

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ **A Blessing for Our Family** ~

Blessed are You,
eternal God,
King of the universe:
You have called us in Jesus
to be Your beloved people,
living pure and blameless lives
in Your sight.

Bless our family.
We ask for your grace.
Let your Spirit
guide our words and deeds,
so that our light may shine before all
and lead all who know us to give You praise.

May our home be filled
with the spirit of love,
with the obedience of faith,
and the strength of hope.
Make our lives happy
in Your service,
and bring us in Your love
to your eternal home.

Father all-holy,
we praise Your Name,
and ask this blessing
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:
The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.
phone: [440] 473-3560. e-mail: jbcsc@ix.netcom.com

Our Lady Chapel



Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.

CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR — BEGIN WITH MASS:

It has been a long-standing tradition here at Our Lady Chapel that we begin our New Year's Eve celebration by first coming to Mass before going out for the evening. This affords us a great opportunity to begin the New Year with a time of prayer and worship of God. **January 1st** is also a **Holy Day of obligation** — the **Feast of the Motherhood of God and New Year's Day**. In addition, our Holy Father, Pope Francis has asked all of us to pray intensely on January 1st for world peace. As noted in the Mass schedule of the Christmas Season, **there will be a vigil Mass on Wednesday, December 31st at 5:30 PM.** Please plan on joining us.



SPECIAL THANKS:

A very special thank you to all who helped decorate the Chapel for the Christmas Season — the Heryak Family, Michael Hughes, Dennis and Charlene Kavran, Madeleine Miller, Ed Bartlett, the Ryavec Family, Kathy DeMarco, and, of course, Patty Szaniszlo. Thanks also our Council Members, Eucharistic, Lectors, Altar Servers; Matt, and all the musicians and cantors, and to Miklus Florist. Above all, a very special thank you to Maha and Astar Abboud, who designed and put together the magnificent Crèche display. If you haven't had a chance to see this and pray before it, please do yourself a favor and visit it. Thanks also to all who have sent special Christmas greetings and gifts to the Chapel and to Father John — your kindness is truly a blessing. May all of us continue to rejoice in this beautiful blessing of Christmas.



2015 CALENDARS:

Calendars for the year 2015 are available for your taking. Besides having space for you to write your family appointments, the calendar also contains information about Mass and Reconciliation times here at Our Lady Chapel. We wish to thank the Schulte-Mahon-Murphy Funeral Homes for their generous donation of these 2015 Calendars to us. Please feel free to take as many calendars as you would like. Thank you.



SCHEDULE OF ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

To help you in your planning, here is a quick synopsis of the Mass schedule throughout the Christmas/New Year Season:

- **December 27-28 — Regular weekend schedule**
- **Wednesday, December 31 — New Year's Eve Mass at 5:30 PM**
- **January 3-4 — Regular weekend schedule**

NEVER TO LATE:

It is no use to say that we are born two thousand years too late to give room to Christ. Nor will those who live at the end of the world have been born too late. Christ is always with us — always asking for room in our hearts. But now it is with the voice of our contemporaries that he speaks — with the eyes of store clerks, factory workers and children that he gazes; with the hands of office workers, slum dwellers and suburban housewives that he gives. It is with the feet of soldiers and tramps that he walks, and with the heart of anyone in need that he longs for shelter. And giving shelter or food to anyone who asks for it — or needs it — is giving it to Christ.



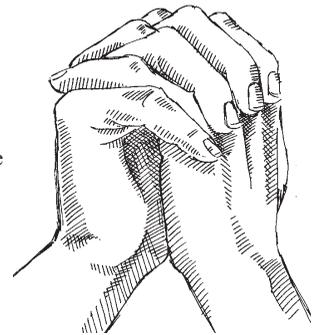
—Dorothy Day

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Wayne Pierce who is preparing for surgery
- For Robert Heer, who is critically ill following a stroke.
- For Jeff Warner, brother of Denise Calabrese, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a stroke.
- For Dan Fagan ['96], brother of James ['91], who is undergoing brain surgery.
- For Rose DeSimone who is critically ill with congestive heart failure.
- For Grace Weil who is recovering from a stroke.
- For Patricia Weaver who is undergoing treatment for a debilitating back injury
- For Brother Charles McBride, C.S.C., who is undergoing medical testing.
- For Marilyn Malloy, grandmother of Will ['15], Kylie ['16], Gianna ['20], and Charlie Velotta who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Bob Meyo, brother of former Gilmour Trustee, Ray Meyo, uncle of Lisa ['93] and Joe ['94] Meyo, who is under hospice care.
- For Sister Cheryl Keehner, C.S.A., who is recovering from injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Devin Stokel, who is critically ill with brain cancer.
- For Mark LeMed who is undergoing treatment for lung cancer.
- For Lynn Newton who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Patty Garbo who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jay Mulhollen who is undergoing treatment for brain and lung cancer.
- For Janice Feenstra, sister of Lisa Habe, aunt of Jack ['19] and Will ['20] Habe who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Russo, father of Jennifer ['93], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Janet Mehling, sister-in-law of Sister Mary Ann Mehling, who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Emily Kuhar, niece of former Middle School Administrator, Patricia Brockway, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Brother Paul Kelly, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for Leukemia
- For Anne Travassos, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Michael Shea, brother of Lower School Teacher, Theresa Stark, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Monica Starks, mother of Faith ['20] and former Gilmour student, Monica Joy, who is undergoing treatment for kidney disease.
- For Phylis McGinley, grandmother of Middle school Head of School, Elizabeth Edmondson, great-grandmother of Mollie ['21] and Abigail ['23] Edmondson, who is seriously ill.
- For Christian Connors, son of technology associate, Kevin Connors, who is continues in rehab
- For Mary Kampman, mother of Mark ['81], Matthew ['85], Dean ['86], and Douglas ['88] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Stephanie Batt ['04], daughter of Debbie Moss Batt, who is undergoing medical testing.
- For Karen Wanders, mother of upper school teacher, Jonathan, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a brain aneurysm.
- For Dan Hathey, technology associate, who is undergoing treatment for cancer and a stroke.
- For Betty Herten, aunt of Hope ['13] and James ['15] Herten, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.



PRAYER REQUESTS:

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Lillian LiPuma, mother of Sam LiPuma [‘80]
- For Karole Baird, grandmother of Baird Ramsey [‘94]
- For Diane DeMarco, cousin of Chapel associate Patty Szaniszlo, and Kathy DeMarco.
- For Florence Druckenbrod, mother of Michael [‘62], James [‘64], Mary [‘75] and Mark [‘79]
- For Amanda Murphy, grand-niece of Brother Robert Lavelle, C.S.C.
- For Theresa Hrovat.
- For Betty Hersch.
- For Marilyn Delaat
- For Steve Hovancsek, uncle of Christina Horvath [‘21].
- For Joseph Lamonte
- For Joshua Swibel, cousin of upper school teacher, Ginna Dybicz.
- For Janice Fiorucci
- For Father James Blaes, C.S.C.
- For Bishop Edward Pevec, retired auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland.
- For Donna Moucha
- For John Blazek, father of Father John [anniversary]

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Eleanor Tibaldi who is recovering from injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Susan Finn who is recovering from surgery.
- For Kenneth McDermott, who is critically ill with cancer.
- For Norma Rasoletti who is recovering from injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Chris Biggins who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Cheryl Arndt, Gilmour housekeeper, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Pastor Henry Charles who is ill.
- For Dan Houlahan who is in rehabilitation following a brain aneurysm.
- For Sister Barbara Johns, I.H.M., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For an end to racial tensions in our nation.
- For all who are called and who live consecrated life.
- For patience and understanding.
- For an end to human trafficking..
- For the unemployed.
- For those who struggle with family relationships.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For a special intention.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.

THANK YOU:

A special note of “thanks” goes out to all of you who participated in our **Giving Tree** and our **Adopt a Family** programs. Many families, in addition to literally hundreds of gifts for children from the giving tree were gathered again this year. Thank you and God bless each of you for sharing your life with someone else. A special thank you to **Mary Schmidt, Gill Plavcan, and Patty Szaniszlo** for all their hard work in coordinating these projects. Again, thanks to all who participated. As usual, your generosity in reaching out to others has been marvelous. Thank you. You are special.



SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

PLEASE NOTE: Father John will be taking some time off this week. **Mass will be celebrated only on Wednesday of this week. . Masses will also take place over the weekend as usual.** Sorry for any inconvenience this causes.

Sunday, December 28: Holy Family	10:00 AM
Monday, December 29:	NO MASS
Tuesday, December 30:	NO MASS
Wednesday, December 31: New Year’s Eve	5:30 PM
Thursday, January 1: New Year’s Day	NO MASS
Friday, January 2: St. Basil the Great	NO MASS
Saturday, January 3: Epiphany	5:00 PM
Sunday, January 4: Epiphany	10:00 AM

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS:

During this Christmas season, we would like to thank all those who have helped us by making memorial offerings. May our floral decorations and this season remind all of us of those special relationships which we hold close to our heart. Please keep the following people in your prayers: **In memory of Bill Gorris, Ronald Rasoletti, Robert Rasoletti, William Rasoletti, Julius Rasoletti, Eleanor & Curtiss DeMarco, Loy and Polack Families, Helen & John Blazek, Antoinette & Frank Rezabek, John & Mary Blazek.** If you would like to make a memorial offering, please place it in an envelope marked “Memorial Offering, Christmas Decorations” and give to Father John or place it in the offering basket. God bless all of you.



LIVE LIFE:

It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Throughout this time of the year, the Feast days keep coming at us. We have celebrated the days of preparing for Christmas; now it's the Feast of the Holy Family. Do we need to prepare for this one? After all, we all live in family in some shape or form. In addition, some might be saying under their voices: "Do we have to go to church again? We just went! All we do during this time of the year is go to Church!" It is not so much fun to do the "have-tos", and preparing for them is a dutiful process. In family life, the business world, and even in the social-relationships of our lives, there are many "have-tos" — and we do them, even when we "just did them" recently. Maybe the best approach would be to reflect on the spirit with which we do the dutiful, the required, and the expected. As you ponder your list of the "have-tos" of Christmas, realize that God "has-to" because God cannot not be God. We do not "have-to", and that is what changes "dutiful" to "beautiful".

Our Scripture readings for this Feast of the Holy Family begin with an instruction from a "Wisdom Figure" speaking to his son concerning the son's relationship with God — the author is not speaking directly about the son's relationship with his parents [Sirach 3:2-14]. Actually, we reverence God through reverencing parents. This is central to the spirituality of ancient Israel. Begetting human life is experienced as a participation in Divinity from Whom all life ultimately flows and returns. Mothers and fathers are revered for their being instruments of sharing God's Life by bringing forth life.

Children are encouraged to relate with God in many earthly ways — but prime among them is honoring and not shaming their parents. The duty of the parents is to acculturate their children into this way of relating with God. The duty of the children is to incarnate the teachings as a spirituality lived into their becoming parents themselves some day and givers of life.

Luke's Gospel centers around the holiness of the "New Family". This holiness is reflected in their compliance with the Law and traditions of their faith [Luke 2:22-40]. The ritual described by Luke is found in the Book of Leviticus [see chapters 12 and 15]. A couple becoming pregnant and giving birth is so related to God's promise of fertility and to the divine power of giving life that there is a mysterious human experience of humanly being that close to God. There is no intent here to give the impression that sexuality is unclean. Rather it is the human — who by entering into the birth-adventure — is experienced as unclean when compared with God. Human sexuality and proper sexual experience is sacred because it participates and continues the experience of God's fidelity to the Covenants. The Laws protect that sacredness of living within the covenanted community of Israel.

Luke presents Joseph and Mary as being faithful Jews. Mary has no physical reason to present herself for purification. A lamb is to be offered for the ritual sacrifice of atonement, but in the case of a poor couple, two turtledoves and two pigeons would do. The first child to be born is sacred and presented to the Lord because that child opened the womb so that other children may also take their turn in being born.

When the ritual is complete, two elders of the temple become witnesses — and like the Magi and shepherds, they become early prophetic figures in accepting and proclaiming that Jesus — the Long-Awaited-One has come. Simeon and Anna say some powerful words to Mary and Joseph about their Child. For Mary, powerful words are becoming familiar — the angel Gabriel, the shepherds, the Magi

**WORLD YOUTH DAY & KRAKOW, POLAND 2016:**

The time has come for us to take the next step in our Pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2016. **It is time to start putting down deposits so that we can finance this trip over a period of time.** We will begin to contact those who have expressed interest. We have a link to the presentation which Chris Dube from Dube Travel did for us, so that you will be able to get all the details of our pilgrimage. Our pilgrimage to WYD will begin with our departure on **Friday, July 22**. Monday, we will visit Auschwitz and the German concentration camps, and see the place where St. Maximilian Kolbe was martyred. We will then begin our trip to Krakow, stopping at Czestochowa — home to the monastery at Jasna Gora and the famous icon of the Black Madonna. During our stay in Krakow, we will journey to Wadowice — the home town of St. John Paul II, and visit the Church of the Divine Mercy and the Shrine of St. Faustina Kowalska. We will be staying at a hotel located on the square in Krakow, within walking distance of almost all of the events of WYD.

We will be attending catechetical sessions each morning, followed by evening cultural and spiritual events — daily Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation, adoration, and many other experiences. Our group will officially welcome, celebrate mass, and take part in the Stations of the Cross with the Holy Father, Pope Francis.

We will return to Cleveland on **Monday, August 1**. Over 40 people have expressed an interest thus far in this pilgrimage. The invitation remains open to **Our Lady Chapel Families** as well as all **Gilmour Families**. Chaperones must be 21+ years old. Children under 16 years of age will be required to be accompanied by a parent. **Please contact the chapel office — Father John or Patty at 440-473-3560 to confirm your place on this life-changing pilgrimage**

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	1 John 2:3-11, Luke 2:22-35
Tuesday:	1 John 2:12-17, Luke 2:36-40
Wednesday:	1 John 2:18-21, John 1:1-18
Thursday:	Numbers 6:22-27, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:16-21
Friday:	1 John 2:22-28, John 1:19-28
Saturday:	1 John 2:29-3:6, John 1:29-34
Epiphany:	Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3:2-6, Matthew 2:1-12

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR OF ST. JOAN OF ARC:

Father Gary Malin, pastor of St. Joan of Arc, asked us to post this request. St. Joan of Arc Parish in Chagrin Falls is seeking candidates with a Bachelors degree in Accounting and at least 5 years accounting experience. The Business Administrator oversees and coordinates payroll, accounts payable, and data entry functions and is responsible for systems, accounting, financial reporting & budgeting. 10-12 hours per week. Submit resume to Fr. Gary Joseph Malin at St. Joan of Arc, 496 E Washington St., Chagrin Falls OH 44022.



WHAT MAKES THE HOLY FAMILY HOLY?

What makes families unique is that while each member is constantly relating to other members, they themselves are constantly changing. Whoever tries to understand families is working with moving targets. This applies also to the Holy Family. If the author of the Letter to the Hebrews is correct when he remarks that Jesus was a human being like all of us except in sin [Hebrews 4:15], then it is safe to presume that his relationship with his family was also like ours except in sin.



Scholars are convinced for a long time that the gospel annunciations to Mary and Joseph are simply literary devices employed by the evangelists to help us understand the implications of the events that they're narrating. That has some disturbing implications. Historically, Joseph and Mary would have had no special revelation concerning their son or their own relationship. What Matthew's angel tells the sleeping Joseph [see Matthew 1], and Luke's Gabriel reveals to Mary [see Luke 1] wouldn't have been known to them until after Jesus' death and resurrection. Only then did they begin to understand what the two evangelists, writing generations later, not only took for granted, but also integrated into their angelic annunciations.

Mark — whose gospel contains no annunciations to Mary or Joseph — would seem to be in agreement when he mentions that at one point in Jesus' life, His mother, along with other family members, tried restrain Jesus because people were saying that Jesus "is out of his mind" [Mark 3:21]. That good intentioned action must have led to some interesting conversations between mother and son. How do you relate to family whom you believe is possessed by a demon?

Like all families, Joseph, Mary and Jesus lived within the restrictions which bind all of us. As good Jews, for instance, they fulfilled their religious obligations [Luke 2:22-40]. And as ordinary human beings, they were expected to develop ways of dealing with one another. As Paul mentions in his letter to the Church at Colossae, they had to show one another "heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" [Colossians 3:12-21]. And according to the customs of her day and age, Mary was expected to be "subordinate to her husband."

This concern for good family relations biblically goes back hundreds of years before the appearance of the Holy Family. The author of the Book of Sirach wants to make certain his readers reflect on the fulfilling life that these relations offer [Sirach 3:2-14]. Of course, as times change, the relationship changes. Notice how the author even talks to a child whose father is in the throes of dementia— "Even if his mind fails, be considerate of him: revile him not all the days of his life; kindness to a father will not be forgotten."

But perhaps the most important aspect of good family relations is the ability to see something in one another which goes beyond one's natural vision. In Luke's gospel, Simeon is given this role. It's possible that this elderly man took each child he encountered in the temple in his arms and said some of the same or similar words over him or her that he spoke about Jesus. For he was convinced that every child had the potential of bringing God's salvation to others. But if one specific child actually carried through on that gift of God, his or her mother had to be warned that a "sword would pierce her" — a biblical idiom for having to make a decision one would rather not make.

Do you think that Joseph and Mary, like all parents, were really prepared for the decisions they'd have to

make about their son? It takes a lot of faith in one another to eventually become a good family. It also that's good faith to become a Holy Family.

—taken from the writings of Father Roger Karban, which appear on the internet

had all indicated the "something special" about the birth and the life that this Child would live. Now new words are added — for the first time Mary hears that a suffering is going to be a part of her life as well. She took this all in and it matured in her heart and soul as Jesus matured in Galilee. Pondering is not the same as worrying — pondering leads to maturing; worrying leads to more worrying.

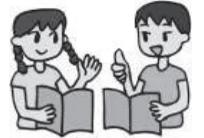
The Holy Family was a law-abiding group. This is a good model for Catholic and Christian families. We do not observe all the Jewish rituals, but we are invited to experience sexuality, birth, life, family-relations in the same spirit of sacredness. Original sin did not have its origin in our families-of-origin, though it was the place of our first experiencing its effects in the lives of others in our families. In my family, we never prayed Grace before meals; we seldom went to Sunday mass together — although we all went faithfully. My parents never attended "devotions" or special parish activities — except "Sports nights". We did not say a prayer upon beginning a long trip — though I think I heard my father mention the Lord's Name during the trip now and then. I learned night-prayers kneeling as a child at my mother's chair. But there definitely was faith and love lived by my parents; that is how we learned about God and church and Jesus.

While all families know the experiences of Original and actual sin in the life of the family, what is most important is that everyone know more and more as they grow that parents absolutely loved each other and that children also love each other — that was the Law! Think of the blessings of your own family time. Think about the times of "lying around" together, laughing, being embarrassed, standing in awe and amazement of one another. The roof might be figuratively falling in — and at times it does — but we all know that we are participants in love — and that is the Law!

—taken from the writings of Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

FAITH EDUCATION:

Here are the dates for Faith Education for the months of January and February — **January 11th** and 25th, and **February 1st**, 8th, and 22nd. Our Sessions go from **8:45—9:45 AM** each time we meet, with the hope that our children would then **participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass**. We have a number of families who attend the chapel regularly who have children who attend non-Catholic schools. Our **Faith Education Program** will help to fulfill your on-going religious education. Our program runs from grades K-8. Students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to participate in our Life Teen Program. **Please contact Patty in the Chapel Office (440)473-3560 if you have any questions.** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility

**LIVING CHRISTMAS:**

The Christmas story is not about how blessed it is to be givers but about how essential it is to see ourselves as receivers. We prefer to think of ourselves as givers—powerful, competent, self-sufficient, capable people whose goodness motivates us to employ some of our power, competence and gifts to benefit the less fortunate. Which is a direct contradiction of the biblical account of the first Christmas. There we are portrayed not as the givers we wish we were but as the receivers we are. —William Willimon

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Father John will be available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you on **every Saturday** between **3:30 – 4:00 PM**. Confessions are also available "by appointment." The Reconciliation Room is located in the small chapel directly across from Father John's Office.



WHERE DO YOU FIND THE HOLY FAMILY?

The Feast of the Holy Family is a relatively new Feast on the Church calendar — it’s origin dates back to only the seventeenth century. In a Church, whose bloodline runs back two thousand years, three or four centuries are not a long time. In the first sixteen centuries of our Church, solemn veneration of Mary, her husband, and her Son was a “non-event”. There was little need to offer the Holy Family as a model for family life — family life was largely in a healthy condition. But then came the Industrial Age and the birth of cities. Serious problems appeared on the family horizon.

Strategist that she is, the Church looked about for a counterforce. Cleverly she hit upon devotion to the Holy Family. Yet Mary, her husband, and her Son had to wait until 1921 before this Feast was officially created. Family life today is a most difficult pursuit. One thinks of divorce, the scourge of alcohol and narcotics, the breakdown of discipline, and all the rest of the challenges of family life. Two thirds of United States families do not eat their meals together. Of the third who do, 50% are watching TV during the meal. The average child over 8 watches three and a half hours of TV daily — largely because the tired parents use the TV as a baby sitter at the end of a long day. “Things fall apart; the center cannot hold. Mere anarchy is loosed on the world” — these words, penned many years ago by the poet WB Yeats could easily describe contemporary family life.



We should all pay attention to St Paul’s letter to the church at Colossae in Asia Minor [Colossians 3:12-21]. Apparently word had reached Paul that Christian families in Colossae were falling apart. And so he notes the qualities that must be in a Christian home. Sit back and allow Paul’s magnificent words to seep into your spirit — “Bear with one another. Forgive one another. Over all these put on love. Christ’s peace must reign in your hearts. Be thankful. Wives, cherish your husbands. Husbands, love your wives. Children, obey your parents in everything.” What a home it would be were one to find all the qualities Paul enumerates! People would fight to visit and just hope the family magic would rub off on them and their families. Why not allow it to be your home?

Arthur Tonne illustrates this best — George was becoming old and infirm. He had been a bachelor sailor most of his life. His nephew Bill invited him to move in with his family. George gladly accepted. Now Bill, who had never traveled, did so by listening to the many journeys of his uncle. George noticed that there were times that Bill was fed up with family life — arguments with his wife, bills, kids’ sickness, etc. He told his uncle more than once: “I wish I was free to roam the world as you did.” One evening over supper, the old sailor told the family of a map of buried treasure in his possession. Bill stored the information away. A year after that, George died. The nephew looked through his few possessions for the map. Sure enough he found an envelope addressed to himself — it was the hoped for map. It took Bill but a moment to read it. It led to the very house in which he stood. The dead salt was telling him: “Your own home and your own family are your treasure. Don’t blow it. Enjoy them.”

But that is precisely the problem. The Holy Family seems like they are “living in the clouds”. How can we relate to the them — Joseph was a celibate, Mary a virgin, and Jesus the Son of God. We do Mary, Joseph, and Jesus a wrong if we fantasize their lives. Take the Christmas stable for openers — we picture it as something out of a glossy *House Beautiful* magazine. But be real.

home and family. Such too is the function of church.

In the end, family life and church life are part of the same thing — in both we participate in God’s life. Among other things, this means that family life is not like church life — it is part of it. To participate healthily in a family is to be part of a church. The family is not secular while the church is divine, mundane while the church is holy, and the place of ordinary life while the church is the place of worship. To be in a family is to be in a church — perhaps the most important church many of us will ever experience. Every family is meant to be a religious community and is meant to do for us exactly what a religious community or church does for its members.

And what is that? By abiding in family — by sitting down with each other around a kitchen table, by sharing the frustration of balancing a common checkbook, by celebrating each other’s joys and sorrows and everyday life, by offering each other consolation and correction, and by putting up with each other’s coughs, phobias, and sins — we experience church. In both, family life and church, our lives break open beyond ourselves and God can enter.

—taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which appear on the internet

PRAY THE ROSARY:

Please join us as we **pray the Rosary every Saturday at 4:25 PM** in the Eucharistic Chapel. In the words of Pope John Paul II: “The Rosary of the Virgin Mary is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium. Simple yet profound, it still remains, at the dawn of the third millennium, a prayer of great significance. It has the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety. Through the Rosary, the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.” Please join us.



R.C.I.A [Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults]:

We are beginning to plan for our RCIA program which will begin in a few weeks. If you know someone who has been away from the Catholic Church for a while, or who is interested in learning more about the Catholic faith, or who presently is not a Catholic but would like to pursue this avenue of faith; if you know someone who is not fully initiated [Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation] in their Catholic faith — then consider having them join our RCIA program. **Please contact Father John [440-473-3560] for more information.**



AMAZON.COM:

Please remember that when you want to buy something from Amazon.com, you need to first go to www.ourladychapel.org and click on the Amazon logo at the bottom of the home page! Because of this simple step — and at no cost to the purchaser — Our Lady Chapel receives a percentage of all purchases that are made from Amazon.com. Ever since we have begun this program, we have consistently been receiving significant checks from Amazon that are being credited to help pay for chapel expenses. This affinity program remains in effect throughout the year, so we ask everyone to continue to remember to start your purchases at Amazon on the Our Lady Chapel home page! Thank you.



TRUTH:

Knowing God’s Word will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from knowing His Word.

THE FAMILY AS CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY:

“God is love and whoever abides in love abides in God and God abides in him or her” [1John 4:16]. If that is true — and it is — then we can say the same thing about family — “God is family and whoever abides in family abides in God and God abides in that person.” The theology of family roots itself here. Among other things, this means that a family is really a religious community — a church, the place where we participate in God’s own life. What is meant by this? It is easy to misunderstand this because we tend to romanticize it. To define God as love is not to say that God is romantic love and that we abide in God only at those times when we feel in love. Rather what is affirmed is that God is a community — a trinity — a flow of giving and receiving between three persons. God is a family and when we participate in a family we experience the very flow of God’s life. Family life then is church life. To participate in a healthy way within a family is, in a manner of speaking, to go to church. But this too is often misunderstood.

What does it mean to live within a family? Too often we think of family mainly in terms of emotional intimacy. We imagine family — real family, not like our family! — as romance, warmth, like-mindedness, continual affirmation, deep mutual revelation, and constant support. In essence, we conceive of it in terms of our emotional and romantic needs. But those things — good as they are — are not ultimately what makes for family. What does make for family?

Someone once said that love is not two persons facing each other, but two persons facing in the same direction and living in the same spirit. Ultimately that is what makes family — both anthropologically and ecclesially. Ecclesially this is easy enough to explain. What makes for church is not, first of all, emotional intimacy — good as that is — but a gathering around the person of Christ and a common sharing of one Spirit — the spirit of charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, fidelity, gentleness, faith, and chastity.

Similarly, in terms of ordinary family — a marriage and the family it produces is not so much grounded on a man and a woman coming together sexually and emotionally as it is in a man and a woman coming together morally — that is, at a level that precisely has them facing in a common direction rather than narcissistically fixated on each other. Moral intimacy, more so than sexual intimacy, is the foundation of family, just as it is the foundation of church. What are the component parts of it?

This too shouldn’t be falsely-romanticized. Moral intimacy is not, at its most important level, being kissed in the soul by that delicious feeling we sometimes get when we sense that another person holds as precious all the same things we do. There is value in this, of course. To sense another person as a soul-mate is to have family in a real sense because to be in family is to be at home, and we are at home precisely when we are with another person who shares our deepest values.

However, family and home, as we well know, generally have more of an everyday than a romantic face to them. Home and family are more than romance — they are the everyday, sometimes dram, business of staying together, eating together, praying together, sharing money and material things together, celebrating occasions together, being mutually accountable to each other, challenging and correcting each other, and carrying each other’s pathologies and weaknesses. Such are the functions of



Stables are constructed not for families, but for livestock. That Christmas stable was crawling with dangerous vermin and foul odors. There were no pampers nor fresh water. Imagine the drafts. Mary and Joseph had to be sick with worry for the Infant’s health. And where would the next meal for the Baby come from? Consider, too, the teen years of Jesus. Most teens believe they know everything. Can you even speculate how difficult it had to be to raise one who did?

We celebrate today not the feast of the Perfect Family, but the Feast of the Holy Family. Do you still find it difficult to relate with such a family?

—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooley, which appear on the internet.

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR:

For the past year, our teens have been volunteering at **Our Savior Lutheran Church Food Pantry** [located right across the street from the chapel]. The Pantry is open on the **third Saturday of every month from 11:00 AM – 1:30 or 2:00 PM**. Our Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. During the course of the past year, the food pantry at Our Savior Lutheran Church served an average of 141 households each time. Our teens have loved this ministry and have been very faithful to it. **We would now like to open this ministry up to our entire Chapel Community. If you would like to help on any given third Saturday, please call Patty at the chapel office [440-473-3560] to let us know that you are going to**

**MARCH FOR LIFE:**

Again this year, students in grades 9-12 have the opportunity to participate in the national March for Life in Washington, D.C. Begun in 1974 on the first anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the March for Life is an annual peaceful and public demonstration that promotes the right to life and advocates for the dignity of the human person from conception; the goal of the March is to protect unborn children and their parents from the tragedy of abortion. This national event is a unique opportunity for students to practice our Holy Cross core values and to live out the Academy’s mission “to develop the competence to see and the courage to act in creating a more humane and just society.” **Our March for Life will begin with a Prayer Vigil held in Our Lady Chapel at 9 PM on Wednesday, January 21st. We will be departing for Washington at 10:30 PM, participate in the Mass for Life at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, March for Life from the National Mall to Capitol Hill, and returning back to Gilmour around 10 PM on Thursday, January 22nd.** Cost of the trip is \$65. All meals and snacks are the responsibility of the student. Registration needs to be completed by Friday, January 9th. Please **contact Father John if you have any questions, and obtain the forms needed for the trip.**

**CHILDREN’S BULLETINS:**

Each week, we are making available a **Children’s Worship Bulletin**. There are **two editions: [3-6]** and **[7-12]**. They are available on the table as you leave. The Bulletin focuses on the readings for the week. These are wonderful tools for your children to learn more about the scripture readings for the week. We hope you will take them for your families or your grandchildren. Thanks.



THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE — A MODEL FOR OUR LIVES:

Luke’s Gospel for this Feast of the Holy Family gives us part of the only story in the Gospels from the boyhood of Christ — His presentation in the Temple [Luke 2:22-40]. The second boyhood story — which is not part of the Feast this year — is the Finding of Jesus in the Temple [Luke 2:41-52]. In the Gospel of Luke, these passages act as a kind of a bridge from the story of Christ’s birth — the Infancy narratives. They become sort of an “overture” before moving to the main theme which is Christ’s public ministry.

In these stories, we can see reflections of many of Luke’s favorite themes — the journey, the temple, loving submission, etc. There is also the natural tendency “to see the man in the boy”. And there are parallels with the Old Testament story of Samuel and his call at the age of twelve.

We celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. But the fact is that we know so very little about the life of the Holy Family. Yes, we have the Infancy Narratives of Matthew and Luke, and we have this little account of his Presentation and then his Finding in the Temple — but that is all that we have. What conclusions are we meant to draw from all of this?

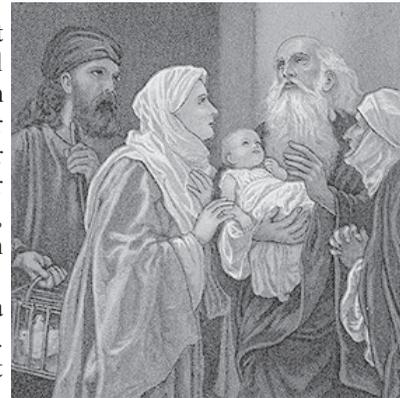
If we look at them as an ideal family then they fall wide of the mark — Mary was pregnant before marriage which somewhat falls short of the ideal; they lived together in perpetual chastity which would be very much less than ideal for most; and to cap it all, they had only one child — and he was the Son of God, which sounds like most people’s worst nightmare! There just doesn’t seem much there that we would want to — or even could — model ourselves on. Jesus is presented as something of a prodigy — how could he be otherwise?

What is there here for us? Let us look first at the Prophet Simeon. Here in his prophecy we have one of the most beautiful prayers of the Bible — “Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, because my eyes have seen your salvation.” Here is a prayer that we can all relate to — a prayer which can really grow in us over the years until it reaches its prophetic culmination at the point of our death, when we all will really say with all our hearts: “Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, because my eyes have seen your salvation.”

Simeon was a devout and holy man. He had received a revelation that he would see the Christ — and he longed for that day. This yearning is an important lesson for us in prayer. Prayer is not just about rattling-off rosaries, or constantly asking for things. Prayer often does not need words. A simple longing — a yearning for the coming of the Kingdom — is an authentic expression of the Christian virtue of hope. It is a deep and important form of prayer.

Simeon makes a prophecy about Christ’s destiny; and as it says: “the child’s father and mother stood there wondering about him.” Every parent wonders about their children. Every parent is full of hope for their children. Over a period of time, this hope might turn in to fear and anxiety, but the fundamental feeling of hope is still there. We hope that everything will turn out well for them; we hope that they will make a success of life; we hope that they will be safe and keep out of trouble; we hope that they will be happy.

If we were to take these perfectly ordinary aspirations and express them in a Christian way, we might express them as: “we hope that they will realize God’s will for them; we hope they will be true to



Christian families survive the same way. A family cannot be spiritual for only a few hours on Sunday. The family must revolve around God who formed it. That is the way it can survive no matter what swords pierce its heart. Take time to pray that all families — especially your family — may reverence and radiate the Presence of the Lord. —taken from the writings of Father Joseph Pellegrino which appear on the internet

CLEAN OUT THOSE CLOSETS AND SERVE OTHERS:

Winter is here. Another change in seasons, and another time to once again clean out the closets. Clothing that no longer fits, or which was replaced by new items, becomes great items for others. Always remember the words of Jesus: “The poor you shall always have with you” [Matthew 26:11]. Please continue to bring your *gently used* men’s, women’s and children’s clothing to the Lennon Board Room, or place it in the cedar chest which is located in the chapel narthex of the Chapel [just press the key button to open the chest]. We partner with Fatima Center to help provide clothing for general use. Also, **business work clothing for this season is especially needed. The Fatima Center helps men and women prepare for job interviews.** If you have some of these items, this would be a good time to send them along. Clothing for all seasons is accepted, but please try to keep in mind that storage facilities are limited at Fatima — so it would help if you could focus on winter items at this time. You may pick up a tax form when you drop off the clothing here at Our Lady Chapel — there are forms in the cedar chest. Clothing may be brought on the weekend, or during the week. Thank you. **If you have any questions, please contact Patty in the chapel office [440-473-3560].**



ATTENDANCE:

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a form [name, address, phone number, children, etc.] indicating this fact, if you have not already done so. Such information not only helps us to know who is attending Our Lady Chapel; it also is of great assistance to

ENVELOPES:

- When you need a **new supply** of envelopes, please feel free to take a supply of them from the table in the vestibule, or call Father John at the Campus Ministry Office [473-3560].

WEEKLY OFFERING:

Baskets will be passed during the “Preparation Rite” and will be brought to the altar as part of the Offerings to help offset chapel daily operating expenses. When you choose to use the envelopes, your donations to Our Lady Chapel will be acknowledged so that you have a record for the IRS.

Total Offerings: Saturday [12/20/14]	-----	\$ 1,552.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [12/21/14]	-----	\$ 968.00
Total Offerings: Wednesday [12/24/14] ---4:45 PM	-----	\$ 3,788.00
Total Offerings: Wednesday [12/24/14] -10:00 PM	-----	\$ 1,625.00
Total Offerings: Thursday [12/25/14] ----10:00 AM	-----	\$ 1,378.00

IT’S SIMPLE:

Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see —Mark Twain

BEING A HOLY FAMILY:

A proud grandma was showing off pictures of her grandchildren to a neighbor. “How old are they?” the neighbor asked. “The lawyer is two, and the doctor is four,” the grandma replied.

We all have great ideals for our children. It is not that they need to become a lawyer or doctor to make us happy, but we do want them to grow up into the finest people they can be — using their potential, and being happy in their lives. If this is what we really want for our children, then like Joseph and Mary in the Temple, we must dedicate our treasures to the Lord. For our children to fulfill their potential, they must find the reflection of God that they were created to bring into the world. Children must find the Lord — not just in the Temple or the Church, but they must find the Lord primarily in their families. This Feast of the Holy Family offers us an opportunity to consider the spiritual life of our families. We ask ourselves today: “Can all the members of our family find the Lord in our homes? Or are our homes merely houses?”

In the face of the allurements of our culture, we have to fight to have a home, and to have a family. So often, homes are just filling stations and stopping off places. Many families count themselves blessed if they can have three meals together a week. This is not good. Children have to contribute to the family by being present, just as parents have to contribute by supporting their children. It is important for children to develop their talents through sports, arts, etc; but it is more important for children to develop their love for God within their family. Parents also have to get out of the mindset that making the fulfillment of their child’s wants is their priority. It is one thing for a person to go bowling an evening a week. It is another for a person to be home only a few evenings a week. Many families have broken up due to this mindset.

Far too many people live this picture — my wife or husband or the children fulfill my need to have a family, but they are only a part of a whole variety of desires that I have. This is not acceptable for a Christian — it leads to the situation of the spouse that wants his or her family or wife or husband, but also wants a private life and perhaps even someone on the side. That’s just plain selfishness. Perhaps, when this person is present all seems loving and beautiful, but that is not family love — that is using others merely to fulfill one’s own needs. Our current culture has too many absent parents living under the same roof as their families. Many of our families have suffered separation or divorce. People consider these to be strong, Christian families. Then there’s the other side — the families where both parents are present but hostile towards each other. The family with the single parent may not be ideal, but no family can be perfect. Just as the Holy Family had to find its way to reflect God in a hypocritical religious society, every family has to find its way to God in the situations life has occasioned.

The only thing that matters is that your house, your apartment, is a Christian home. Simeon predicted that a sword would pierce Mary’s heart. A situation beyond the control of the Holy Family would bring pain to the family. That situation was the evil in the world that Jesus had come to destroy. Every family in the world has pain that has come into it which resulted from the basic evil of society — a child dies, alcohol or other drugs devastate relationships, all sorts of terrible things take place that pierce the heart of the family with a sword. The Holy Family survived because God was present — not just God the Son who was the child, but God the Father around whom the life of the Holy Family revolved. All



their faith; we hope that they will be good and holy; we hope that they will be effective witnesses to Christ; we hope that they will, after a long and happy life, be welcomed into God’s Kingdom.

These aspirations are our prayers for our children. We know that our children, from time to time, will also bring us pain and sorrow. The same went for the Holy Family. Look at the second part of Simeon’s prophecy: “a sword will pierce your own soul too.” How often have mothers and fathers experienced this sword of pain and sorrow? But it does not stop them from loving — rather it frequently causes them to love more deeply, and to pray more earnestly.

And what of the children? There is no word from Jesus here — after all, he is an infant. We know that Jesus fulfilled all that was promised. You might say he had to — after all, he was the Son of God. But what of us? How are we to fulfil the expectations of our parents? The answer is simple — you cannot and you probably should not. You are most likely to experience these expectations as a burden, even though your parents have the best of intentions.

But there are other expectations that you can and indeed you should fulfil. These are the expectations of God himself. God has set us on a course through life, he has given us gifts and talents and all the quirks of our unique personality. He has put us in the way of all sorts of experiences — each of which has presented us with a whole series of choices, and as a result of our reactions to them we have become the person we are today.

However, God also has expectations and hopes for us. His desire for us is simple — that we should love him with our whole heart and mind and soul. This might seem a tall order, and it might not sound like much fun. But really, it not just possible it is actually the most fulfilling thing we could ever do. We are all called to live in relationship with our maker? What about realizing the consequences of upsetting our relationship with him? God has a plan for us — It is to live in accordance with his will; it is to take Jesus for our model; it is to be at one with our fellow humans; it is to live a life of sacrifice; it is to be united with the Father in prayer.

That prayer of Simeon is a powerful one — “Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, because my eyes have seen your salvation.” Simeon saw Christ in the flesh. But he only recognized him because he had spent his whole life in his service. He had totally dedicated himself to prayer and to the service of God, just as the Prophetess Anna had also done. They were both rewarded and saw the face of God.

Both Simeon and Anna prayed that they would see God’s salvation, but their prayers had in a real way brought about that salvation. This is the same with us. Christ has won the victory but the work of salvation goes on. We are his co-workers. We help to make his salvation present to the world of today. This is how we play our part in the redemption of the world. And by doing so, we win our own redemption.

We are also part of the Holy Family; Simeon and Anna are our brother and sister. Our task is to be like the Christ Child, and as it says in Luke’s Gospel, “to grow to maturity”. Then we will be filled with wisdom, and God’s favor will be with us.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., which appear on the internet

THE PRESENCE OF GOD:

“The further I go into this life, the more I realize that God is everywhere — and the extraordinary is waiting quietly beneath the skin of all that is ordinary. Light is in both the broken bottle and the diamond; music is in both the flowing violin and the water dripping from the drainage pipe. Yes, God is under the porch as well as on top of the mountain, and joy is in both the front row and the bleachers, if we are willing to be where we are.”

—Mark Nepo

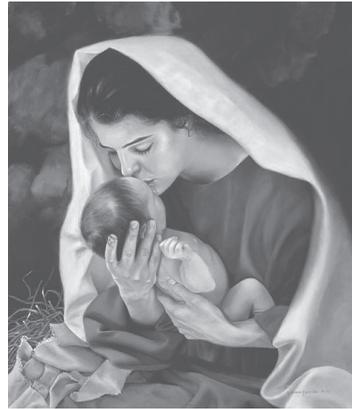
HAVE A VERY MARY CHRISTMAS:

When I grow up, get smarter, inherit a ton of money, and invent a time machine, my first excursion outside the 21st century will definitely be to Bethlehem for the night that Jesus was born. How epic would it be to see firsthand the event that changed our lives and our eternity? That would be epic! If I were a fly on the wall, or a goat on the floor, or a human standing by — anyway, if I were there, I would especially want to watch my main girl, Mary, and how she handled everything. What did she do? What did she say? How did her peace and her virtue transform the less-than-ideal situation of having a baby in a cold stable? What can we learn from her?

For one, we can learn to be grateful for sterile hospitals!

Seriously, there are a few more things. I've been praying about how to enter into this Christmas season in a more "Marian" way. I've realized there are a couple practical things I can do to experience Christmas as she did. So here's what I'm going to try to do in order to imitate and hopefully learn from Mary. Join me?

1. **Be in the Presence of God.** Sit in the quiet, and recognize God's presence in your life. Just because he's not physically in your midst as a baby, doesn't mean that he isn't there for you. Faith is believing in the unseen. Soak in his presence all around you — and also in a tangible way in the tabernacle.
2. **Receive.** Mary let herself be cared for by Joseph, accepted gifts from the magi, and praise and affirmation from the shepherds. Learn what it means to be able to receive gifts with gratitude — especially when you feel it is undeserved or that you aren't able to reciprocate the generosity. Just accept. Don't minimize compliments either — simply say "thank you." When someone serves you, they are affirming how much you are worth to them. Don't fight that affirmation. You are worth it.
3. **Have a Holy Family.** Surround yourself with holy people. There's a time to go out and serve, and there's a time to be fulfilled by holy people and built up by good community. We are by nature people who thrive from the love of others and the example of those around us. What a gift for Mary and Joseph to have each other, and their little holy family. What a gift for you to have your parish community — get to know them. What a gift to have your family, your friends — just to name a few. If you don't feel like you have anyone in your life to walk with you in the faith, ask God persistently to put those people in your path. Seek and you will find.
4. **Live in the Stable.** Experience poverty. Give away something you want. Share your lunch. Donate some of your warm clothes and blankets — there are very few homeless shelters that have enough to fulfill the need they have. Experience poverty and what it means to not have everything you need at the tip of your fingers. It will make you more aware of your blessings, and the struggles of so many around us.
5. **7 Pound Jesus.** Hold a baby. Not just any baby — I recommend finding one you know personally, and getting their mother's permission, and washing your hands. I think we forget how amazing it is that God became a baby because it's easy to forget how small, vulnerable, and dependent babies are. It's only when you feel that tiny hand wrap around



your finger that you are moved by God's humility and love.

6. **Trust Him.** Mary didn't know where she was going to be able to lay her head on Christmas night. She didn't know what the rest of her life was going to look like as the Mother of God. **All she knew was that the child in her arms was the God who she could trust.** He depended on her and she depended on Him — their mutual, sacrificial love leading to salvation for our souls.
7. **Eat Chocolate.** Mary did not eat chocolate. However, given the fact she is really cool she definitely would have loved it. And given the fact that she could not enjoy chocolate in the year 1 AD, you definitely need to have some in her honor.

Who needs a time machine? Mary is longing to share her experience, her wisdom, her love with us, and we don't need to go back 2000 years. Ask her to walk with you this Christmas season. Have a wonderful, Mary Christmas.
—written by Christina Mead, an associate of the Bible Geek

LIFE TEEN:

Our next gathering will be on **Sunday, January 4th** — this will be a brief meeting sharing the joys of Christmas. Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be on **Saturday, January 10th when we will gather for a very popular "game night" from 6:30 PM—8:00 PM.** Life Teen normally meets right after Sunday Mass — from **11:30 AM—1:00 PM** in the **Lennon Board Room.** Life Teen is open to **all high school aged young people.** **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming.** We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. On **Sunday, January 25th, we will be gather to discuss the March for Life.** Come and try us out. We have a great deal of fun together and we grow in our faith at the same time. **Respond to your texts and/or emails, or call the chapel office [440-473-3560] to be notified.** Please continue to remember all our teens and young people in your prayers.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP — THE EDGE:**

Our next gathering will be on **Sunday, January 11th,** when we go to **"Build-a-Bear" to create Teddy Bears for Children Hospitalized at Ahuja Hospital.** Bring your friends. Come and find out what **the EDGE** is all about. If you have not joined us before, that's OK. **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming.** We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. On **Saturday, January 31st, we will have our EDGE "game night".** Our EDGE Youth Group has a Faith-Service-Social component, and we need your help. Join in on an exciting happening. **Call the Chapel Office at 440-473-3560.** Join us for a fun filled faith experience. All are welcome.

**DRESSES FOR HONDURAS:**

One of the nurses in our Gilmour Clinic is involved in a **dressmaking project** for the children of Honduras. They have devised a method of making sundresses out of common pillowcases, and then adorning them with other items for decoration. And that is where you come in. **If you have any old buttons, ribbon, ric-rac, lace or other sewing trim,** please bring them in. The group would like to collect these items to help decorate the dresses they are working on. This is an on-going project; the dresses will be sent to Honduras every time there is a mission trip. The next trip is scheduled for March of 2015. There is a **basket in the narthex of the Chapel** to collect any donations you may have. Thank you for your help!

