

In the Year of Faith, we are all called to renew and rediscover our faith. At the last meeting I mentioned St. Augustine, who says that believers “strengthen themselves by believing.” *Porta Fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI’s letter initiating the Year of Faith, says “Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy. It makes us fruitful, because it expands our hearts in hope and enables us to bear life-giving witness: indeed, it opens the hearts and minds of those who listen to respond to the Lord’s invitation to adhere to his word and become his disciples.” So the way we need to work toward renewal of faith in our lives is to live our faith more fully in all aspects of our lives.

This idea of living out faith can be kind of confusing. The thought that jumps to my head first is an extreme of living faith, something that is more properly reserved for a priest or other clergy and people like that; something that doesn’t quite involve me in my life. However, after reading a little more on the Vatican’s and the Catholic Apostolate Center’s websites dedicated to the Year of Faith, I have learned that this is not the truth at all. Although there are specific parts of the year that have more to do with the hierarchy of the Church, there are plenty of things that lay people like you or I can do to live out our faith.

Probably the most obvious way to live out faith, as well as the easiest, is through prayer. By praying, we practice our faith and grow stronger in our relationship with God. Prayer can be as simple as a short prayer before taking a test in your hardest class or can as formal as attending adoration. One of the unique things about our university is that it affords us an almost limitless amount of possibilities for prayer. There are many masses and prayer services held on campus throughout the week, including one put on by our council on Mondays at 5:10, followed by a rosary in Caldwell Chapel. Mass especially is a great way to practice faith because, through participation in the Eucharist, we are actively proclaiming and renewing our faith.

Another strong way to live out faith is through charity. Charity does not always have to be as dramatic as building houses for poor children in Ethiopia. There are many simple and just as necessary forms of charity that we can all take part in. Our council has many great service events coming up, and the rest of campus has a lot of other opportunities for charity that we can all take part in. I know we all enjoy reading emails from Joe McQuarrie about pregnant homeless women and a vengeful Liam Neeson, but we really need to understand the reason behind the service events or we will not grow from them. There is no reason not to have fun doing a service event with a bunch of Knights, but why do the service? We are called to charity as a means of expressing and growing and renewing our faith in God and in the Church. Unless we open ourselves up to that type of growth, charity has not helped us live our faith.

In their Pastoral Recommendations for the Year of Faith, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith says that “Faith is both a personal and a communal act: it is a gift from God that is lived in the communion of the Church and must be communicated to the world.” As Knights of Columbus, we have all taken a large first step to living our faith. This step, however, is not enough. We need more than just the title; we need to truly live our lives according to our faith both in the ways mentioned already, and the many ways not mentioned. We all need to do our part in the Year of Faith.