

## **RAMPING UP FOR THE YEAR OF ST. PAUL**

Folks know by now that Pope Benedict XVI has declared a special “Year of St. Paul” which will formally open on 28 June of this year (the Vigil of the Solemnity of Ss. Peter & Paul) and end on the Solemnity itself in 2009.

This is a wonderful context for coming to know the writings of the “Apostle to the Gentiles” more intimately: even the writings in which he expresses himself with anger, frustration and disappointment, as well as those that show him in times of excitement, affection and joy. He was, after all, a real human being, and his writings make up the bulk of the New Testament.

July is a splendid time to begin an exploration of Paul, the man and the preacher/theologian. So be thinking about participating with me in the following ways:

On Tuesdays in July (8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>) beginning at 9:30 (roughly, after morning Mass) we will have Bible study for adults on “Themes in the First Letter to the Corinthians.” This is one of St. Paul’s earliest preserved letters, one of the longest, and one of the most important. Come and see aspects of his thought about Jesus and the Church. This will not be sequential, so if you miss one week you won’t be a “fish out of water.” Yes, there will be “homework”; no, there will be no charge.

Along with this series, on Wednesdays in July (9<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>), also beginning about 9:30 (roughly, after coffee & donuts) a series for our youth who are interested in learning: “The Life and Times of St. Paul the Apostle.” It will study his conversion, his missionary journeys and preaching, and his final journey to Rome. This, too, will be “thematic,” though there is a bit more of the sequential to this than for the adults. Still, teens can gain a great deal from the individual sessions even if they cannot make all four.

I hope this will whet folks’ appetites for more Bible study of this sort in the course of the Year of St. Paul. More details will be forthcoming a little closer to the time. For now, just begin to mark your calendars and be ready to join us.