

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Blessing for our Mother ~

Loving God,
You are the source of all life
and your presence is shown to us
through the gift of our mother.
We thank you for her life,
her care,
and the love and value of family life
that she has taught us.
As a mother gives life
and nourishment to her children,
So you watch over your people.

Bless our mothers.
Let the example of her faith
and love
shine forth as a bright morning star.
Help her to hear your voice,
and to follow you each day.
May she teach her children
to love and worship you.

Grant that we,
her family,
may we honor her
with a spirit of love
and profound respect.
May you, O God, fill her with joy
and holiness in your presence.
Amen.

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

MOTHER'S DAY:

What a blessing motherhood is — not just the physical “giving birth,” but the nurturing and special love that mothering involves. We take time this weekend to celebrate the blessings of mothers. Offer a prayer for them — today and everyday. There is a special blessing from our mother on the back cover of the bulletin.

**WOMEN'S DAY OF RETREAT — MAY 12:**

All Women of Our Lady Chapel, Gilmour Academy, and their guests and friends are invited to join us for our **Women's Spring Retreat on Tuesday, May 12th from 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM at Lennon Board Room.** Father John will facilitate our evening of reflection. The evening will begin with Mass at 5:30 PM, followed by a refreshing dinner that you won't have to cook. **Cost for the evening is \$20.** [Please know that ability to pay for the retreat is not a condition for attendance]. Dinner will be served around 6:30 PM, and the evening of reflection will begin around 7:15 or so. If you can't make it for Mass or even for dinner, come anyway when you can. It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal. So **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Sign up on the retreat sheet which is located on the easel which in the narthex of the Chapel, or call Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560].**

**FAMILY MASS & FIRST COMMUNION:**

Next **Sunday, May 17th**, at the **10:00 AM Family Mass**, many members of our Second Grade Class will be celebrating their first Eucharist. Few of us will argue the fact that one of the times we are closest to God is at our first communion. The faith and openness of a child to Jesus is inspiring. May we all receive the Eucharist with so deep a faith. Congratulations to our children who are celebrating this special bond with Jesus: **John Amps, David Black, Raphael Costa, Rocco DiCenso, Michael Feuerborn, Marco Hayek, Braden Keller, Gavin Kiebler, Anthony Lacroix, Brody Lennon, Dominic Prince, Matthew Mirando, John Overman, David Pfundstein, Thomas Popovich, Patrick Seibel, and Charlie Shade.** Congratulations to all of our children, and also to their parents who have nurtured them in the faith and the love of Jesus. May we always remember that as people of faith — the Church — we too play a very important role in bringing each other into deeper relationship with Jesus.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Our Lady Chapel opened at Gilmour Academy in September, 1995 — which means that it has been used by students, parents, alumni, and the community for nearly 20 years. And in just a few months, we're going to celebrate our 20th anniversary! Many of the details are still in the planning stages, but we want to share some of the plans with you now. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, September 13.** On that day, **Bishop Roger Gries** will join us to offer a special Mass celebrating our anniversary. Then, **following Mass we're going to have a party.** Most of the details are still being finalized, but think of something along the lines of a champagne brunch. You're going to want to be there.

We'll keep you advised over the next few months as more details are confirmed, so check the bulletin regularly. But in the interim, if you'd like to get involved in the planning and execution of our celebration, please call the chapel office and leave your contact information with Patty [440-473-3560].

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Eddie Keating, ['85], son of Carole, brother of Kelly ['83] and Karen ['86], who is preparing for brain surgery.
- For Lad Kukwa who is recovering from spinal surgery.
- For Vinny Heiman, former Gilmour coach, and grandfather of Megan Porter ['17] who is under hospice care.
- For Bill Slattery ['77] who is preparing for cancer surgery.
- For Brother George Klawitter, C.S.C., who is undergoing medical testing.
- For Adeline Derby, an infant, who has a rare disorder.
- For Bob Rickelman, relative of Rhonda Rickelman, Director of Auxiliary Programming, who is undergoing treatment for injuries sustained in a fall.
- For John Burke, uncle of Rachel Burke, member of music ministry, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jack Sutter, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Annie Trivassos who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jay Mulhollen, brother of former Gilmour housekeeping employee, Debbie Bowen, who is undergoing treatment for lymphoma
- For Brother James Reddy, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nicholas Zanella.
- For Jan Botek, wife of Fred, mother of Fred ['85], grandmother of Matthew ['14], Jonathan ['17] and Daniel ['21] Botek, who is undergoing treatment for dementia.
- For Dorothy Power, great aunt of Kiley Eble ['15], who is seriously ill.
- For Janet Surman, sister-in-law of chapel associate, Patty Szaniszló, who is undergoing serious medical treatment.
- For Teddy Prusock, nephew of Lower School associate, Nina Prusock, who is undergoing neurological testing.
- For Jimmy Vickers, father of Lower School teacher, Caroline Holtz, who is seriously ill.
- For Phillip McNulty, nephew of Janet and Mike Heryak, cousin of Lillian ['09], Rosa ['12], and Edwin ['17] Heryak, who is undergoing treatment for Crohn's Disease.
- For Susan Cangelosi, mother of Lou ['09] and Marissa ['12], who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- For Brother James Gulnac, C.S.C., who is under hospice care for cancer.
- For Kay Yunker, aunt of Mary Schmidt, great-aunt of Maggie ['12] Schmidt who is under the care of hospice.
- For Dan Hathey, former Gilmour Tech Employee, who is critically ill with cancer.

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.

**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.



PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Sister Mary King, I.H.M., who is critically ill with pancreatic cancer.
- For Lois Angiocchi, who is preparing for open heart surgery.
- For Kara Dolling, Gilmour’s athletic trainer, who is recovering from a serious illness.
- For Patrick Lawlor, father of Alec Lawlor, resident hall associate, who is recovering from recent surgeries.
- For Nina Curran who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Jack Hickey, a 10 year old, who is recovering from liver transplant surgery.
- For Roger Mallik, brother of Jan Leavitt, uncle of Katie Leavitt, who continues treatment for lymphoma
- For Brother Tom Maddix, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for leukemia
- For Brian Minotas [‘96], Lower School teacher and coach, brother of Lauren [‘99], husband of Laura Panzica [‘02], who is in rehab from a heart condition.
- For Bob Hurtt, Uncle of Gilmour Religion teacher, Sarah Reed, who is undergoing treatment for lymphoma
- For Celeste Kazel, sister of Gilmour Counselor Jamie, and Daniel [‘86] Kazel, who is recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Mark Steffens, grandfather of Emily [‘15] and Natalie [‘18] Kirk, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic and liver cancer.
- For Matt Barry [‘13], brother of Tim [‘12], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Thomas Bares, audio-technical associate, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Maria Ricci, friend of Linda McGraw, who is ill.
- For Gloria Cotton, former director of Residential Life, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Josh Rankin, son of Liz Peca Rankin [‘98] who undergoing treatment for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy
- For Jeff Warner, brother of Denise Calabrese, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a stroke and seizure.
- For Marilyn Malloy, grandmother of Will [‘15], Kylie [‘16], Gianna [‘20], and Charlie Velotta who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Janice Feenstra, sister of Lisa Habe, aunt of Jack [‘19] and Will [‘20] Habe who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Janet Mehling, sister-in-law of Sister Mary Ann Mehling, who is seriously ill with 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 continues in rehab following an accident
- 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 Head of School, Jonathan Wanders, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a brain aneurysm.
- For Betty Herten, aunt of Hope [‘13] and James [‘15] Herten, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- For Sister Barbara Johns, I.H.M., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.



SCHEDULE CHANGE COMING UP [one time only]:

Because of graduation, and the Baccalaureate Mass, we will have changes in the Mass times for the weekend of May 23rd and May 24th. **Saturday evening Mass on May 23rd will be at 4:30 PM, and Family Mass on Sunday, May 24th will be at 9:00 AM. This is a one time change because of graduation weekend.**

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, May 10: 6th Week in Easter	10:00 AM
Monday, May 11:	NO MASS
Tuesday, May 12:	5:30 PM
Wednesday, May 13:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Thursday, May 14: St. Matthias	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Friday, May 15:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Saturday, May 16: The Ascension of Jesus	5:00 PM
Sunday, May 17: The Ascension of Jesus	10:00 AM

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 volunteer.** Come as a family or by yourself.



PRAYER OF DISCIPLESHIP:

Almighty ever-living God, it is an awesome task to be called to follow you in this world. It is an exciting time for us to share about your life. It is an excellent moment for us to believe in your Son, Jesus. Help us not be afraid to proclaim your words to others, to share your gift of grace and to live your spirit in all that we do. Amen.

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Imagine, if you will, Jesus at the Last Supper. He has just finished the meal, and he is walking around the room from one disciple to another. He stops in front of each disciples, looks each one in the eye, and speaks to them from the depth of his heart. There is urgency in his voice, and a tone of intimate love. Judas has been long gone, but to those who remain, Jesus almost begs them to stay close to each other in love. Then he gets to you. He looks you in the eye — penetrating to the depth of your soul — and he whispers: “You did not choose me. No, I chose you and appointed you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure. Then my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is the commandment I give you: Love one another” [John 15:9-17].

The Feast of Pentecost is quickly approaching. There begins a slight shift in theme as we look forward to the graces of Pentecost. We hear of God’s universal love which is not given merely to certain favorites, but is offered beyond national and ethnic boundaries [Acts 10:25-48]. God’s love flows like a fountain — with water tumbling indiscriminately down all sides. In John’s Gospel, Jesus is asking his closest friends to continue the mission of his fountaining love. There is much to grasp and reflect upon. God’s love for us is overwhelming, and we must fountain out that love beyond our comfortable boundaries. “Loving one another” means more than loving those who will receive our love and those who can return it to us abundantly. Our love for others must be the spirit of Jesus that we have all received — and the courage to live and give it out.

St. Luke in his Book of Acts of the Apostles presents us with a beautiful incident of the Church beginning to expand its borders. Cornelius is a Roman soldier who, while praying devoutly receives a vision in which an angel announces that his prayer and generosity have been accepted by God. Then he is instructed to send for Simon Peter for a conference. Simon Peter also has a vision in which he is instructed to eat the birds and animals which are appearing on a large sheet dropped down before him. While the menu sounds strange, we need to remember Peter at this time is a most devout Jew and would never eat anything “unclean.” The voice in his vision responds to his religious objection by reminding him that God made everything clean — and Peter has no authority to name birds and animals and anything that God created as profane.

Meanwhile, the messengers arrive to take Peter back for his conference with the first visionary — Cornelius. What is most important here is to understand that Peter and his companions go into Cornelius’ house even though at this time that would be considered a “no-no.” This entire incident, and how it plays out is one of the most significant in scripture for social and religious reasons. As we hear though, God does not play favorites — not even to the holding back on the sending of the Spirit. Peter — finally understanding that the Holy Spirit was moving beyond friendly confines — declares that Cornelius and all in his company should receive Baptism, even as they had themselves. Jesus, through the Spirit is growing wider and deeper.

John’s Gospel is a favorite at weddings — it’s all about loving. And that is true; but there’s more there than that. Love is about laying down one’s life; love is about remaining faithful as God is to us; love is shown in actions and in mutual sharing of all one’s personal gifts — including histories, fears, graces as well as material goods.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Shirley Mazzulo.
- For Catherine Schafer, wife of Theodore Schafer [‘50]
- For Peggy Regos
- For Daniel Ferrazza, father of Gregory Ferrazza [‘83], and father-in-law of Gregg Rodier [‘79]
- For Michel Tuite [‘87]
- For James Rock, brother of Brother Thomas Rock, C.S.C.
- For Joseph Kruczek.
- For Sister Barbara Lusnack, O.S.U.
- For Melvin Schapker, brother of Brother Donald Schapker, C.S.C.
- For sister Carmelita Wagner, S.N.D.
- For Anne Marie Friedman, sister of Ron Ryavec, Sr., aunt of Ron Ryavec [‘16].
- For Martin and Rose DeSimone
- For Bob Danford.
- For Evelyn Isanski
- For Ed Langhenry
- For Edward Rybka, Sr., father of Edward [‘73], and grandfather of Keith [‘05] and Hallie [‘08] Rybka.

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 us in record keeping [for our friend, the IRS] of any contributions which you may make.

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].
- When you **use** your envelope, please make sure that **your number** is on it. If you need to know your number, please call the Campus Ministry Office. Thanks.

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 [4/25/15] ----- \$ 621.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [4/26/15] ----- \$ 1,063.00
Total Offerings: Saturday [5/2/15] ----- \$ 332.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [5/3/15] ----- \$ 187.00

ALL ARE WELCOME:

Luke's Book of Acts of the Apostles narrates the biblical beginning of one of the three basic changes made in Christianity's first century and a half — the acceptance of Gentiles into the church as Gentiles [Acts 10:25-48]. Originally non-Jews who wished to become disciples of the risen Jesus were expected to first convert to Judaism, and only then convert to Christianity. Since the historical Jesus was a reformer of Judaism, why would a non-Jew want to follow him? Because he had preached his reform in the context of the religion he professed — Judaism — his earliest disciples logically presumed they had to imitate his reforming faith against that same background.

Yet, eventually some of those disciples began to understand more implications of Jesus' resurrection than they had first recognized. As Paul writes to the Church at Galatia, the risen Jesus was quite different from the historical Jesus. Whereas the latter was a Jew, the former had become both Jew and Gentile. Neither was this "new creation" restricted to being a slave or a free person; not even to being a man or woman [see Galatians 3]. For "progressive" Christians like Paul, that meant more than just free — Jewish men could become other Christs.

Though this theology was widely accepted by the time Luke composes Acts in the mid-80's, Luke paints a picture of a gradual process which leads up to it. First, "heretical Jews" — Samaritans — are permitted to become Jesus' followers [Acts 6]. Next, Philip baptizes a Gentile convert to Judaism — the Ethiopian eunuch [Acts 8]. Finally, Cornelius, simply a "God fearing" Gentile, and his family are evangelized and baptized by Peter.

Of course, once Gentiles as Gentiles are accepted as full partners in the faith, most of Jesus' followers begin to ignore the 613 laws of Moses to which first century Jews were committed. Though Matthew's Jesus — addressing the evangelist's Jewish/Christian community — insists his disciples still keep each of those 613 precepts, our Christian biblical authors normally revolve their morality around love. It's not only the one act that unites Jewish and Gentile Christians, it's the one principle on which the historical Jesus based his reform.

Love of others is at the heart of Jesus' faith. No one expresses this principle better than John's Jesus [John 15:9-17] — "This is my commandment, love one another as I love you." And should anyone have any doubt about what such love entails, Jesus continues: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."

The author of John's first letter insightfully expands Jesus' command — "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love" [1 John 4:7-10]. The writer is convinced that all this love stuff actually began with God — "In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins."

Though Luke's Peter is motivated to baptize Cornelius both because of a vision from God and the Spirit's gifts which come down upon the centurion and his family, most commentators on the subject believe love might have historically played a bigger role in Gentile conversions than is mentioned in the Acts narrative.

As I've mentioned before, one of my favorite "religious" posters is the Glenmary one depicting an African-American young boy wearing tattered, hand-me-down clothes, standing in front of a ramshackle house. The caption reads: "God made me. God don't make junk."

If we regard someone as incapable of becoming another Christ, I'm afraid we're regarding him/her as junk. Our sacred authors were convinced that God never created any junk. It just takes some of his/her creatures a little while to figure that out.

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

Loving is a command because we are so selfish. If the elements of loving were so easy and natural to us all, Jesus would not have given a command to do it, and he gives it to his friends twice. If love were easy, Jesus would have probably said: "Keep it up people," and told them to do something harder perhaps. No, this is the hard one because to love means to lay it all out there. Jesus asks this of us because this is the way he began the reversal from sin and its consequences. Love would continue his growing wider and deeper if we would lay it all out there as he did. For all the songs and poems and movies about love, love still remains an insult to our selfishness. Jesus does not give his friends a handbook on how to love — rather he gave them three years of his loving forgiveness, caring, and sharing of all he has. He will lay it all out for them on the cross and then give them the Spirit, but for all that, we flounder. Jesus did not give them a weed to chew or potion to drink which would make loving easy. If any of us could come up with something to make his commandment easier we'd all be rich! One thing is for sure — receiving love from God, and from God through others, seems to be the beginning. We cannot share what we have not first received. Jesus is God's love made visible and receivable. Like a good secret, once received it just has to be shared.

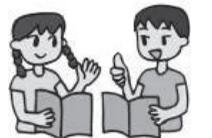
The most difficult aspect of this greatest of all the commands is to believe that we are "loveable" — and that "God has made me loveable." For all the songs and poems and movies about love, there is more money and time spent on arranging our outward selves to appear — appear what? Being loveable comes from within where God's grace plays artist. The beauty then does appear, but radiates outward and cannot be smudged off or wiped away or criticized into disappearance. When Jesus asks us to love one another, he asks first if we have allowed him to wash our feet, our simple humanity — wash away our shame for being so human. Because we do not achieve our own standard of beauty, we assume that we are too ugly, too much the loser to love sincerely as he invites us to do. So that is the first part of this commandment — that we let him grace us with his Spirit so that we become who we really are, rather than the "false shame" of our failures. Loving is never a perfect experience, but being loved makes living with imperfections faith-filled. —edited from the writings of Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

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.

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

Our final session of Faith Education for this year will occur on **May 31st**. Our Sessions go from **8:45—9:45 AM**, with the hope that our children would then **participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass. Now is the time to register your family for next year's classes. Please contact Patty in the Chapel Office [[440-473-3560] if you have any questions.** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility



THE VALUE OF ONE PERSON:

When the German army began to round up Jewish people in Lithuania, thousands of Jews were murdered. But one German soldier objected to their murder — he was Sergeant Anton Schmid. Through his assistance, at least 250 Jews were spared their lives. He managed to hide them, find food, and supply them with forged papers. Schmid himself was arrested in early 1942 for saving these lives; he was tried and executed in 1942. It took Germany almost sixty years to honor the memory of this man — Anton Schmid. In 2000, Germany's Defense Minister in saluting him said: "Too many bowed to the threats and temptations of the dictator Hitler, and too few found the strength to resist. But Sergeant Anton Schmid did resist." Name a person who better obeyed the admonition of the Christ in John's Gospel — "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" [John 15:9-17].

The hero Schmid went beyond what even Jesus encouraged — he laid down his life for strangers. What a welcome the court-martialed Anton Schmid must have received from Our Lord when he entered the Kingdom. Being a Christian requires all the character we can summon up. However, in the face of people such as Sergeant Schmid, we should not grow weary and give up the quest. When our Master returned to His Father, he sent us the Holy Spirit. It is He who increases the spiritual marrow in our Christian backbones; it is He who empowers us to stand up and be counted as Christ's followers. As someone said: "What Jesus accomplished for us in His lifetime, the Holy Spirit accomplishes in ours." With the Spirit, we can face the might of hell and win. We must always remember that Christ has chosen each one of us to be advertisements for Him.

Our lives should be billboards for Christ. He is most anxious that we produce abundant good works. The only authentic method of spreading the Gospel message is to be a genuine Christian person. No one can be forced into Christianity — they enter into it when they see Christianity work. Our lives must attract others to the truth of the Gospel. It was Socrates who told us that the greatest way to live with honor in this world is to be what we pretend to be.

When Al Smith — four time Governor of New York, and a devoted Catholic — was a member of the New York State Assembly in the 1920's, he roomed with a fellow Assemblyman, Robert Wagner, in the state capital. Wagner, who was later to be a distinguished member of the US Senate, became a convert to the Church. He was asked what prompted his conversion. Wagner replied simply: "Watching Al Smith get down on his knees every night to say his prayers." Like Smith, each of us is an ambassador with a portfolio for Christ. Oftentimes, we are completely unaware of the role we are playing. But the non-Christians watching us do not forget that we follow Christ. Frequently we disappoint them. An agnostic once said of the Christians he knew: "I expected nothing and I was not disappointed."

The problem is that each of us has tried many times to be a Christian — only to fall on our face. Do not grow tired. Reflect, as an historian tells us, that the first electric bulb was so faint that a lit candle had to be used along with it. Thirty-two hours were initially required to make the trip by steamboat from Albany to New York — a trip of but 150 miles. The initial flight of the Wright brothers in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina lasted but 12 seconds. The top speed of the first car was anywhere from two to four miles each hour. We know what those inventions can do today. Remember the aphorism that God makes a great finish out of a slow start and nothing can be done until we take the first step. Be patient. It takes an oak fifty years to produce an acorn. Once you have begun to make progress, speak the prayer of the old man: "Lord, I am not yet what I would like to be. But thank you, Lord, because I am no longer what I



4. We need a multiplicity of approaches. No one approach reaches everyone. People go where they are fed.
5. We need to appeal to the idealism of people — particularly that of the young. We need to win people over by linking the Gospel to all that's best inside them, to let the beauty of the Gospel speak to the beauty inside of people.
6. We need to evangelize beyond any ideology of the right or the left. We need to move beyond the categories of liberal and conservative to the categories of love, beauty, and truth.
7. We need to remain widely "Catholic" in our approach. We are not trying to get people to join some small, lean, purist, sectarian group, but to enter a house with many rooms.
8. We need to preach both the freedom of the Gospel and its call for an adult maturity. We need to resist preaching a Gospel that threatens or belittles, even as we preach a Gospel that asks for free and mature obedience.
9. We need today — in an age of instability and too-frequent betrayal — to give a special witness to fidelity.
10. We need, today more than ever, to bear down on the essentials of respect, charity, and graciousness. Cause never justifies disrespect.
11. We need to work at winning over hearts, not hardening them.

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

LIFE TEEN:

Our final meeting of the year will be on Sunday, May 31st, when we will be honoring our Seniors and our 8th graders. Come and try us out. Life Teen 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. 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 final meeting of the year will be on Sunday, May 31st, when we will be honoring our 8th graders and our Seniors. 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. 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.

**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.



THE NEW EVANGELIZATION:

Recently a new expression has made its way into our theological and ecclesial vocabulary. There's a lot of talk today about the New Evangelization. Pope Benedict even called a Synod to gather in Rome to articulate a vision and strategy for such an endeavor. What is meant by New Evangelization? In simple terms: Millions of people — particularly in the Western world — are Christian in name, come from Christian backgrounds, are familiar with Christianity, believe that they know and understand Christianity, but no longer practice that faith in a meaningful way. They've heard of Christ and the Gospel — even though they may be overrating themselves in their belief that they know and understand what these mean. No matter. Whatever their shortcomings in understanding a faith that they no longer practice, they believe that they've already been evangelized and that their non-practice is an examined decision. Their attitude toward Christianity, in essence, is: I know what it is. I've tried it. And it's not for me!

And so it no longer makes sense to speak of trying to evangelize such persons in the same way as we intend that term when we are speaking of taking the Gospel to someone for the first time. It's more accurate precisely to speak of a new evangelization — of an attempt to take the Gospel to individuals and to a culture that have already largely been shaped by it, are in a sense over-familiar with it, but haven't really in fact examined it. The new evangelization tries to take the Gospel to persons who are already Christian but are no longer practicing as Christians.

How to do that? How do we make the Gospel fresh for those for whom it has become stale? How do we, as G. K. Chesterton put it, help people to look at the familiar until it looks unfamiliar again? How do we try to Christianize someone who is already Christian?

There are no simple answers. It's not as if we haven't already been trying to do that for more than a generation. Anxious parents have been trying to do this with their children. Anxious pastors have been trying to do that with their parishioners. Anxious bishops have been trying to do that with their dioceses. Anxious spiritual writers — including this one — have been trying to do that with their readership. And an anxious church as a whole has been trying to do that with the world. What more might we be doing?

My own view is that we are in for a long, uphill struggle — one that demands faith in the power and truth of what we believe in, and a long, difficult patience. Christ, the faith, and the church will survive — they always do. The stone always eventually rolls away from the tomb and Christ always eventually re-emerges, but we too must do our parts. What are those parts? What is the vision that we need as we try to reach out to evangelize the already evangelized? Here are the principles involved:

1. We need to clearly name this task, recognize its urgency, and center ourselves in Jesus' final mandate to go out to the whole world and make disciples [see Matthew 28].
2. We need work at trying to re-inflate the romantic imagination of our faith. We have been better recently at fanning the flames of our theological imagination, but we've struggled mightily to get people to fall in love with the faith.
3. We need to emphasize both catechesis and theology. We need to focus both on those who are trying to learn the essentials of their faith, and those who are trying to make intellectual sense of their faith.



used to be.” Jesus gave up His life for our sins. We must give up ourselves for His service. Know that one person can make a difference. If you have any doubt on this point, check it out with any of the 250 people whose lives Sergeant Anton Schmid saved.

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

RELATIONSHIPS COME ALIVE:

The Good News of John's Gospel is that Christ does not call us slaves, but friends [John 15:9-17]. He has chosen us as friends and has given his life for us. Jesus shares with us the secrets of the Father who loves us unconditionally. He assures us that we can use his name in putting our petitions before God. While our friendship with Christ is the source of a deep and abiding joy, it also places fundamental demands on us — we are to remain in his love by keeping his commandments. Jesus calls us to love one another as he has loved us. Our Christian vocation is to share his self-sacrificing love for us with others — and to do so with a joyful spirit.

John's Gospel invites us to reflect on our own friendships. We do not choose our parents or siblings, but we do choose our friends. We like to spend time with them and to do things together. If we are blessed with good friends, prayers of gratitude are certainly in order. A husband who considers his wife his best friend thanks God every day for this blessing.

Loyalty is a crucial virtue for maintaining friendships. Think, for a moment, of Mary of Magdalen who remained faithful to Jesus through his passion and death. A collegian stood by her pregnant friend, after she was abandoned by the father. She was there for her friend through the birth and beyond.

Friendships can go badly — misunderstandings, disappointments, inattention, and even betrayal. This makes forgiveness essential to maintaining and restoring friendships. We learn from Christ who forgave his friends after they abandoned him, offering them a greeting of peace and an opportunity to start over with him. Following the example of Jesus, a small business owner not only forgave his friend who stole some money from the company, but managed to restore their friendship over a period of time.

What can you learn from Christ about deepening and strengthening your friendships and relationships?

—taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik which appear on the internet

EVERYONE COUNTS:

A lay people are not a second-class Christians, for they share in the priestly ministry of Christ — the universal priesthood. They see to it that the people in their walk of life — in school, family and work — come to know the Gospel and learn to love Christ. Through their faith, they leave a mark on society, business, and politics. They support the life of the Church, for instance, by becoming lectors or extraordinary ministers, by volunteering as a group leaders, or by serving on church committees and councils — for example, the parish council or the board of directors of an institution. Young people, especially, should give serious thought to the question of what place God might want them to have in the Church.

—YOUCAT #139

A PROVERB:

Greatness is defined by what we give — not by what we receive.



IMMERSED IN GOD'S LOVE:

St. Luke gives us an account of the first Gentile convert to Christianity — Cornelius the Centurion [Acts 10:25-48]. Cornelius had a vision of an Angel who told him that his good deeds had been recognized by God, and that he should send his men to bring Simon Peter to him. At more or less the same time Peter himself had a dream in which he saw a big sheet being let down from heaven containing many unclean animals, and he was told by a voice from heaven to kill and eat them. As a well brought-up Jew, Peter did not want to eat anything unclean, but he was told by the voice three times that nothing made by God was unclean, and to kill and eat the animals. By this he came to understand that the Word of God was intended not only for the Jews, but for the Gentiles too. Peter therefore went with the men Cornelius had sent. The Holy Spirit was poured out on them all and Peter baptized Cornelius and his entire household.

This is a wonderful story and it shows how the newly born Church was guided by the Holy Spirit to fulfill its mission in accordance with God's will. And it is clear that it is God's will that the Church is intended for everyone in the world — and not just for the Jewish people. This is something that we all have to keep always before us — realizing that the membership of the Church can never exclude anyone who believes. It can never be confined to an exclusive group. We have to always guard ourselves from thinking that this or that person or group is unworthy of being a Christian.

The writings of John are all about love [1 John 4:7-10 and John 15:9-17]. John exhorts us to place love at the very center of our lives, and to make it our main motivating force. He tells us that love originates in God, and that anyone who embraces God embraces love. He also points out that when we fail to love others, we betray a lack of belief in God. St John says: "Anyone who fails to love can never have known God." This really puts our belief in God to the test, for it means that we can never separate our beliefs from our actions. When we discover hate in our hearts, we ought to realize that we are getting into dangerous territory, and that we are already putting our faith in God in jeopardy.

In John's Gospel, Jesus is speaking to his disciples in the long discourse he gave at the Last Supper. After telling them about the True Vine [5th Week in Easter], Jesus moves on to tell them about how he is the expression of the Father's love for us all. He gives us the famous command to love — "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you."

In Old Testament times, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments for his Chosen People. But these were very prescriptive — the "do this, don't do that" model. But here in the new dispensation all the old commandments are reduced to this one new commandment — the command to love. This new commandment actually encapsulates all the old ones. But even more importantly, this new commandment makes it very clear that love is the underlying principle by which God wants us to live our lives.

The famous early 20th Century Catholic intellectual, Hilaire Belloc, fell in love with an American girl whom he met in a London restaurant. After a few days trying unsuccessfully to woo her, she informed him that she was leaving for America the very next day. She further told him that she was going to fulfill her long term wish to enter an enclosed convent on her return to California. The girl's rich mother wouldn't let her join the convent until she had taken her on a tour of Europe so that she could see something of the world before taking her vows and entering the cloister.

Belloc was shattered and beside himself with grief at the lovely girl's departure. He was only a



loved. Parents respond to their baby's cries in the middle of the night. They have no choice if they really love their child. But that choice takes sacrifice.

This is the meaning of true love. Look at your Moms and Dads. Look at the sacrifices each makes for the other. That is how they make love to each other. In a true marriage, marital love is infinitely more than the physical expression of that love. A teenager listens to a friend's story of family difficulties. The other teen needs an ear that understands. The first teen would much rather be listening to music, or playing video games, but has no choice but to be present for the suffering friend. Christianity demands it. A retiree spends a few hours each day with an elderly neighbor. He'd rather be fishing or golfing, but he has no choice but to visit Christ's presence in the homebound. An auto mechanic repairs a traveling family's car after the garage's hours so that the poor folks can get on the road and get their kids to bed. He would rather be with his own family, but he is a Christian — he has no choice. And on and on. Millions of little routine daily sacrifices make the greatest life there ever was a reality in our world. Love, the true love of Jesus, imposes limits on us. Love is sacrificial. When we look at the cross, we realize the life that we have been chosen to lead. We have been chosen to make Jesus' life a reality. And He died for others.

One last story. It is just a story — not in scripture — but it gets the point across. It is the story of how the devil tried to sneak into heaven. The legend goes that just before dawn on Easter Sunday, the devil dressed up as the Risen Lord. He had his fallen angels accompany him, all dressed as angels of light. As he approached the gates of heaven, he and his mob cried out the words of Psalm 24: "Lift up your heads, O gates of Heaven. Rise up you ancient portals, that the King of Glory might enter." The real angels looked down at whom they thought was their King returning in triumph from the dead. So they shouted back in joy the next words of that psalm: "Who is the King of Glory?" Then the devil then made a fatal mistake. He opened his arms, spread his palms and declared: "I am the King of Glory." He did himself in. The angels immediately slammed shut the gates of heaven. They knew this was not the Lord. Do you know how? They saw that there were no marks of the nails in his palms. He had no wounds of love. He was obviously an imposter. To put it very simply. If we have been chosen by Christ, and we have, then we have to accept His way of life, the way of limits, the way of sacrificial love.

—taken from the writings of Father Joseph Pellegrino which appear on the internet

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Acts 16:11-15, John 15:26-16:4

Tuesday: Acts 16:22-34, John 16:5-11

Wednesday: Acts 17:15-18:1, John 16:12-15

Thursday: Acts 1:15-26, John 15:9-17

Friday: Acts 18:9-18, John 16:20-23

Saturday: Acts 18:23-28, John 16:23-28

Ascension of Jesus : Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 4:1-13, Mark 16:15-20

WISE WORDS:

Be not afraid of growing slowly; be afraid of only standing still

— Ancient Chinese Proverb

LOVE — A CHOICE THAT DEMANDS SACRIFICE:

Love, love, love, love, love. It seems that we hear this word over and over. Bill loves Sue; Sue loves Fred; etc. Every sitcom is loaded with people who fall in and out of love. We hear about married people breaking up, and we wonder where their love went. Then we come to Church, and again we hear about love. But it is not all the same.

True love is a choice that demands sacrifice. People who fall in and out of love have not made a choice that demands sacrifice — or at least one of them has not. There is always a lot of talk about love when people are getting married. But, sadly, some of them don't see the Lord as the center of their love. So they want weddings with beautiful backgrounds, but not necessarily with the sacrament of marriage. Perhaps they are not ready for true love. Perhaps they are not ready for a choice that demands sacrifice. Perhaps they really do not want Christ's love in their marriage — that costs too much.

The Love of Christ comes with a price. There is sacrifice that we need to make to return the Lord's love. If we have been chosen to work for the Kingdom — and according to John's Gospel [John 15:9-17]: "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit — then our options are limited. If we have put on the baptismal gown of the Lord, we cannot wear the clothes of pagans. This is hard to accept in a society that preaches endless choices — a society that caters to infantile fantasies of no rules and no limits to life. We have to come to the realization that because we have been chosen, we have to have rules for a way of life that is truly Christian. We have to deny our infantile desires for the infinitely greater good of the Kingdom of God. Some stories and examples may help. A young boy, fourteen years old, gets his first after school job working in his grandfather's little store. After a few months, his grandfather felt confident that the boy could be left to handle the store alone for brief periods of time. The store was in a quiet neighborhood, and there really were not many people around in the afternoon. But during one of the few times when the boy was alone, the store was robbed. And the boy was shot to death. A few days later the robbers were captured.

That was the same day as the boy's funeral. A news reporter interviewed the grandfather and told him that they police caught the murderers. Then the police officer asked the grandfather if he wanted the men to receive capital punishment. The grandfather looked shocked at the question: "I cannot wish that. I am a Christian, I am not permitted revenge" Christianity imposes limits. You are aware that Blessed Mother Theresa was often asked why she spent so much time and energy helping people who were going to die anyway — and most of them not even Christian. Her answer was that she had no choice. She was a Christian, committed to serving Jesus, and Christ identified with the poorest of the poor.

You may not have heard the story of Princess Alice — the second daughter of Queen Victoria of England. The princess married and had a child, a baby boy. When the child was four, he came down with a terrible disease at the time called "black diphtheria". It was highly contagious; and there was no cure and no hope. The doctors and nurses told the princess that she had to stay away from her son. Her own health was frail. One day as she stood at the door of her little boy's room, she heard him whispering to a nurse: "Why doesn't my Mommy hold me and kiss me anymore"

That was more than Princess Alice could bear. She then did what any loving mother would do — she ran to her son's bed, hugged him and kissed him. She had no choice. She had to show her love. He needed her. Within weeks she came down with the sickness. Both were buried together. The choice of love demands that we accept limitations on our lives and even pain and suffering in order to love as Jesus



very young man, but he managed to scrape together enough money to buy a passage on the next boat to New York. Without any money — and just relying on his wits — he managed to get himself across America. Often he offered to paint a portrait of a hotel keeper in exchange for a night's lodgings.

When Belloc eventually arrived in California, he managed to track down the poor girl, and to her complete astonishment turned up on her doorstep asking her to marry him. She refused again, but he wouldn't give up, and in due course managed to woo her away from the convent to be his wife.

This is love; this is passion; this is heroic; this is the kind of love God wants from us.

And so Jesus says to the disciples: "A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends." We often see these words inscribed on war memorials to mark the sacrifice of the lives given by those who have fallen in war. We acknowledge the tremendous sacrifice that these soldiers were willing to make on behalf of others.

But when we look around us, we actually discover quite a lot of this sort of thing — we see it in the lives of parents who make huge sacrifices for their children; we see it in the lives of those who dedicate themselves to caring for a partner or a parent or a sick child; we see it in the lives of those who give up a kidney so that someone else does not have to live their lives on a dialysis machine.

As humans we find that we are actually no strangers to sacrifice. In fact, we are surrounded by people, frequently without a vestige of faith, who live lives of tremendous and heroic self-sacrifice. One is led to conclude that we are made that way — that we human beings, for all our faults and failures, can in the end come up with the goods. The God who made us knows this very well. He places before us achievable goals, targets that are hittable. He knows us better than we know ourselves, and the Cross he places on our shoulders is tailor-made to our own very particular specifications.

This Christian enterprise is a wonderful mystery. It provides a deeply satisfying understanding of the reasons behind the existence of the whole created order. We each have our part to play. But before us is the most powerful example of Jesus Christ himself. He is the Son of God and Son of Man; the lamb and the shepherd; the priest and the victim; the creator and the savior.

So we glory in our faith and in the great God we have. We marvel at the intricacy of his workings and the mysterious hidden way that he operates in the world. And we look forward with anticipation to coming of his wonderful Kingdom at the end of time.

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

ALTAR SERVERS and LECTORS:

We continue to be in need of servers and lectors. **Any student who is in the 3rd [and up] grade is invited to become an altar server; any student who is in the 5th [and up] grade is invited to become a lector.** These are both wonderful ministries — a great way to serve God and the faith community. If you would like to take advantage of these opportunities, **please give your name to Father John.** You do not have to attend Gilmour to



be an altar server, lector, or to be involved in any other ministry at Our Lady Chapel. **Please call the chapel office [440-473-3560].**

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR:

"If you truly want to help the soul of your neighbor, you should approach God first with all your heart. Ask him simply to fill you with charity, the greatest of all virtues; with it you can accomplish what you desire."

— St. Vincent Ferrer

LETTERS TO GOD — REASONS TO JOURNAL:

My first writing professor was a short stocky man who didn't like religion and wore a Harley Davidson leather jacket to class. Even more so, he was bald with a white goatee and his signature move was honesty. He didn't believe in sugar-coating life. Honesty was the only thing that made for good writing — even if the truth hurt. Despite all these eccentric quirks, his teachings changed not only my writing, but my life.

One day my professor pulled out a small book from his bag. It had a black cover and the pages looked yellow and worn out. “So, does anyone in here use a journal?” he asked. Not waiting long for our class’ response he mumbled: “Hmm, that’s too bad.”

He continued to explain that his journal was his sanctuary — the place where he found safety and calm. He wrote down all the experiences that inspired him, all his thoughts, and most importantly his struggles. It was the place where he processed the joys and hopes, the griefs, and anxieties of life.

“Don’t be fooled” he warned us, “this isn’t a diary — it’s a secret weapon, a tool for your success and for your happiness.”

Immediately after class I drove to the bookstore and bought my first journal. Ten years and five journals later, you’ll find my own worn-out journal in my backpack. So what’s the big hype about journaling? What can it do for you? Here are five reasons why you should start a journal today.

1. **Keep your brain healthy.** It’s one thing to want to pray more; It’s another thing to actually sit down and do it. And even when you do pray, there are an endless number of obstacles and distractions. So often I walk into the chapel and sit there with my brain scrambled. When there are 10,000 things going on at the same time, it’s easy to get overwhelmed in prayer. But if I write my prayer — things are different. Writing down my thoughts and prayers force me to focus on one thing at a time. My brain automatically tries to process a “bagillion” things at a time, but working through my thoughts slowly on paper puts my soul at rest.
2. **Find Peace and clarity.** Journaling might be weird and even painful at first, but the fruit of that struggle is peace and clarity. Writing my thoughts slow me down enough to remember that God is with me through it all. Moreover, it reminds me that God’s plan is bigger than the one I’ve drawn up in my head. Journaling always seems like a burden, but every time I begin my prayer this way, I find myself more peaceful with a greater sense of clarity and direction.
3. **Create evidence of God’s plan.** I’ve been journaling for almost ten years, and every now and again I find myself randomly reading my old entries. I’ll open it, turn to a random page, look at the date, and it’s as if I am reading my own biography. There was a time I spent two hours reading the whole journal because I was in awe of the ways that God worked with me through my doubts, pain, and fears. Some pages even had teardrops that bled into the ink. My journals are evidence that I have been through some tough times in my life, but even more so, it’s proof that God has a plan for us and that our suffering is only temporary. My prayers and my letters to God are all hard evidence that things get better — in fact, they get more than better. Document your current prayers and your struggles and be



amazed at the ways God works in your life over the years. Write it down so that you can be living proof of someone who has died and risen with Christ.

4. **Allow God to become a real friend.** Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to chat with a stranger? Even when you have good intentions and genuinely want to start a conversation, sometimes there is a natural awkwardness that comes with the task. Every now and then I experience this in my prayer. When I pray, I go through the usual and polite routines — sign of the cross, thank you for..., protect this person, etc... — but then I find myself at a loss for anything meaningful to say. There are times when I go so long without praying that God becomes a stranger to me. Over the years, I’ve discovered that keeping a consistent journal creates a history of your relationship. Think about this. The best conversations I have are with my best friends, and it’s because we have a history of things to chat about. When I see them I can’t help but ask them how their week was, how their job interview went or how their vacation was. There is a certain ease to the friendship because of the countless memories we share together. My best friendships require a continual act of checking up on each other. During difficult times, I never demand that my friends fix my problems. I simply appreciate they are with me because their presence can ease the pain. The same goes with God. Spiritual journaling is yet another tool that creates relationship history — it draws us deeper and deeper into friendship with an infinite God who thirsts for our attention. Almost all of my entries begin with “Dear Lord” and conclude with “Until next time...” You, of course, can and should find your own way to speak to God, but these entries give us opportunities to continue the conversation with ease rather than being at a loss for words like we so often are. The intimacy level of your entries is all up to you, but I would encourage you to write as if you are on a mission to fall in love.
5. **Write for your grandkids or for those who come after you.** I have a distinct memory of being at my grandfather’s funeral. We were surrounded by loved ones, picture boards, slideshows, and even poetry about the generous life that he lived. But even after all the stories, I wish I could have heard about his life first hand; I wish I could know the young disciple that he was. It sounds silly, but another reason that I journal is for my future grandkids. I want them to know that I, like them, was a real person, with real struggles, challenges, and sometimes hopeless situations. But through it all, it was Christ who transformed my life into something worth living. Spiritual journaling leaves a trace of our struggle to be holy. If we seek Christ worthily, our lives can blaze a pathway to Him, and our written prayers can be a way for us to share in each other’s journeys.

When I was nineteen and at the beginning of my spiritual journey, I found myself with nowhere to go on Valentine’s Day. In my loneliness, I drove to an adoration chapel. I knew of a church that had perpetual adoration, and it calmed my soul to know that I could spend Valentine’s day feeling wanted, accepted, and deeply loved. That day I spent over two hours writing, praying, listening to music, talking — hanging out.

Looking back at my entry, I didn’t receive any quick fixes. I was still single after walking out of the chapel — the drama didn’t disappear — but I left hopeful that God had a much bigger plan for me.

Journaling isn’t a magic trick — it’s a style of prayer that brings us closer to an intimate friendship with the divine. It’s a powerful tool that leads us to surrender to His mysterious plan rather than frantically praying for a quick fix to our unending litany of struggles.

—taken from the writings of Jurell Sison, an associate of the Bible Geek