIA format meets diverse needs

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forward, we plan to incorporate a few more times of fellowship and group teaching to give the RCIA participants more opportunities to connect, use the catechists' teaching skills, and give participants the chance to meet the clergy.

**We have found** this format to be a safe space for folks

who are at varying stages in their evangelistic journey. Some entering RCIA have been following the Lord for many years and have relatively few questions, focusing primarily on gaining clarity on Catholic doctrine. Others are brand-new to the Faith and require a spiritual leader who will bring them

step-by-step into the heart of the Church. This format helps meet both of their needs.

For more information about RCIA at Christ the King, contact Director of Evangelization Jessica Dudek at 734-929-0976 or [jdudek@ckcc.net](mailto:jdudek@ckcc.net).



# Coming home

*My dad had a stroke over Memorial Weekend in 2016 and died on July 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. This is the story of God's amazing mercy in his life.*

by Kathy Sokolowski

**My dad came from** a broken marriage and a very unhappy, abusive childhood. He ended up running away and went through different foster care systems. Later in life he married my mom; I am the oldest of their three girls.

Growing up, we never went to church and Christianity wasn't talked about. When I was 20, I felt called to the Catholic Church. When I told my dad, his response was, "Oh, I was raised Catholic." That was the first I had ever heard that. My dad went to my Easter Vigil, went to church with us whenever he visited, and would pray before meals in the presence of my kids, but that was it.

My husband, Samuel, and I had been praying for my dad and making quite a lot of sacrifices for him for a long time. No fruit was really showing as of yet. Then came the phone call telling me that my dad had had a major stroke and was in the ICU.

**One of the first amazing things** that happened was, as we were driving up to Michigan, I got a call from the charity Food for the Poor asking if we had any prayer requests. It was amazing timing—God's timing!

When we got to the hospital, I knew I had to ask him if he wanted me to get a priest. I was very anxious to see how he would respond. He was conscious when we got there and seemed for the most part to be



able to think clearly. So after I got enough courage, I said, "Dad, do you want me to get you a priest?" He responded, "I have actually been going to the Catholic Church for the last two months." He said that he felt like there was something to that "religious thing." I was shocked. I called him every Sunday after Mass, and he had never said a word. So Samuel called his priest.

When the priest got there he gave him the Anointing of the Sick. He also gave him the chance to have the Sacrament of Confession, which my dad said that he wanted to do. Being present for all of that was one of the most amazing moments in my life. My dad had probably not been to Confession since his First Confession. After that, whenever anyone who was Christian came to visit my dad, he would very proudly say that he got "Last Rites."

The next day, my good friend Deacon Kyle came up to visit and gave both my dad and me Communion. I was so overjoyed to be able to receive Communion with my dad. It was something that I had so very much longed for.

That Sunday, I told my dad that the deacon from his parish was going to be coming to see him after Mass. My dad's disappointed response was, "Oh, I didn't want to miss church on Sunday." In the past, church hadn't been important to my dad and he felt like we went too much. Then a couple of days later, he wanted me to bring him to church, and I told him, "Dad, it's a Tuesday." He said, "I don't care, some church would take me." Hearing those words come from my dad's mouth was unbelievable. My dad had never talked like this my whole life; to hear his change

*After I got enough courage, I said, "Dad, do you want me to get you a priest?"*

*He responded, "I have actually been going to the Catholic Church for the last two months."*

Artwork: *Return of the Prodigal Son* by Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1617-1682). This work is in the public domain. Accessed via WikiArt, [wikiart.org](http://wikiart.org).

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## Coming home

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*After a few months, he decided he was ready and registered at that church. We later looked up the readings for that Sunday, and the Gospel reading was the Prodigal Son.*



of heart was such a gift that God allowed me to witness.

**My dad stayed in the hospital** for about a month with many downs and few ups. At the end of June, they placed a feeding tube in his stomach, and within 12 hours after the surgery, he went septic. I, Samuel, my two sisters, and his twin sister were with my dad the day he passed away on July 1.

When we went to meet the priest to set up my dad's funeral, we found out that he actually had been going to church there since January. My dad really felt at home there, and this church did an amazing job of making my dad feel welcome. At first, when he would go (which was not very often), he would just sit in the pew and look around. The priest was curious who this new man was so he approached my dad. Dad told him that he had been away from the church for a long time and just needed some time before he decided to fully come back.



Kathy Sokolowski has been a CTK parishioner since the summer of 2018. She and her husband Samuel have been married 10 years and have 6 children ranging in age from almost 10 years to 6 months old. Kathy and Samuel are originally from the Grand Rapids area. She has happily been a Catholic now for 13 years.

After a few months (in March during Lent), he decided that he was ready and registered at that church. We later looked up the readings for that Sunday, and the Gospel reading was the Prodigal Son.

Around this same time in Lent, I had been reading St. Faustina's diary and placed a picture of her on my bathroom sink. Every night while I brushed my teeth I would pray, "For the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world" and think of each member of my family, starting with my dad.

After my dad's passing, I found on his dresser the book *Beautiful Mercy* by Matthew Kelly with a bookmark on page 13. That page also referenced the Prodigal Son.

**Even though I am so happy** to share this beautiful story with you, I still struggled with God over not healing my dad. While he was in the hospital, one of the readings for Mass was when Peter was in prison and he was able to just walk out of there unnoticed—a *miracle*. The next day's reading was when Jesus healed a man, saying, "Take up your plat and walk." My dad had lost feeling in his left leg and the doctor didn't think that he would be able to walk again. I wanted Jesus to perform a miracle and heal my dad.

I also had recently read that Jesus had told St. Faustina that whoever meditates on His Passion at the 3:00 hour while asking for a request, He could not refuse them. So at 3pm every day, I would really pour my heart into meditating on Jesus's Passion and pleading with God to heal my dad.

I felt like He was going to heal him, so when Dad died I was so upset. I felt like there is no miracle in dying—it's natural—but the real miracle would have been if he was healed. I really struggled with that.

My husband helped me understand the other meaning behind those readings. The real miracle was that my dad was *saved*. God had answered our long-awaited prayer, even more than I could have ever imagined. My dad was also more of a witness to my extended family than he ever was while he was living. The priest talked in his homily about my dad's journey in coming back to the Church. After the funeral, many people came up to me, and I could tell that it made a big impact on them.

**In closing, my prayer** for you all is that, in hearing my story, it will give you hope that God will always with arms open go running to any returning prodigal child, no matter how far off in the distance he or she may be!

### Schedule of Major Events

- 8/3: First Saturday Holy Hour
- 8/9: Praise 'n Play Festival
- 8/11-17: Pine Hills Girls Camp
- 8/15: Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION  
Parish offices closed
- 8/23: Upper Room

For more information about these and other events, check the bulletin or go to [www.ctkcc.net](http://www.ctkcc.net).

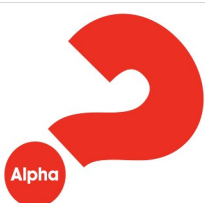
## MAJOR EVENTS—AUGUST 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	Aug 1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# Save the Dates!

### Fall 2019 Alpha!

Begins the week of Sept. 15  
Multiple dates, times, and locations  
Start praying now about who the Lord might want you to invite to a potentially life-changing experience through Alpha—or just come yourself! For more information and to sign up, go to [www.ctkcc.net/alpha](http://www.ctkcc.net/alpha). Questions? Contact Jessica at [alpha@ctkcc.net](mailto:alpha@ctkcc.net).



### Walking with Purpose

#### Women's Bible Study:

#### Opening Your Heart

Mondays starting Sept. 16  
This 22-lesson Bible study will take you on an exciting journey closer to the heart of God! For more information and to register, go to [ctkcc.net/opening-your-heart](http://ctkcc.net/opening-your-heart).



### Religious Education classes

Begin the week of Sept. 8  
We offer many great formation options for pre-schoolers through high schoolers! For more information and to register, go to [www.ctkcc.net/ctk-religious-education](http://www.ctkcc.net/ctk-religious-education).



Check future bulletins for more details about these and other great events!

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## Christ the King Catholic Church

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### Coming in future issues...

- Hospitality
- Vocations

Look for this and more in future issues of

## The Open Door

### Parish Staff

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We welcome your comments. Please send them to Theresa Hofer at [thofer@ckkcc.net](mailto:thofer@ckkcc.net).

*The Open Door* is the monthly newsletter of Christ the King Catholic Church.

I sense that the moment has come to  
commit all of the Church's energies to a  
new evangelization...

No believer in Christ, no institution of  
the Church can avoid this supreme duty:  
to proclaim Christ to all peoples.

Pope St. John Paul the Great  
*Redemptoris Missio*, #3

