

28 Ways to Sanctify, Evangelize and Catechize a Parish

by Reverend Francis J. Peffley
Pastor
Holy Trinity Catholic Church
Gainesville, VA 20155
www.holytrinityparish.net



My priestly background began at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary where I studied from 1986 to 1990. I graduated from Christendom College and settled in the diocese of Arlington, Virginia, for which I was ordained nineteen years ago. I served in several parishes before becoming founding pastor of the newly formed parish named the Church of the Holy Trinity in Gainesville VA.

We started with twenty acres of ground, entered the hectic world of fund raising, and eventually the church was built and is now up and running. Three hundred families made up the parish seven years ago, when Sunday Masses were held in a public high school, daily Mass in the local Benedictine Monastery, and the rectory was (and still is!) a private home in one of the neighborhood settlements. Eventually the parish grew, and just a year ago we had 1,500 registered families -- we are now blessed with 3,000! I've baptized over 1,200 babies in the last seven years and just told the deacon that it seems everyone in the parish is pregnant except him and me! We have 1,400 kids in CCD and Religious Ed. In our first year of the new church we did about fifty weddings and there are now twice as many weddings, funerals and baptisms.

It has been a wonderful blessing to be in this kind of parish situation; I've learned much I didn't think I'd ever need to know about building the body and soul of a parish, and being aware that each parish is unique and has its own particular set of needs and circumstances I would like to offer some practical suggestions on how to sanctify, evangelize, and catechize a parish.

Sanctifying the Parish

1. Eucharistic Adoration

Number one would be to start a Eucharistic Adoration Chapel. It will focus our people on the very center of the Catholic Faith, Jesus Christ, will strengthen their belief in the Real Presence, and get them to spend some time in silence and prayer. Eucharistic Adoration gives them an opportunity to do

spiritual reading, to discern a vocation, make reparation or influence them toward confession or deeper appreciation for the Sacraments. The Adoration schedule in my parish goes 140 hours a week, beginning 5 pm Sunday night to 9 am Saturday morning. We started our program by arranging for a priest from the Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament to preach at all the Masses, after which 700 signed up for a weekly holy hour. I believe this Holy Hour is a necessity for the conversion of a parish, county or territory. It is, as Bishop Sheen has said, a “radiation treatment” that burns away sin when time is spent before the Blessed Sacrament.

2. Have the Legion of Mary

Although the Legion of Mary is primarily known as a worldwide *apostolic* organization, its main purpose is *sanctification* – first, of its members and second, of the society and environment in which it works. The Legion offers those who give themselves to it a system of spiritual formation based on St. Louis de Montfort’s “True Devotion to Mary”, Our Lady’s Spiritual Motherhood, and the Mystical Body of Christ.

I have been involved with the Legion since I was ten years old, moving up through the Juniors and Intermediates and on to the young adult level of membership. I am now spiritual director of eight praesidia in my parish: six for adults and two for younger and older kids, all following the same rule of spirituality and apostolic discipline which has produced many unknown saints (and known martyrs) in its history, and potentially canonized ones today. For the Church has accepted this sanctifying charism of the Legion by recognizing three of its members as candidates for Beatification: Venerable Edel Quinn, Legion Envoy to Africa, and Servants of God Alphie Lambe, Legion Envoy to South America and Legion founder Frank Duff. I have found the sanctifying presence of the Legion in the parish to be an absolute necessity (I will deal with the apostolic value of the Legion in the section on “Evangelization of the Parish”).

3. Inaugurate a Weekly Novena

The Miraculous Medal Perpetual Novena I find to be a wonderful element of spiritual uplift for the parish. Usually held on Monday evenings, ours is on Friday morning after the 9:00 a. m. Mass, since Friday is our biggest day for daily Mass. About 300 attend, thanks to the presence of homeschoolers and many senior citizens. Most stay for the Novena which is offered for returns to the sacraments, healings, conversions, and miracles of grace.

4. Confession: Good of the Soul – of the Parish!

Our weekly Confession times are: every Thursday evening, every Friday morning after 9:00 a.m. Mass, and of course, Saturday afternoons for an hour and a half (where two or three priests are kept busy the entire time) and during Lent on Fridays after Stations of the Cross. We also feature Confession

during the 12 to 3 period on Good Friday afternoon; also on Holy Saturday with extra priests assisting. I find that if this sacrament is promoted the people will come; if we sit in the confessional, encourage Confession, and talk about Confession, they will come.

5. The Confessional as Pharmacy

I have placed a small bookcase in my confessional, equipped with quantities of about seventy different prayer and picture holy cards and other useful leaflets; these are my “prescriptions” based on the penitent’s confession. In addition to the needed counseling, and the “Three Hail Marys and Three Our Fathers,” I give an appropriate card to match the problem or situation of the soul. When I hear of stress, scruples, anxiety, they receive a tangible help for that condition; when I’ve heard contraception I give Natural Family Planning information; with abortion, Project Rachel literature.

The space behind my screen could be considered a medicine chest. When the contractors were installing the confessionals I made sure the screen had room at the bottom for passing out my “pills”; these include copies of the Act of Contrition to help those who can’t remember it, and also a Guide to Confession for those returning after a long absence, which is very much appreciated by them. I have been so blessed in my priesthood to have had the privilege, almost weekly, of hearing the confessions of people five, ten, forty years away. By the way, for the kids, it becomes not just a routine confession – they love the holy cards! (I get my supply from Autom Company for about a nickel a card).

6. Mini “Retreats” and Missions

We have found it beneficial to the spiritual life of the parish to hold “Half-days of Recollection” either mornings or evenings, separately for men or women. We bring in priests from various Religious Orders and Congregations such as Opus Dei who offer these services. They give a talk, hear confessions and give spiritual direction when needed. This could also be held for CCD teachers, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Lectors, etc.

Lent is a perfect time for a Parish Retreat or “Mission”, when the parochial mind is focused on spiritual things like prayer and sacrifice. It’s a help to have a guest priest for a week emphasizing the truths of the Catholic Faith in the context of Lenten holiness. Our schedule for this is for the priest to say the daily morning Mass, hear confessions for about an hour after Mass and again around 5:30 in the afternoon. He holds a Holy Hour in the evening and gives a talk and Benediction with confessions following. He preaches at all the weekend Masses as well. We also arrange for an annual Fall Mission in October or November following the same routine, but do a mailing and advertize in the local newspaper; it’s a great way to reach people who may want to go to a priest outside their own parish.

7. Sacramentalize the Flock

Give out sacramentals, order them by the thousand, and give them to every parishioner. In November, around the feast day, give the Miraculous Medal; in July, in honor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, give the Brown Scapular, and in October, a Rosary. We do this every three or four years. We know that by promoting these items we are promoting the flow of Actual Grace, as well as with Holy Water, which can be made available in a dispenser for people to take home, or the devotional use of votive candles before the statues. And with regard to statues, at each one of ours the parishioners find a stack of holy cards to match the saint. These have to be replenished every few weeks. In this connection, a small, parish Gift Shop would be a good way to make available to our people not only the sacramentals mentioned but also books on the lives of the saints, prayer books, crucifixes, etc., to extend the Catholic influence deeper into the home.

Evangelizing the Parish

8. Use the “Pastor’s Sheepdogs”

I’m very blessed to have eight groups of the Legion of Mary in my parish. I could use ten -- I could use twenty! As I have already mentioned, six are for adults and two for kids. Four are mixed groups of men and women, one is Spanish, and one is made up of “Moms” who bring their babies and their little kids. The Moms, the junior and the high school groups all meet at the same time, so I am able to get around to each of the meetings. I am guided by a principle of Father Robert Bradshaw, a Legion priest who died evangelizing in Siberia. He said, “A priest should do the work of a hundred men a day – but use a hundred men to do it!” That has been my goal wherever possible: to involve and delegate, not to do anything I can get someone else to do. So the adult Legion of Mary goes door-to-door throughout the parish for their pastor! It takes from a year to two years to knock on each of the 30,000 doors in the parish boundaries. This is in addition to all the other things I like to see being done: Pilgrim Virgin Statue program, Sacred Heart Enthronements, welcoming new parishioners. When it’s a not-at-home call a packet is left containing a parish bulletin, information about the church and a letter from me. Many people will show up merely because of the packet left at their door. It’s wonderful to see!

During the summer, the legionaries knocked on the door of a Catholic man away from the church for forty years; he cried when he tried to talk to them and said, “Jesus sent you to me!” He was dying of stage four lung cancer. I saw him a few days later, heard his beautiful confession and anointed him. His wife, a Baptist, would bring him to Sunday Mass. He lasted a peaceful six months and often expressed his gratitude to the Legion for having brought him back.

On another occasion the legionaries came across a family with three lovely unbaptised children ages two, four and six. Both parents were Catholic. We got the girls baptized, both parents attended

RCIA, were confirmed and married in the Church and were teaching CCD the year after! Being shepherd of so large a flock, I affectionately call my legionaries the “Pastor’s Sheepdogs”, because they go about rounding up the lost sheep of the fold!

9. Try “Phonelization!”

I can vouch for the fact that it is not easy to call every parishioner on his or her birthday! When I started using this evangelizing tool the parish was small, and I made only half a dozen calls a day. Now it’s thirty to forty! It involves about a minute to speak to the person or leave a message, but if you’re willing to do it, it is well worth the time! You’ll hear things like. ”Father, I’ve been a Catholic for seventy years and no priest has ever called me on my birthday!”, or “Father, your birthday call got us back to Church – we hadn’t gone for months!” Although my main motive is evangelization, I look on it as an act of kindness or thoughtfulness to people I may not often see in person. (I also call the non-Catholic spouses of registered families who have helped with RCIA.) One break is in the fact that, about seventy percent of the time, no one answers, so the message takes much less time than talking in person!

10. The Postal Approach

If someone is not Catholic in the family, a personal letter from me is sent to them, as well as to the non-Catholic spouse of a Catholic parishioner. I personally sign about 500 letters a year, expressing how pleased we are with their presence in the parish and inviting them to various events and activities, and mentioning other items the Catholic spouse might be interested in. We’ve been very blessed to have had a good number of converts in the last seven years, averaging thirty. This year, thanks be to God, we had forty, in addition to twenty-five Catholics getting confirmed or receiving First Communion.

Another letter we send is to every parishioner before Christmas and Easter, supplying them with the Mass and Confession schedule. And a third letter is sent when someone is newly registered. The first thing they receive from the parish is a welcome letter signed by the pastor, *with no collection envelopes enclosed*. The envelopes come a few weeks later. We must try to rid the American parish of the idea that the first thing you get when you register in a parish is envelopes! (It also helps to have friendly and personable receptionists who project a good “first impression” of the parish!)

11. The “Sunday Catholic” Apostolate

It’s our Sunday homily. It’s really our one chance to reach all the “Sunday Catholics”, to make use of that one collective moment to educate, motivate, and inspire them, and to help them move their will to be “Weekday Catholics” as well. I think it is a great, providential opportunity given to us priests, the one chance to influence them while they are doing the only thing they do for God each week. I am reminded of the ditty: *Paddy Reilly went to Church / He never missed a Sunday / But Paddy Reilly went*

to Hell / For what he did on Monday! Let us pray our “Sunday Catholics” will become “Weekday Catholics” as well!

12. Entrées and Evangelization

Marriage preparation meetings are a great time to evangelize couples. I meet with every couple about four times and do about forty weddings a year; that’s 160 meetings! It’s not that bad, though, since I do most of my marriage prep in restaurants! Saturday and Sunday lunch is a great time to meet couples. This system leaves most of my weeknights free to attend other meetings and do other things.

I usually do back to back lunches with the couples, scheduling one for 11:30 a.m. and have a salad while they have lunch; the next couple comes at 12:30 or 1:00 and I have my entrée with them. If I happen to have another couple, I get dessert. I evangelize by giving them CDs, miraculous medals, the pictures of the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart, and lots of handouts. By the way, every couple getting married at Holy Trinity has to take the full Natural Family Planning course; it’s not an option. When one of them is not a Catholic, I try to recruit for RCIA and our Young Adults meetings. We’ve had a good number of converts with this approach.

13. The Welcome Table

We equip our large vestibule with friendly greeters, smiling, accommodating ushers and a Welcome Table. Some of my legionaries are assigned to be on duty before and after Mass where they can converse with the parishioners, answer questions about the parish, give people registration packets or recruit for parish organizations. At the table people will find rosaries, and leaflets on how to pray the rosary, literature and holy cards. Just recently one of the legionaries called my attention to a young woman who, it was learned in conversation, was away from the Church for ten years. While chatting with her she asked if I had some time. I do have some time between Masses, so we walked down to my office where she made a beautiful confession. I gave her literature about the parish and encouraged her to look into our organizations; the following week she appeared in the choir. It was a wonderful experience! I thank God and Our Lady for these marvelous graces! With the very first plans for this church I insisted on a very large vestibule where people can meet each other and where there is room for evangelization around the Welcome Table.

14. Mass Management

Before and after Mass, on Sundays and weekdays, it’s very beneficial for a priest to just “hang out” in the vestibule. Brian Tracy calls it MBWA, *Management by Wandering Around*. It’s a great idea; to just socialize, to just be present, to move among the people or merely stand and greet them as they come and go. So many souls are attracted to the Church, or come back to God, or are affirmed in

their love and trust for the priesthood, when they can expect, on coming to Mass, to meet a friendly, unrushed priest who's willing to say hello and chat, and introduce his parishioners to one another.

This practice helps the priest, too, in several ways. For one, the parishioner becomes more than a name in the files, but a person with a name to be used personally, week after week. Also, names are more easily remembered, and the priest will notice how pleased people are when they are greeted by name. Many of them become *his* people, his workers, his friends.

And believe it or not, having coffee and donuts after Mass is great for evangelization, especially when done in the same spirit as "hanging out" in the vestibule. Many a Catholic, (who may have once been Protestant) will seek that Christian fellowship and friendship in the parish, which in many parishes is not easily found; and we do want people to stick around and not rush out all at one time. When half a congregation stays for donuts and they meander, munch and meet each other, they get to know each other and feel connected. It's a great thing!

15. Go For Groups . . .

I can't emphasize enough the need to get as many parishioners as possible involved in parish life. These groups *make* parish life! We must especially provide for the young adults with some kind of organization; it is so important for both married couples and single adults. In addition to good social events our Young Adults hold the Holy Hour, conduct Scripture Study, etc. The monthly Praise and Worship Holy Hour is run by my graduates from Steubenville College on Sunday nights from 6:30 to 7:30. The lights are dimmed throughout the church, the monstrance is well lit, and we hear confessions during that time. It is very well attended, with hundreds coming from different parts of the diocese. Afterwards the young adults go out for a bite to eat. Last Sunday night we had twenty young adults at IHOP for dinner and a month before that thirty young adults went out to Chili's. This group is a good resource for helping with parish activities and is a seed-bed for future converts.

And we can't forget or neglect groups for the men, the moms, the seniors. I find ours to be fantastic! The men's group meets once a month, the moms group meets once a month, the seniors meet once a month. These groups do not involve big time commitments, but they go on regularly and happily.

16. . . . and More Groups

By now I'm sure you realize my goal as pastor is to start as many organizations as I can. At last count we had 65. Do I go to all of them? No. Do I delegate to the laity? Absolutely! The more there are, the more life there is around us, the more wholesome activities are available *in the parish* for the non-participants to discover. The Knights of Columbus was one of the first things I started. We have both the Good Samaritans and the St. Vincent DePaul Society that help the needy. They work very well;

no money is given out from the parish office or on church property but about \$45,000 worth of aid was given out by them to needy families: gas bills, electric bills, etc. With these worsening times, the need seems even greater than before. We also have the Cyrenians who do bereavement meals, the Pro-Life Group that prays at the abortion clinic; there's actually a Sewing Committee who make baptismal garments and vestments. It's wonderful what they do. Another special group is for Altar Boys; we have over 200 of them! There will usually be between 12 to 25 altar boys serving at each of my Sunday Masses. It's fantastic; I love it! Is all this overwhelming? I think I may probably have more time for myself than any priest in the diocese!

17. Catch Them in a Web

I'm sure every pastor in today's world realizes the value of the Internet. Our website was designed by a convert who came into the church last year. We always had what I thought was a pretty good website, but with her redesigning ability it came out great. Every parish should have one! Evangelization is not the same without it! It has been especially helpful with the sections on RCIA, Deepen Your Faith, photos of the church, the Church Calendar, and listings of our many Ministries. I invite you to check it out. (www.holytrinityparish.net)

18. Record and Reach Out

With our modern yet simple technology, the parishioners can be provided with your homilies and talks simply by using a digital recorder to put them on the website. For example, Holy Trinity parishioners – and others – can click on and listen to my Sunday and daily homilies -- or those of Palm Sunday, Easter or Christmas -- which are recorded and put on the website in a day or two. The shut-ins, the home bound, and anyone around the country can listen and be evangelized.

19. “Advangelizing”

Convince your parish to get a car magnet. There's nothing like it for keeping the Catholic name in the public eye. We ordered 5,000 and gave them out after the Christmas Masses as a Christmas gift to the parishioners. The magnet is a ten inch oval, yellow-gold on dark blue, proclaiming: “Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Gainesville, VA” and the website address. They show up everywhere. In the neighborhood where I live I've seen them on cars of people I didn't know were my parishioners! When I see this I can comfortably go up and say hello or knock on their door. It creates a nice connection as well among the other neighbors who see the magnets displayed. The magnets were reported as being seen in Richmond, Va. and Washington, DC. Some call it advertizing – some call it evangelizing; I call it “Advangelizing”!

Another area in which to advangelize the Church is in the local secular newspapers. So many people come to our church because we advertise our Mass and confession schedule. Another idea would

be to post a welcome home sign on the church property; something like “Welcome home inactive Catholics; rediscover your Church.”

Catechizing the Parish

20. The Baptismal Class

At the Baptismal class I teach every month, the participants receive a binder that we put together containing good articles about Baptism, messages for the Godparents and literature on such topics as *Why go to Mass on Sunday*, *Why Go To Confession*, *Examination of Conscience*, *Natural Family Planning*, etc. Many of our couples have come back to the Church through our Baptismal class. Parents can be caught and taught through their kids – their kids’ Baptism, their kids’ First Confession and First Communion, and Confirmation. We want to use these sacramental opportunities to bring people back to the Faith. They are always given Immaculate and Sacred Heart plaques as a gift at the Baptismal class. They get a rosary and a Miraculous Medal. And if they are not married in the Church we get their information and I, or the other priests or deacon, will work with them to get their marriage validated.

21. The Trifold Library

To be a catechizing parish, a library is a must -- not just the usual library of books, but in today’s world, a library of DVDs and videos and CD audio books. We have over five thousand volumes of donated books in our library, all solid, orthodox Catholic books. The video and audio sections are nicely building up with good family and Catholic DVDs, and it’s great to see parents and others coming in after Mass and signing out this worthwhile material, offsetting, hopefully, the dominance of secular influence. The CDs seem to get a lot of interest since many of our parishioners have long commutes to work and can listen in the car.

22. The Pamphlet Rack

A familiar sight for years in the vestibules of many Catholic churches was the Pamphlet Rack. I remember stopping and perusing through the small selection of titles as a young Catholic. The need for these today is greater than ever, and I recommend some space be made for these “impulse items” for people to pick up after Masses, or before and after Confession or while gathering in the vestibule. Our Sunday Visitor is one of our sources, with attractive covers and “Take Me and Read” titles. The Pamphlet Rack is the perfect place for the EWTN television schedule, which are free for the asking. Get 2,000 copies to start! They come every two months. Needless to say, the need for supplying information on decent TV programming is paramount in the widespread and ever-present video world. By the way, once a year we invite the Daughters of St. Paul or others to set up a display for our parishioners, to acquaint them with what good Catholic Books are available to them.

23. Formational Inserts

Frequent inserts in the parish bulletin can be a constant way of catechizing the parish. In anticipation of a recruiting drive, I included *Ten Reasons to Join the Legion of Mary* on the back, listing the meeting times of our eight groups. We have used articles like *How Old is Your Church?*, *Why Make a Holy Hour*, *Why Not Women Priests?*, *Why Celibacy for Priests?* Around Christmas and Easter, and at the beginning of Lent and Advent, The Guide to Confession is inserted. Educational items on the vestments or the sacred vessels can be used. These are all wonderful handouts and can show results. A few weeks back the inserts were: *Origins of the Catholic Faith*, *The Four Marks of the Church*, *The Timeline of Christianity*. On Sunday after Mass a man came up to me and said, “Father, this is great; just this week I was talking to my non-Catholic neighbor about when his church and the Catholic Church began, and lo and behold! the article shows up in this week’s bulletin!”

24. The Bulletin as Evangelizer

Of itself, the bulletin can more than catechize; it can be an aid to evangelization as well. Space given to “The Pastor’s Corner” or “From the Desk of the Pastor” can be most beneficial. I try to get something humorous or inspirational – perhaps quotes from the saints – to get attention to the lesson I want to give. A more important and serious use of the bulletin is to touch on the subject of Annulments and getting marriages blessed. We know many people go to Communion without realizing their marriage is invalid. Some enlightening item with encouraging words like “Please feel free to talk to your priest or deacon about the Annulment process” does get results.

25. E-mail, Ad-mail

These days, the parish registration form is not complete without the E-mail address if we want to catechize our people. It is usually thorough enough to get the information needed – were they married in the Catholic Church, their birthdays, are the kids baptized, in CCD, non-Catholics interested in RCIA, what language spoken at home, anyone in need of seeing a priest – but to complete the form we should get as many E-mail addresses as possible. The weekly E-mail is our best advertising tool for highlighting guest speakers, activities and events; it is like a personal invitation to participate in parish life.

26. Invite Some Guests

Nothing perks up parish life like occasional guest speakers like Scott Hahn, Christopher West, or Father Benedict Groeschel. For Pro-life emphasis there’s Father Tom Eithewer of Human Life International or the priests who promote Eucharistic Adoration; and there are many Christian and Catholic artists available for concerts with a message for our youth. Recently one of our diocesan

priests held a seminar on praying the Liturgy of the Hours. It was well attended. Oftentimes these speakers are engaged to speak at the weekday and Sunday Masses.

Also available is a Natural Family Planning teaching couple that can offer NFP planning classes at least three times a year – and we have a beautiful handout that goes in the bulletin each time they are about to start a class.

27. Open for Discussion

The Legion of Mary's discussion group called "The Patricians" can have a remarkable effect on the parish. It is great adult education. We average about 40 people a month, but we've had as high as 100 attend. Some topics have been *The Meaning of Suffering, Angels and Demons, What Does the Church Teach about Miracles or How to Respond to the DaVinci Code*. This is an all laity discussion; monitored by the priest who gives his talk towards the end, based on the ideas (and heresies!) generated during the session. The topics are often not fully covered, so that the "Patricians" find themselves discussing them on their own on other occasions.

My other recommendation for monthly adult education is the Book of the Month discussion, based on good Catholic books that are ordered and put on sale in the gift shop. Titles range from biographies of saints and famous laypersons to theology and spiritual reading categories. About 15 to 20 attend, and there is usually much enriching discussion.

28. CD or Not CD – No Question!

When it comes to catechizing, there is no better tool than the spoken CD. At Christmas or Easter we will give a gift of a free CD on some topic on the Faith to all the parishioners. We have to reach those "Christmas and Easter Catholics" somehow! It has been a Scott Hahn or Father Corapi conversion tape, a CD on how to pray the rosary or Father Larry Richards on the Mass or on Confession. In fact, this past Palm Sunday we gave out 3,000 copies of the one on Confession. Hopefully some will listen to it during Holy Week and come back to confession. Last Christmas we gave out the Seven Secrets of the Eucharist. There's no question that the CD is the right tool for this technical age.

I recommend the *Catholic Lighthouse CDs*. With about 70 different titles and a free CD stand, it's a great buy. The Mary Foundation is another economical place for CDs; if you buy 2 or 3 thousand copies they're only .50 each. Left in the vestibule, people will pick them up and usually leave a donation. But if they don't, who cares! We're interested in souls. If we get a convert by their listening to Scott Hahn or Father Corapi, or if a lapsed Catholic comes back, we'll get our money back in the collection!

About the Author

Father Peffley was born March 16, 1963 in Norristown, Pennsylvania to William and Mary Peffley. He grew up with two sisters, Edel and Natia. He graduated Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts in Theology. Father Peffley attended Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland where he received his priestly formation and Master of Divinity and Master of Arts Degrees. He was ordained to the Catholic Priesthood on May 19, 1990. Father Peffley has been assigned to: St. Andrew the Apostle, Clifton; Our Lady of Angels, Woodbridge, St. Mary's, Fredricksburg; and St Louis, Alexandria. In June 2001, he was named Administrator of the newly formed parish of Holy Trinity in Bristow/Gainesville, Virginia and is currently the Pastor.

In addition to his parish duties, Father Peffley is especially active with the parish young adult ministry, retreat work, Catholic apologetics, and evangelization. He serves as the Diocesan Spiritual Director for the Legion of Mary, an apostolic organization in which he has been a member for over 37 years. For the past nine years he has also been a Chaplain for the Knights of Columbus councils in each parish in which he has served. Father Peffley's interests include: juggling fire torches and machetes, golf, scuba diving, bowling, billiards, and baseball card collecting.

Father Peffley has written numerous religious articles which have appeared in a variety of publications including Homiletic and Pastoral Review, Queen Magazine, Maria Legionis, Lay Witness, and the Arlington Catholic Herald. He has recorded over two hundred audio tapes on Spirituality, the Saints, Apologetics, Evangelization, and the Family.

"I believe my vocation was formed in three ways:

- The example and inspiration which I received from my family;*
- The spiritual and academic formation I received at Christendom College; and*
- My involvement in the Legion of Mary."*