

Even as we get older, we all have a job to do: Grow in faith and knowledge



One of my favorite movies growing up was the 1989 classic “Say Anything.” You might know it from the famous scene where John Cusack’s character, Lloyd Dobler, stands below his love interest’s bedroom window and holds a boombox over his head as it plays Peter Gabriel’s “In Your Eyes.” If you haven’t seen the movie, you should make plans to do so.

Anyway, there’s a scene in the film that I like even better – one that, I promise, is relevant to the topic of this column. Earlier in the movie, Lloyd is invited to dinner at his girlfriend’s house, and her father asks him about his plans for the future. He gives, in my opinion, one of the all-time great speeches in movie history: “I don’t want to sell anything, buy anything or process anything as a career. I don’t want to sell anything bought or processed, or buy anything sold or processed, or process anything sold, bought or processed, or repair anything sold, bought or processed. You know, as a career, I don’t want to do that.”

As a teenager, that resonated. I knew from a very early age what I wanted to do when I grew up, and it didn’t involve selling, buying or processing anything. My dad was a sportswriter, and I never seriously considered any other profession. I joined the high school newspaper as a sophomore, worked part-time during college at our city’s evening paper (back when there was such a thing), and moved to Florida at the tender age of 22 to pursue my first full-time writing job.

But God had other plans. After 10 months (and one marriage

proposal), I moved back to my hometown in Indiana and took a job as a copy editor on the sports desk of the city's morning paper. While I had converted to Catholicism years prior, toward the end of my nearly 14 years there, I started taking my faith a little more seriously. The more I leaned on God, the more desire I had to learn about his Church and what it teaches. It made me desire something more meaningful – more spiritually fulfilling – for my career.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I started working at Our Sunday Visitor in February 2014, and to use a sports metaphor, it didn't take long for me to realize that I was a rookie surrounded by all-stars. I could write headlines and edit stories well enough, but when it came to the knowledge of the Church, I was lost. Even more so, I was intimidated. My colleagues, it seemed, knew the content and context of every papal encyclical and exhortation. They were walking Catholic encyclopedias, and I could barely pray the Rosary. I thought a papal bull was an animal that lived somewhere on the Vatican ranch.

While I learn more about the Church every day, even after eight years at Our Sunday Visitor, there's still so much I don't know and haven't read. I'm sure I'm not alone.

Thankfully, as it has done for almost 110 years, Our Sunday Visitor is here to help. In a new monthly series that we're calling "[An Unfailing Treasure](#)," writer David Werning will walk with readers as he explores 14 of the Church's most important and influential documents, from the First Vatican Council's 1870 apostolic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* to Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on human ecology *Laudato Si'*.

In his introduction to the series, Werning writes: "The Church's documents help individuals to make prayerful and thoughtful decisions that are steeped in the wisdom of the Church's own 2,000-year-old reflection on revelation. People who avail themselves of these documents benefit from the

magisterium's discernment: What actions are good or evil? How does one come to that decision? The Church's documents also help people avoid errors and understand the reasoning involved in a particular teaching. The basic call of every Church document is to follow Jesus more closely."

Throughout the coming year, I invite you to follow this series and, if you have the time, read the documents for yourself. I plan on doing so as well, because I've realized that there are a couple of other things I want to be when I get older: more informed and more faithful. This series will help with both.

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