



# THE SHINING SON

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November 2019

PETERSTOWN TEC

FATHER GIFFORD

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST-

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“Jesus, Jesus. Can I tell you how I feel? You have given me Your Spirit. I love you so.”

One of the highlights of the last TEC weekend for me was in the moment of praying these words together at the embrazzo. It was a moment of peace, of prayer, of gratitude. It was all of this and more in the present moment . But, it was also a moment of recollection of how this became my experience on so many TEC weekends when I was a youth. To explain this, let me paint a picture for you. Back in the day (I love saying that), my friends and I would spend a good chunk of every TEC weekend down at the TEC Center, doing wheat in many and varied ways (helping in the kitchen, praying in the chapel, writing letters, etc.). Regardless of whether we were on team or wheat team, if we were able (and we often went out of our way to make ourselves available), we spent at least some time down there gathering wheat, on any given TEC weekend. It was just what we did and we loved it. But, it was more than just a habit of how we spent our time. It wasn't just about community and recreation. It was about encountering the Lord, not just one another. It was both wheat (personal sacrifice offered to the Lord for the good of the team and candidates) and part of our own personal growth. We grew a lot through that experience. Many of my friends from TEC are now serving the Lord in big ways. We have teachers of religion, devoted husbands, wives, mothers and fathers, a handful of full-time missionaries, some religious sisters and brothers, and a few of us are priests. Really spending time allowing TEC to become an opportunity for growth was a big part of what led to answering these calls of the Lord in our adult lives. I previously promised that I would gradually give you more of the specific lessons that I learned from my TEC experience as a youth. One of the most important lessons I learned was this.

TEC helped me learn how to pray . What do I mean by that? Some of my other Christian friends would talk to me about their “quiet time” with the Lord, but I had very little real experience with that. Until I did my first wheat team. We had to learn to embrace

## FATHER GIFFORD CONTINUED

quiet time in the chapel. Thankfully, we had some great leaders who really tried to help us learn to embrace it. Praying for a speaker during their talk? Turn your gaze toward the Lord, and pray that the candidates would turn theirs toward Him as well. Speak to Him. Listen to Him. Rest with Him, even in the silence, or even amidst distractions that can't be avoided. Get stranded in the chapel, because of a sudden schedule change? Then, enjoy that extra time with the Lord and offer it for the candidates. And oh, boy, was it awkward and uncomfortable at first! But, I learned to love it and even to prioritize it in my life (which is a constant challenge, in the busyness of life).

Truthfully, we have plenty of obstacles to this at TEC. We are not there to listen to the talk through the wall, but it's hard not to be distracted by it and even to want to listen. We have a lot to do throughout the weekend and might have things we need to briefly talk about. Someone might have concerns on their mind that might even lead to a kind of holy conversation with another in the chapel, in which the Lord is drawing them toward Himself. We should strive to keep these things to a minimum, when they are in our control and to accept what is not in our control, offering our perseverance in prayer to the Lord.

But, back to my story. The chapel was the main place that I learned to pray at TEC, but it overflowed out beyond. I don't remember when it happened or how many TEC weekends went by for me before it happened, but I do remember rather vividly the first time that it occurred to me at the embrazzo that, rather than simply waiting for the next hug, in between people, I should just pay attention to the words we are singing. So, I did. And my eyes naturally turned toward Our Lord in the Tabernacle and I would often lean back and rest my head on the wall, like St. John resting his head on the breast of Christ. It became a cherished moment of the weekend, which filled me with the love of Christ, which I could then pass on to the next candidate or team member. But I was able to pass it on because I first turned my gaze to Him and let Him fill me. At the end of a long weekend - whether I had been down at TEC for one meal or less or the whole weekend - it was a beautiful moment of simply turning my heart toward Him in gratitude and praise. May we have many such moments at TEC, that we may "Keep Coming Back" to encounter Jesus Christ.

## DEACON DAN

We just finished the Boys #215 TEC weekend last November 2-4 & the weekend went really well. We had 8 candidates & we are praying for our new TECites that the Holy Spirit touched their hearts in many new ways.

Thank you to Rhodes Garland for being our Leader and to his team. All of you did a great job. The reflections were really good & again we pray that they touched our candidates.

Joanie Morse is our leader for the upcoming Girls TEC #216 weekend, December 7-9. We have already started our team meetings. Please pray for our team & candidates for this weekend.

Then in February, we have another Boys weekend. Please think about and pray ahead of time if you as a teen or an adult would like to be a part of this Boys TEC #217, which is February 22-24. Everyone is invited! We need your help to grow our TEC program & for all of us to grow closer to Jesus.

Have a Blessed Thanksgiving with your family & don't eat too much.

God Bless,  
Dcn. Dan O'Connor

"Faith is to believe what you do not see. The Reward of Faith is to see what you believe." St. Augustine

## WELCOME NEW TECITES

### WELCOME NEW TECITES TEAM #215-

Isac Alvarado, Tim Daluga, Griffen Heuser, Matthew Liebhart, Nick Mattern, Jonathan Schmidt, Peyton Williams, and Isaac Wujek were able to come to Peterstown November 2nd-4th and participate in the TEC #215 weekend. The Peterstown TEC Community would like to welcome you all and hope you remain close to Christ. We hope you become an active member of the TEC Community by serving Christ and others, "keep coming back" and being a part of the next Boys' TEC by filling out a team application and sending it in, coming and participating in the next Hoot Mass on Dec. 8th (as we celebrate Mass for TEC#216). CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU and all of us to spread Christ's love for all!

## LEAD US LORD

We have experienced the first couple of inches of snow already for this season and we are only a little over half way through November! I enjoy snow and winter but not this early! We had like maybe, two weeks of fall weather? I anticipate what is to come for us this winter. Like we have any control over it? The words that keep going through my mind are, “Winter is Coming”! Yes, the motto many are familiar with from “Game of Thrones”.

I was not really “into” this book series or show on television but I do know that this was the motto of House Stark and the meaning behind these words is one of warning and vigilance.

Another meaning of this motto in an even deeper sense according to George R.R. Martin, “it more generally expresses the sentiment that there are always dark periods in each of our lives, and even if things are good now (“summer”), we must always be ready for a dark period when events turn against us (“winter”).”

This same meaning can be found in Richard of the House of York’s opening line in Shakespeare’s Richard III, “Now is the Winter of our Discontent...”

The Latin term “Memento Mori” (“remember that you will die”), is the ultimate step that goes beyond “winter”. Memento Mori is the Christian spiritual reflection on one’s mortality. It reminds one of the passing, nature’s way of this world which ultimately, should mean nothing to us. Death is the fulfillment of life. It is the reason why we were born; it is why we are called mortals. A Christian who has thought seriously about his life should have no serious fear of death. “The Christian who unites his own death to that of Jesus views it as a step towards him and an entrance into everlasting life.” (CCC 1020)

The Church dedicates the month of November to those who have passed before us – it’s not just the first two days. As we pray for those who have left us to whatever awaits them, we think about our own demise. God knows the time of our death and our ultimate fate. That is why we need His guidance and protection as we advance towards our unknown future. “Winter is coming!” We ask Him for mercy. He gives it to us if we show mercy to others. He gives us His love. In return He asks that we love others as we love ourselves. We can do this by loving Jesus and His Mother and bringing them into our lives.

Death is a part of us and our Faith. It is too important to ignore it. If saints are the only people in Heaven, exactly what are we doing to make sure we make it to that end? We need to be vigilant... “Winter is Coming”.

-Lead us Lord-

## **TEC TEAM #216**

The current Girls' TEC #216 Team have been meeting the past couple of weeks on Wednesday evenings to prepare for the upcoming Girls' TEC #216 Weekend Dec. 7th-9th here at Peterstown. Joanie Morse is the Lay Leader with Colleen Yucus and Mary Ann Hocking serving as the Assistant Leaders.

The Weekend Spiritual Advisor is Fr. Augustine Kassa, SMA. Deacon Dan O'Connor is the Peterstown TEC Director with Colleen Harmon and Jim Hoscheid as Assistant TEC Directors. Other team members include: Anna Bokus, Madison Brown, Diane Carlone, Kris Klieber, Irene Milligan, Isabella Nanez, Natalie Orozco, Regina Scarpaci, Brian Sherman, Rachael Sherman, Margaret Vaessen, Elaina Wamhoff, and Lexi Wittenauer.

Please keep these team members and the candidates that will be with us on the upcoming TEC weekend in your daily prayers. Do some "WHEAT" for them and offer it up to God. (An act of "Wheat" is a sacrifice done prayerfully) THANK YOU!!

## **THANK YOU!!**

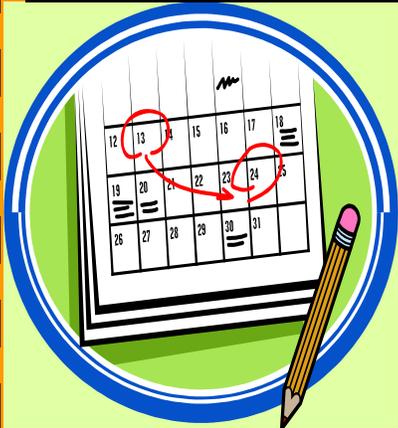
Thank you to the TECites from TEC #214 for coming on Monday of the TEC #215 to help clean. Elaina Wamhoff, Jyll Pozzi, Steve Harmon, and Kim Santman. Peterstown TEC does need volunteers to come, help with vacuuming, dusting, putting things away from the TEC Weekend, washing blackboards, and re-setting tables and chairs in the upper sleeping room. We always aim to be done by 5:30. TEC does not want to have to pay a cleaning service to do this job when TEC is capable with a few more volunteers. Please make the extra effort to show up around 4:15 - 4:30ish and help do this extra necessary task on Monday of the TEC Weekend. Thank You!

## **HOOT HELP WANTED!**

If you or a combination of you and some other TECite friends would like to provide an "Act of Wheat" for the upcoming Hoot on Dec. 8th, contact Dria Kuntz (815) 830-7825 or Anthony Schneider (815) 303-8233. Let them know that they need to save a spot for your "WHEAT"!

# IMPORTANT DATES

**CLIP AND SAVE  
IMPORTANT  
DATES**



Please make sure to mark your calendar so that you don't miss out on all the fun we have at the TEC Hilton, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**Mon. Nov. 25th-**

Peterstown TEC Council Meeting 6:00 p.m.  
4th TEC #216 Team Meeting 7:00 p.m.

**Thu. Nov. 28th-**

Thanksgiving

**Dec. 7th – 9th-**

Girls TEC #216 Girls Weekend

**Sun. Dec. 15th-**

Follow-Up 5:30 p.m. in the Lounge

**Wed. Dec. 25th-**

Christmas

**Wed. Jan. 22nd-**

1st TEC #217 Team Meeting 6:30 p.m.

**Feb. 22nd – 24th-**

Boys TEC #217 Weekend

**April 4th –6th-**

Girls TEC Weekend #218

Peterstown TEC Program  
1307 Henry St.  
Peru, Il 61354

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED

**KEEP PRAYING: CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU**

Pray for the team of TEC#216 as they prepare for the girls TEC weekend to be held December 7-9.

Pray for all TECites and their families who are suffering from illness, loss of jobs, and other stressors of life. May God grace them with his healing touch and give their caregivers strength and faith.

Remember all prayer requests may also be submitted on the Peterstown TEC website at <https://www.peterstowntec.com>.

**PRAYER  
REQUESTS**

