

Please Let Me In!

YEAR OF FAITH

When Jesus calls out to us do we listen and respond to Him? Jesus knocks on the door of our hearts each and every day. What does Jesus want from us? He wants us to open our hearts to His love, because the more we love Jesus the more we strive to get to know Him. The more we get to know Jesus the more we want to please Him which leads us to realize that His will for our lives is really the road to true joy. This is what Pope Benedict is asking us to do during the Year of Faith: Get to know Jesus better and then respond to Him by living our faith all the time.

How can we get to know Jesus better?

- We can pray every day. Take time out of our busy lives to have a conversation with Jesus, remembering that a conversation requires both talking and listening. Building a true friendship with anyone, even Jesus, includes an open and honest sharing of ourselves in both word and action. We make ourselves vulnerable with our closest friends and they do the same with us. Jesus certainly made Himself vulnerable for us when He suffered and died for us! If we want to get to know Jesus then we have to listen to what He has to say to us. How does Jesus speak to us? He speaks to us in unlimited ways: through the people we meet each day, through the Scriptures, through nature, through our conscience, through our dreams, etc. We just need to pay attention, look, and listen.
- We can learn more about our faith. How do we do that? In his Apostolic Letter, *Porta fidei 9*, Pope Benedict says that “to rediscover the content of the faith that is professed, celebrated, lived and prayed, and to reflect on the act of faith, is a task that every believer must make his own, especially in the course of this Year.” Jesus founded the Catholic Church over two thousand years ago, so it is worth our time to learn more about it. We can read the Catechism. We can attend Bible studies and other classes offered by our parish or other trusted Catholic organizations. There are many trustworthy resources available to learn our faith: Encyclicals, Vatican II documents, CDs, DVDs, books, magazines, internet, Paul VI courses <http://archstl.org/paul6/page/course-catalog> etc.
- We can put our faith into action. In *Porta Fidei 10*, Pope Benedict XVI explains, “Faith, precisely because it is a free act, also demands social responsibility for what one believes. The Church on the day of Pentecost demonstrates with utter clarity this public dimension of believing and proclaiming one’s faith fearlessly to every person. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that makes us fit for mission and strengthens our witness, making it frank and courageous.” How do we do that? We can fully participate at Mass; treat every person with love and respect even when it is difficult; explain our faith to others; and defend our faith when necessary.

Pope Benedict has challenged us to truly open the door of our heart to Jesus. **Will you meet this challenge?**

Q What specific changes will I make in my life to live the Year of Faith?

Julie A. Bostick, M.T.S.

