

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for the third week in Advent ~

I praise you, Lord,
and ask,
who am I,
A small one of the earth,
that the word of the Lord
should come to me?
Open my ears
that it may be a word
that compels me
to do what is right and just.
Open my heart
that it may be a word of rejoicing.

O Majesty,
O Splendor
greater than the mountains and the sky!
I am a child of earth
who adores you.
I love you,
And I live
because you have desired me.
Praised be God
whose greatness has reached
to the ends of the earth.
Let me live in your presence
and give thanks through your name!
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.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH — LAST WEEK:

We are beginning our annual Advent-Christmas outreach program earlier this year because many have expressed concern that they have not had enough time to participate as they would like. Our Lady Chapel is again joining hands in partnership with several Parishes and social service agencies in an effort to share our lives together. The *Adopt a Family* project and the *Giving Tree* programs have been a tradition at Our Lady Chapel for many years. This year, we will again be serving these parishes and agencies in these two ways.

[1] **Giving Tree/Adopt a Child.** Our Lady of Fatima Community Center, the West Side Catholic Center, Manor Care, and St. Adalbert Parish are all trying to serve the needs of the less fortunate during this Advent-Christmas time. Most of these agencies need hats, gloves, socks, underwear, sweaters, sweat shirts, hoodies, infant needs, books, toys and games for children, ages Newborn to 16 years. Manor Care, serving the elderly, need fleece throw blankets, as well as hats & gloves. People will be able to pick an ornament off of the tree — located in the narthex of the chapel — with a label showing the item needed. [There will also be a tree located in the front lobby of the Lower School]. These items would then be gathered, UNWRAPPED, please, and the tag [ornament] taped onto the gift. **Our goal would be to have all items assembled by December 16th, for pickup by the various agencies.**

[2] **Adopt a Family.** This year we would again like to adopt between a minimum of 30-40 families from St. Adalbert Parish School. St. Adalbert identifies families — most often single parent, below poverty level families; we are given the grade levels of the children & other family information, so that you can purchase gifts appropriate to each member. In addition, if possible, we ask that you also provide a Christmas meal for the family [non-perishable items in a food basket, and/or Gift Cards for Giant Eagle, Aldi's or Family Dollar.] Those from our chapel family who participated in this project last year spoke very highly of the benefit of this project to their own families. This is a project that the entire family can get involved in. Families can be matched according to family size, ages, etc. It was truly inspiring. Adopt-a-family gifts should be WRAPPED. **We would need everything here at the chapel by NOON on Sunday, December 20th. Please call Patty at the Chapel Office [440-473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org] if you and your family would like to participate in this program, or if you have any questions.**

ADVENT DEVOTIONS:

On the table in the narthex of the Chapel are several Advent devotionals to assist you in your spiritual journey during this season of Advent. We hope that you will make use of them for you and your family. [1] **The Little Blue Book** with daily readings and devotions. This book corresponds to "The Little Black Book" that is so popular during Lent. [2] The daily scripture devotion, **The Word Among Us**, is available. It lists the scripture passage for the day along with a short reflection on one of the passages.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE:

On **Monday, December 21st**, at **7:00 PM**, we will celebrate our Advent communal **Penance Service**. This service will consist of scriptural reflections by those involved in the Christmas story. There will also be songs and hymns, and a time to straighten the paths of our lives to ease the arrival of our God. Each of us needs to truly hear in our heart the message of John the Baptist: "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." The service will last about 45 minutes. There will be an opportunity for individual reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation following the service. Please join us.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Carol Yost who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Zio Romano who is very ill.
- For Pat MacCandlish who is recovering from neuro surgery.
- For Owen Timura, an 8 year old, who has been diagnosed with lymphoma
- For Jackie Goler who has been diagnosed with lymphoma
- For Jay Cusick who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- For Eddie Keating, brother of Kelly ['83] and Karen ['86], who is recovering from brain surgery.
- For Vickie Norris, kitchen employee, who is recovering from emergency heart surgery.
- For Becca Curry, a young mother, who has been diagnosed with lymphoma.
- For Kate Wilson, Niece of Brother Ken Kane, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Penny Morotto who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Justin Tarr who is critically ill with brain cancer.
- For Bun Riley, who is preparing for surgery.
- For Joseph Frantz ['75], brother of Mark ['65], David ['66], Roger ['69], and Peter ['78] Frantz, who is critically ill.
- For Cindy Bernet who is recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Jim Spicer who is undergoing treatment for brain and lung cancer.
- For John O'Brian who has been diagnosed with a serious form of cancer.
- For Andy Sims who is recovering from spinal surgery.
- For Bill Slattery ['77] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Burkey, uncle of Rachel Burkey, member of music ministry, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Annie Trivassos who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nicholas Zanella., who is undergoing medical treatment
- 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 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 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.

BRINGING UP THE OFFERTORY GIFTS:

Would you and your family or group like to bring up the gifts at the offertory at Mass? In the past, our Council people have invited people to bring up the gifts, and we have found that many — if not most — of you like to be asked. But in using this method, we may be leaving people out, especially if it is done as a "last minute item". So, we are posting a sign-up sheet on the Easel in the narthex of the chapel. **If you or your family or group would like to bring up the gifts on a certain Saturday or Sunday — or if you are open to doing this at any time — please call the chapel office [440-473-3560].** We look forward to opening this beautiful experience to all in our community.



PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Mark LaCasse, brother of Upper School Associate, Linda Wheeler, uncle of Molly [*06] Wheeler, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Charlie Grover who is recovering from spinal surgery.
- For Molly McKenna who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jerry Walczak, grandfather of Carter DiVincenzo [*19], who is undergoing treatment for congestive heart failure.
- For Charles Babbush, father of Jeffrey [*83] who is critically ill.
- For Ali Priest, who is undergoing treatment for a rare muscular disease.
- For Debbie Cappioni and Alice Bruce, great aunts of Patrick [*22], Daniel [*26], and former Gilmour student, Morgan Miklus, who are undergoing medical testing.
- For Thelma Bingaman, who is recovering from injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Peggy Hurley, relative of James [*10] and Connor [*13] Hurley, who is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- For Sue Nyberg, godmother of Katie Leavitt, who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Andrea Trivisonno who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Ryan Berger [*15], brother of Cameron [*17] who is recovering from injuries sustained in an accident.
- For Drew Franco, son of Brian [*90], nephew of Jeff [*88] and Kristin [*94] Kirkpatrick, who is struggling with a seizure disorder.
- For Michael Palumbo, father of Michael [*14], Marisa [*15], and former Gilmour student, Christian, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Todd Deranek, relative of Hayden [*28] and Hadley [*29] Bashein, who was seriously injured in an accident.
- For Maureen Kenner, aunt of Katherine [*09] and David Hasler [*13], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Colleen Lowman, grandmother of Rachel Burkey, member of music ministry, who is seriously ill.
- For Dennis Kavran, father of Dennis [*86] and Jennifer [*95], grandfather of Adam [*14] and Madeleine [*16] Miller, who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Donna Farkas who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Lexi Pappadakes, who is undergoing treatment for complications from surgery..
- For Rosemarie Lemieux who is ill.
- For Robert Heltzel [*65], father of Jennifer [*91] and Kathleen [*93] Heltzel, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Matt Barry [*13], brother of Tim [*12], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Maria Ricci, friend of Linda McGraw, who is ill.
- For Jeff Warner, brother of Denise Calabrese, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a stroke and seizure.
- For Janice Feenstra, sister of Lisa Habe, aunt of Jack [*19] and Will [*20] Habe who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- 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 Mary Kampman, mother of Mark [*81], Matthew [*85], Dean [*86], and Douglas [*88] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Karen Wanders, mother of upper school Head of School, Jonathan Wanders, who continues in treatment and rehabilitation
- For Betty Herten, aunt of Hope [*13] and James [*15] Herten, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.



FAITH EDUCATION — DECEMBER 13:

Faith Education for this year continues. 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. Register your family for classes by contacting Patty in the Chapel Office [[440-473-3560]. If you have any questions, please call Patty in the chapel office. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility. Dates for December and January: December 13-20 and January 10-24-31.



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SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, December 13: 3 rd Week in Advent	10:00 AM
Monday, December 14: St. John of the Cross	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Tuesday, December 15:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Wednesday, December 16:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Thursday, December 17:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Friday, December 18:	5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Saturday, December 19: 4 th Week in Advent	5:00 PM
Sunday, December 20: 4 th Week in Advent	10:00 AM

UPCOMING CHAPEL ACTIVITIES:

December 13 -----	Faith Education Session #11 EDGE Giving Tree/Adopt Family Project Children’s Christmas Gospel Rehearsal	8:45 AM - 9:45 AM 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM 11:30 AM—12:30 PM
December 15 -----	Chapel Council Meeting	6:15 PM
December 20 -----	Faith Education Session #12 Decoration of Chapel for Christmas Children’s Christmas Gospel Rehearsal	8:45 AM - 9:45 AM 11:30 AM 11:30 am—12:30 PM
December 21 -----	Advent Penance Service	7:00 PM
December 24 -----	Children’s Christmas Mass Christmas Eve Community Mass	4:45 PM 10:00 PM
December 25 -----	Mass on Christmas Day	10:00 AM
December 31 -----	New Year’s Eve Mass	5:30 PM

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

It is helpful to our spiritual life to spend more than a glancing moment when looking at and reading our Christmas Cards — with their notes of good wishes both printed and handwritten. It is good for our souls also to spend time with the pictures or drawings on those cards and notes. We probably look quickly at the signature — do that first, as it is natural. But then after you spend time with the card, look at the signature again — it will become a prayer.

The writings of the Prophet Zephaniah are full of prophecies against the nation, the leaders, and the people of Israel. Disasters will befall God's people because of their false worship and disregard for the needs of the poor. God is going to sweep away all living things from the face of the earth. The leaders, the judges, the prophets, and the priests have all defiled the nation and the city of Jerusalem.

But all this sad-bad news is replaced by the glad-news that this very same God of troubling vengeance has remained faithful and actually is living in the presence of Israel; fear and disenchantment have been driven away and the victorious warrior is now singing and dancing with joy over the return of Israel [Zephaniah 3:14-18].

The images in this poem are celebrational and reflective of the ritual festivals of this agricultural land. Instead of a sweeping away, there is a gathering up; rather than banishment, there is inclusion. The people are to shout for joy that what was held against them has been removed, and they are to relate gratefully with their new and loving King.

This 3rd Week in Advent used to be called “Rejoice Sunday” [Gaudate Sunday], and the themes running through the Scripture Readings are certainly joyful. We are now less than two weeks away from the celebration of the feast of the Nativity. The sense of joyful anticipation is emphasized. Jesus, as Victorious Warrior, is drawing near. Paul's letter to the Church at Philippi [4:4-7] echoes strongly this spirit. Someone very good to us and for us is near and we will be better for that Someone's arrival.

John the Baptist continues to take “center stage” as he announces the imminent arrival of the Messiah [Luke 3:10-18]. In response to this preaching, various groups of people line up to find out what they must do to be ready. We all want to know what's expected of us — what's going to be on the test; how will I be prepared for the upcoming job interview; what's involved in taking care of aging parents. The crowds, the tax collectors, the soldiers and presumably other groups of influential people, stepped up to make sure they would be wearing the proper clothes and appearing just right and ready.

John tells each in turn to let go of the natural inclinations of their trade or lifestyle. Basically John is telling them to be freed from their fullness of self to receive a life that leads to the fullness of life. John the Baptist uses a familiar farm image to describe one of the missions of the One who is to come. The Waited-For will have a large fan in His hand and will separate the precious grains of wheat from the expendable chaff. The grain are those who will receive life through the Messiah and in turn give that life through their deeds. The chaff will be those who will choose other ways of receiving meaning for their lives.

Throughout this exchange, John continues to distribute the “Good News”. The rejoicing is both the giving and the receiving of the News of the coming of the presence of God. This is a partial reason for the giving of gifts during this Advent and Christmas season. Gifts are meant to express something about the giver, the receiver and something about the relationship between both.

The seven sacraments within the Catholic Church say the same kind of things as gifts of God. During this Advent season, it would be well for us to not give presents, but to give sacraments. These big

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Charles Cumming.
- For Rose Ghartey, mother of Brother Nathaniel Obbin, C.S.C.
- For Lajos Takas.
- For Bob Solen, grandfather of Trevor Harrington [*19].
- For Sister St. Dominic Nudo, S.N.D.
- For Ernie Ernsberger.
- For Ronald Rasoletti [anniversary]
- For Mary Lou Lawlor, grandmother of Resident associate, Alec Lawlor.
- For Sister Geraldine Wadowick, S.N.D.
- For Kenneth Laue, brother-in-law of Brother James Kumba, C.S.C.
- For Eleanor DeMarco, mother of chapel associate, Patty Szanislo, and Kathy DeMarco [Anniversary]
- For Louise DeFlorio [anniversary]
- For Harry Whelan
- For Sister Jean Marie, O.C.D.
- For Brother John Thornton, C.S.C.
- For Katherine Kearney, mother-in-law of CFO Kelley Kearney, grandmother of Chris [*09] and Bridget [*13] Kearney.
- For Joe DeVito
- For Brother Julien Grandmont, C.S.C.
- For Sister Josephine Mariano, C.S.C.
- For Michael Spena, grandfather of Michael [*93] and Rebecca [*96] Spena.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For Jaylynn Wilcox, a 12 year old girl, missing since November 17.
- For the victims of the violence in San Bernadino.
- For an end to violence in our society.
- For the families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.
- 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.

THE TRUTH:

“Everyone has inside them a piece of good news. The good news is you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is.” —Anne Frank

ARE WE WAITING FOR SOMEONE WHO IS ALREADY HERE?

One of the problems with the Scripture Readings used in our liturgical celebration of Advent is that many of us logically employ them to prepare for Christmas — forgetting that none of them were composed for that purpose. This is especially true on this “Rejoice [Laetare] Sunday.” Our sacred authors aren’t rejoicing over the future coming of Jesus at Bethlehem — they’re joyfully reflecting on the God already in their midst.

Few prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures zero in on this belief better than Zephaniah [3:14-18]. Active during the late 7th century BCE reign of the reforming king Josiah, the prophet ends his short collection of oracles with a basic reminder to people of faith that no matter what’s happening around us — no matter how confusing the life we live, no matter the tensions we constantly experience — “God is in your midst, a mighty savior; he will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love, he will sing joyfully because of you, as one sings at festivals.”

We must never forget that the historical Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed the same message at the beginning of his public ministry, reminding his disciples that God’s kingdom is so close, we can extend our hand and touch it [Mark 1:15]. God is present and working effectively in each of our lives.

Luke was convinced that the morality flowing from this conviction of the presence of God’s kingdom was so powerful that it trumped even what was taught and experienced by the prophetic reformer John the Baptizer. Though the evangelist certainly agreed with John’s command to share what we have with those who have nothing, to stop extorting money from the helpless, and to cease lying about others’ actions, he was convinced that Jesus’ arrival would usher in an even deeper way of relating to God and the people around us. For the evangelist, the unique ritual which would symbolize this new covenant wouldn’t be just a “water” baptism — it would come “with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Serious students of Scripture respect the importance of the Spirit in Luke/Acts. Writing in the mid-80’s, the evangelist and his community know just the risen Jesus. As far as we can determine, none had ever personally encountered the itinerant Galilean preacher who lived and taught during the first third of the first century CE. They experienced only the “new creation” who was neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, male or female. And it was the Spirit who helped them surface that risen Jesus in their daily lives.

Unlike his mentor, the Baptizer, who was constantly looking for the arrival of the Lord — the historical Jesus was convinced that God was already present, day by day working effectively in everything and everyone they experienced. Though John thought the morality which he expected his followers to practice would hasten the Lord’s coming into this world, Jesus was convinced that the love of neighbor which he preached was simply the essential way to surface the God already here.

No wonder Paul encourages his Philippian community to rejoice. He certainly wants the risen Jesus to quickly come in a triumphant “Parousia” — to complete the salvation he had achieved by his death and resurrection. But in the meantime, he reminds his followers that Jesus, as Lord is among us here and now. Why would anyone waste their time longing for someone who’s already here?

Centuries after the historical Jesus’ resurrection, when we began to celebrate his birthday, we also must realize that we employ our Advent readings in ways their authors could never have imaged. Forgetting about the upcoming “Johnny come lately” feast of Christmas, we should again hear these passages in their original settings. Interesting what messages we surface when we dare do that.

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



and little things are gestures expressive of the giver, the receiver and the relationship between both. God does this in the sending of the Good News in Christ. The things we give must have accompanying notes verbally expressing or making explicit what is being said by the gift. We are saying something about our feelings, our reverence for the receiver, and something explicit about our union or love. The gift says something of the good news about our relationship and the words complete it and make it all a Christmas “Presence” and Christmas sacrament within the present we are sharing.

John was preparing to present Jesus and made it explicit by his preaching. In giving and receiving Christmas sacraments we are symbolizing in our little spiritual way, exactly what God is doing every time we gather at the Eucharist and every time we live out God’s Grace.

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

YOUNG PEOPLE — JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS PAGEANT:

All youths are invited to participate in our CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY Biblical presentation of the Gospel, during the **Children’s Christmas Eve Mass on Thursday, December 24th at 4:45 PM.** If seeing is believing then doing is even better. **Are you interested in having your child act out the Gospel this Christmas?** Drama is a good way to reinforce Biblical teachings and encourage children to take what they’ve learned, interpret it, and present it. Please join our cast as we celebrate the church’s liturgical seasons throughout the year. **Rehearsals will be at 11:30 AM on Sunday, December 13th and Sunday, December 20th.** If you have any questions, **Contact Denise Calabrese [216-905-0661] or d-calabrese@att.net, call Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560], or simply sign up on the sheet located on the easel in the Narthex of the Chapel.**



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.



WHO AM I?

Abba Poeman said to Abba Joseph: “Tell me how I can become a monk.” And Joseph replied: “If you want to find rest here and hereafter, say in every occasion: ‘Who am I? and do not judge anyone.’” Abba Poeman was very direct about the level of sanctity cultivated at Scetis and its desert outposts. Every day say to yourself: “Who am I?” On Monday: “Who am I?” Answer: I am the one who is tired of staying here in the desert any longer. It’s not anything like I thought it would be. On Tuesday: “Who am I?” Answer: I am the one who has little enough to give to the world, but I would like to give it anyway. On Wednesday: “Who am I?” Answer: I am not that showoff who brings water to all of us every day. “Who am I?” “Who am I?” “Who am I?” At base, it is a simple enough question — but ask it often enough and answer it truthfully enough and you might, sometime, answer it sincerely enough to know the true answer the next time you look in the mirror — I am the person who pretends to care for people more than I really do. Or, I am the person who talks about the Scriptures, but seldom really sits with them and takes them seriously. Or, I am exhausted being a person who is trying to be faithful to a daily practice — but is not. Or, I am a person who never tells the truth about my family background — which means that I have learned to lie well.

Suddenly the answer to what makes for spiritual transformation becomes plain — I will really be a monk when I put down all my righteousness, am honest about myself, and never again judge another person. The effect is immediate. I am free now. There is nothing anyone can say about me that I have not already admitted about myself. Abba Joseph has enabled me to accept who I am. I don’t need to lie anymore. I am ready to grow again.

—taken from the writings of Joan Chittister, O.S.B., which appear on the internet

ADVENT IS A “HANDS ON” EXPERIENCE:

An elderly person in Kansas City went each day to the newspaper box on the corner. She placed her money in the slot, opened the door, and took as many newspapers as were there. Finally she was caught. The charge was that she was selling the papers. She was acquitted — she was actually taking the papers back to her home to use as fuel. She wanted to remember what warmth felt like for a few moments each day. One third of our fellow citizens in the United States are either badly fed or living in sub-standard housing or wearing rags. Sometimes they suffer from all three afflictions. The situation deteriorates daily. Our privately funded Soup Kitchens are sometimes literally running out of soup. Incidentally, contrary to popular prejudice, the majority of our poor are white; most of them are children. We Americans have the capability to watch a comet strike Jupiter, but we have failed to give an old woman in Kansas City fuel for her house.

Why should this tale of woe excite us this third Week in Advent? After all, we can already see beautifully wrapped gifts and bright Christmas trees. The answer is to be found in Luke’s Gospel [3:10-18]. It grabs us rudely by the throat and reminds us that ours is a social Gospel. It is not merely a question of God and me, but rather God, me, and the other person. This is so especially when the other person is going down for the third time. Many Catholics charge that the Church is oftentimes off the mark. This charge becomes particularly true when “economic issues” are discussed.

Yet, John the Baptist reminds us that we need to be a “hands on” Church. What can be more explicit about moral questions than the three answers given by John to questions put to him? One section of his audience asked him: “What must we do then?” In answer he said: “If anyone has two overcoats, he must share with the man who has none, and the one with an extra loaf of bread must do the same.” John is not telling his audience to give away everything they have; rather, he is advising them to give out of their surplus.

Then it is the tax collectors’ turn — “Master, what must we do?” His answer was swift: “Do not rob taxpayers blind.” Finally the military — “What about us?” John continues on a roll: “Hold no kangaroo court-martials. Do not shake anyone down.” This advice from the Jewish holy man can hardly be called the general principles of morality. Rather, the Baptist is crossing the “t’s” and dotting the “i’s.” A spiritual director at a seminary was admirably nicknamed John the Baptist by the students. He not only lived like the Baptizer, but he also spoke like him to them. Would anyone be tempted to give us such a nickname? Probably not.

St. Paul endorses the advice of John the Baptist. Paul is writing to the small Christian colony at Philippi in Greece. It had been founded by Philip — the father of Alexander the Great — and so its name. Paul writes: “Let your generosity be manifest to all.” As a matter of fact, this advice to be generous with a five dollar bill is a broken record in the letters of Paul. One finds the advice not only here, but also in his letters to the Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, and in both letters to the Corinthians. Paul did not confine himself to enunciating the general principles of ethical conduct. Rather, he was taking direct aim at the checkbooks of his followers.

No doubt they were making as many moans about Paul of Tarsus as we do when people ask us for the poor. The human condition is the human condition no matter what the century. But do keep in mind that Advent is designed to give a serious electrical shock to one’s spiritual nervous system. It is true that Jesus cannot be born again, but, we can. And that really is what Advent is all about. It is unabashedly demanding that we give birth to our best selves.

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



To come to possess all, desire the possession of nothing.
 To arrive at being all, desire to be nothing.
 To come to the knowledge of all, desire the knowledge of nothing.
 To come to the pleasure you have not, you must go by the way in which you enjoy not.
 To come to the knowledge you have not, you must go by a way in which you know not.
 To come to the possession you have not, you must go by a way in which you possess not.
 To come to be what you are not, you must go by a way in which you are not.
 That, and that alone, is a recipe for joy.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Numbers 24:2-25:9, Matthew 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zephaniah 3:1-13, Matthew 21:28-32

Wednesday: Isaiah 45:6-25, Luke 7:18-23

Thursday: Genesis 49:2-10, Matthew 1:1-17

Friday: Jeremiah 23:5-8, Matthew 1:18-25

Saturday: Judges 13:2-25, Luke 1:5-25

4th Week in Advent: Micah 5:1-4, Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45

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 2016. There is a **basket in the narthex of the Chapel** to collect any donations you may have. Thank you for your help!

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:**

We are currently discerning a new group of Eucharistic Ministers who would undergo training within the next month. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be going into Senior year of High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are need of ministers for both our Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. **Contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you feel called to this ministry.** We are always in need of Eucharistic Ministers.

**DO IT WELL:**

Whatever mission God gives us, no matter how common it may appear, carries within it our potential sainthood. What God asks of us during our lifetime is the most appropriate and suitable means to our growth in holiness — whether our lives remain ordinary or take an extraordinary turn.

—Julie Onderko

A MEDITATION ON JOY:

Every year during the third week of advent, the church asks us to do a meditation on joy. That seems a curious thing to ask — though it becomes less curious when we actually reflect on the nature of joy. What is joy? Few things are as misunderstood as is the notion of joy. Of itself that wouldn't be serious except that in this case we are often left chasing the wrong things in life.

Too often we confuse joy with good cheer, or with a certain rallying of the spirit that we try to crank up when we go to a party or let off steam on a Friday night. We tend to think of joy this way — there is ordinary time in our lives, when duty, work, emotional and financial burdens, tiredness, worries, and pressure of all kinds keep us from enjoying life — from being as cheery and pleasant as we would like. We think of ordinary times in our lives as keeping us from joy — the grind, the routine, the rat-race, the work-week — and so we look forward to special times, weekends, nights out, vacation times, social times, celebrations, and parties where we can break the routine, break out, enjoy ourselves, and experience joy.

Joy then is often identified with the boisterous good cheer we try to crank up at parties, or the lack of pressure and the freedom from burdens that we feel when on vacation. But is this joy? It can be — though often isn't. The loud robust cheer that we enter into at parties is often little more than a desperate effort to keep our depressions at bay; it is a form of denial. That's why the good cheer dissolves so quickly when we go home, and why, three days after returning from vacation, we are again just as tired and in need of a vacation as before.

What then is joy? Joy can never be induced, cranked up, or made to happen. It's something that has to find us precisely within our ordinary, duty-bound, burdened, full-of-worries, and pressured lives. This is joy — imagine walking to your car or to the bus after a day's work, tired, and needing some rest. But, just as you reach your car or the bus-stop, you fill with a sense of life and health; in some inchoate way, all jumbled together, you feel your body, mind, soul, gender, sexuality, history, place within a family, network of friends, city, and country, and this feeling makes you spontaneously exclaim: "God, it's good to be alive!" That's joy.

As C. S. Lewis puts it, joy has to surprise you. You can't find joy — it has to find you. That is joy's real quality. You can go to a party and say: "Tonight I'm going to have a good time, if it kills me!" It might! Indeed parties and letting off steam have their place. You might even find good cheer at a party, or find a good distraction, and these can be needed therapy and a good respite from hard work. But neither is joy.

Joy is always the by-product of something else. As the various versions of *The Prayer of St. Francis* put it, we can never attain joy, consolation, peace, forgiveness, love, and understanding by actively pursuing them. We attain them by giving them out. That's the great paradox at the center of all spirituality, and one of the great foundational truths within the universe itself — the air that we breathe out is the air we will eventually breathe back in. Joy will come to us if we set about actively trying to create it for others.

If I go about my life demanding, however unconsciously, that others carry me rather than seeking to carry them, feeding off of others rather than trying to feed them, creating disorder rather than being a principle of peace, demanding to be admired rather than admiring, and demanding that others meet my needs rather than trying to meet theirs, joy will never find me, no matter how hard I party or try to crank up good cheer. I'm breathing the wrong air into the universe.

The great mystic, John of the Cross, ends one of his most famous instructions with this poem:

To reach satisfaction in all, desire its possession in nothing.



CHARITY — THE RULE OF LIFE:

Luke tells us that John, the son of Zachariah and Elizabeth, is out in the desert preaching good news and baptizing those who request it. He has created such a reputation that people are thinking that he might be the Christ — the long awaited Messiah — an expectation he could have fostered but vigorously denied, pointing instead to one who is mightier who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Many people came to John asking advice [Luke 3:10-18] and he told them: "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none." When despised tax collectors, who cooperated with the occupying Romans and often overcharged their fellow Jews, asked John what they should do, he replied: "Stop collecting more than is prescribed." John also admonished soldiers who protected the tax collectors not to practice extortion, and to be satisfied with their wages.

As we reflect on how to apply Luke's Gospel to our lives in the world today, we hear John the Baptist telling us to be generous to those in need, to accept our limitations, and to treat others justly. We can imagine individuals heeding this advice. Joy has a lucrative job with an advertising firm that enables her to indulge her passion for fine clothes. For years she was in the habit of donating clothes she no longer needed or wanted to the annual Thanksgiving clothing drive. This year she made a prayerful decision to donate not only clothes she no longer wanted but also some she liked and still wanted to wear. Having cleared out some space in her closet, she felt a new open space in her heart which led to genuine prayers of gratitude. In that prayerful spirit, she resolved to look for other ways to share her material blessings with the less fortunate.



Joe, a middle aged business man, has always been envious of his older brother who was a better athlete in high school and became far more successful in the business world. Desperate to outdo his brother, Joe started his own business, made some shady deals, treated his few employees badly, lost money, and had to shut down. Hitting bottom, Joe was forced into an intense period of reflection that revealed his root problem of envy which led to his destructive behavior. With the help of John the Baptist, he came to see a path forward — repentance for his sins against others; learning to accept himself with his strengths and weaknesses; coming to terms with his limitations; and replacing his envy of his brother with fraternal charity.

What can you learn about generosity and self-acceptance from John the Baptist and how can you practice those virtues in your everyday life? —taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik 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].**

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



IT'S NOT "WHAT MUST WE DO" — IT'S "WHAT MUST WE BE":

"What must we do?" Everyone was asking the question [Luke 3:10-18] — it is probably a question that ought to all ask ourselves — "What must we do too?" We all want to get to heaven, and so we need to know what the rules are — what admission criteria must we comply with. Once we know this vital piece of information, we can then set about doing what is necessary and so ensure our eternal salvation.

There are three groups that John refers to — first, the ordinary people who are told to share from their surplus with others less fortunate; then come the tax collectors who are told not to cheat others; and lastly come the soldiers who are told not to intimidate the people and to be content with their pay. These requirements don't seem very onerous, and if all we had to do was to share with others, not cheat, or intimidate people, and be content with our pay then most of us would easily get into the Kingdom of God. Actually, what John the Baptist is suggesting is nothing more than to live an ordinary decent life — something most of us would do anyway. His requirements are not very demanding even if this is on top of repenting of our sins.

In a way this is surprising since John the Baptist is considered to have a fierce reputation. He is a man who has lived a very severe life of fasting in the desert, but, as we see here, he does not make following him into the desert a requirement for anyone else. Actually he seems to be quite content with everyone else carrying on as they did before as long as they are not openly exploiting others. One might have expected John to be a bit stricter, but this turns out not to be the case; he turns out to be quite lenient on the ordinary people — so long as they are living for others.



John goes on to tell the people that someone is coming after him — someone much more powerful, someone for whom even he is not even fit to undo the strap of his sandals. And this Messiah is going to come to judge everyone — and his judgment will be based on how we have lived for others. John tells them that this Messiah will have a winnowing fan in his hand and his task will be to divide the wheat from the chaff. The implication is that this Judge of the World is going to hold us accountable.

This dialogue between John and the people is unique to Luke's Gospel. What is interesting here is that the three distinct groups of people that John speaks to are precisely the people that are highlighted in the life of Jesus — tax collectors, soldiers [Gentiles], and ordinary people. Luke is telling us that these three groups are particularly open and receptive to the Word of God even though it might seem surprising in the case of tax collectors and soldiers.

In a portion of the Gospel not reported in today's liturgy, John is scathing about the scribes and Pharisees — calling them a brood of vipers [Luke 3:7]. Again, in this John is consistent with Jesus who identifies with the ordinary people and with tax collectors as well as soldiers on occasion, but who has absolutely no time for Pharisees and people of their mindset.

But what about this winnowing fan? Is Jesus really going to be more severe than John the Baptist? This is a worrying question. And the answer is both yes and no. The problem is actually the question the people ask: "What must we do?" They seem to be asking the wrong question, for Jesus is not so concerned with "doing" as with "being". Jesus is not over interested in what we do — He is much more interested in how we are as persons. Jesus is not as concerned with our deeds as with our attitudes. Jesus knows very well that it is our underlying attitudes that are the most important thing in life because it is our internal attitudes that ultimately affect our behavior. If you've got a bad attitude, then you are much more likely to be a sinner — much more likely to be upsetting those who live around you, much more likely to offend God in some way or other.

later. "Rejoice," St. Paul tells us, "rejoice in the Lord always [Philippians 4:4-7]. What a wonderful time of the year we are in. But all of this is just a symbolic recognition of the wonderful time of the world we are in.

The Lord is in our midst. He is among us. He is within us. The Kingdom of God is at hand and we have been chosen to be members of that Kingdom. Rejoice. What are we to do? We have to find the Messiah. Is this hard? Not really. Here's the thing. Jesus is not hiding from us — he never hides from us. It is we who often hide from Him. What shall we do? Live with Christ. Love others with the love of Christ. Rejoice!
—taken from the writings of Father Joseph Pellegrino which appear on the internet

CLEAN OUT THOSE CLOSETS AND SERVE OTHERS:

Winter is here — another time to once again clean out the closets. Clothing that no longer fits, or has been replaced by new items, can become 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 [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].**

**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, or email Elina Gurney at gurney.oh@gmail.com.** Come as a family or by yourself.

**CHAPEL 20th ANNIVERSARY NOTE CARDS:**

Note Cards of the Vatican Treasure — Our Lady Of Gilmour — are also available for purchase. The card has a beautiful photo of Our Lady of Gilmour — taken by John Reid — on the front. The inside is blank for your message, and the back of the card has a description of the Vatican Treasure and it was brought to the Chapel, along with appropriate credits. **The Cards sell in packets of 5 for \$10.** The Cards are located in the chapel office and are available by contacting **Patty Szanislo at (440) 473-3560 or at szaniszlop@gilmour.org.**



WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

John the Baptist again is at the center of our Liturgy for this 3rd Week in Advent. John has a particular place of honor in our Catholic tradition — he was the kinsman of the Lord who leapt for joy in his mother’s womb when Elizabeth received a visit from Mary [see Luke 2]. He was the Forerunner, the one who said that the Messiah was coming. He is the one who pointed to Jesus and called him the Lamb of God [see John 1]. He was the one who lived as a radical prophet, wearing animal skins and eating locusts and demanding a radical change in the way people lived [see Luke 3]. Our generation likes to close an eye to this aspect of John's life, but it is this aspect, this demand for continual and radical change, that fascinated the people of the centuries.

The people who listened to John were so excited. They experienced God in his words. "What shall we do?" they asked [Luke 3:10-18]. Sound familiar? John told the people to be charitable. They should give the poor their surplus. The tax collectors are told to be honest, not using their position to enrich themselves. The soldiers are told to stop harassing and intimidating people. John tells us that we should continue our lives, but now live them on a new dimension. Live with love — sacrificial love, the love of Jesus. What should you do? What should I do? What should all of us here do? The first thing we need to do is to consider how we treat other people, and then make every effort to be kind, considerate and lovable. The second thing on our “to-do” list should be to ask for God’s help and forgiveness for those times that we go out of our way not to be lovable. The little children are concerned that Santa knows when they’ve been naughty or nice. We should be concerned that God knows when we’ve been lovable or when we have refused to be lovable. We have penance services and confession periods to give us the opportunity to say: “I take responsibility for my actions and I seek God's forgiveness so I can be a more loving person.”

What is it that we should do? Well, closely connected with seeking forgiveness — in fact fundamental to seeking forgiveness — is offering forgiveness. Christmas can be the most hypocritical day of the year when we go through the motions of being at peace with all while at the same time we are still looking for ways to repay insult with insult, upset with upset, nastiness with nastiness. Anger for things that others have said to you or done to you will swell up in you when you least expect it. It wants to boil over in rage. And if we are warm and fuzzy with those who have occasioned this anger while we are looking for an opportunity to repay them for their viciousness, makes us a hypocrite. John the Baptist was a radical.

John called people to make a radical change in their lives. Sometimes we let the sentimentality of Christmas get in the way of our hearing the call of the prophet. Christmas is about a radical change in the world and a radical change in ourselves. Maybe we cannot forget a hurt. But we have no right to let that hurt destroy us. We enter into the realm of sin when we let the actions of others be an excuse for our joining them in breaking charity. What shall we do? We need to develop and nurture our prayer lives. We need to make the time to speak to the Lord, giving him at least fifteen minutes a day — a half hour would be much better.

Actually, we are not giving the Lord anything. We are making this time for ourselves to come closer to the one who is calling us. But the problem that we face is busyness — especially during this time of the year. How can we possibly squeeze one more thing into an already packed schedule. If something is really important, we make the time for it. It makes no difference how busy we are. This is important. We need to be with the Lord every day — even if it means getting up a bit earlier or going to sleep a bit

Rejoice
IN THE *Lord* ALWAYS.
I WILL SAY IT AGAIN:
Rejoice!
-PHILIPPIANS 4:4

Jesus gets to the very heart of things; He is concerned with how you are in yourself. He wants people in his Kingdom who have the same attitudes that he has. He wants people who are friendly and open, people who are full of compassion and love. He wants people in his Kingdom who are honest and trustworthy. He wants people who are filled with faith and hope. He wants people who are committed and passionate.

Jesus doesn’t mind if you are damaged goods, or if you are suffering from moral failings or some kind of handicap — whatever it may be. Actually he likes it if you have suffered or struggled with life. He is open to the poor and to the humble and those who are disadvantaged in any way. If you’ve got a physical or mental illness, if you are needy and unloved, or if you fall into any number of other categories which mean that you are looked down on by others — these all open the door for God’s overflowing love

Jesus, when he comes as Judge of the World, will be doing his judging on a completely different basis than any earthly judge. On that Last Day he will most certainly have his winnowing fan in his hand and he most definitely will sort the wheat from the chaff. But what to us looks like wheat he may consider to be chaff and what we consider to be chaff he may very well consider to be wheat.

This means that all bets are off. This means that we need to start looking at the world in a completely different way. This means stopping asking “What must we do?” and starting to ask “What kind of people are we.” This means that we must stop thinking about our external actions and starting to think about our internal attitudes.

Changing those attitudes is what matters. It is what kind of person we are that counts. Once we have this sorted out, then we won’t need to worry about what we have done or left undone. Our deeds will look after themselves. What we have to do is to become a person who thinks the way Jesus thinks — all the rest is purely secondary. —taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., which appear on the internet

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 [12/5/15] ----- \$ 614.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [12/6/15] ----- \$ 1,062.00
Total Offerings: Monday [12/7/15] ----- \$ 60.00
Total Offerings: Tuesday [12/8/15] ----- \$ 269.00

A SECRET:

Love only grows by sharing. You can only have more for yourself by giving it away to others.

—Brian Tracy

IS YOUR FAVORITE WORD “ME”?

Do you ever find yourself feeling like “you know a little better or a little more” than the next person because you’re involved in your faith? Do you ever struggle with dealing with people who don’t believe — or who live totally self-centered lives? Do you ever find yourself getting held to a different standard because you claim to be a Catholic who is “active” in their faith? Are there people in your life that you try to be an example to, who always seem to be waiting for you to do or say something “un-Christian” so that they can point out your faults or failures?

Listen to what St. Paul wrote: “In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel” [1 Corinthians 9:14]. It sounds very, very simple when we read it, but when we really stop to think about it, it’s actually a pretty severe challenge and command made by St. Paul to the people living in Corinth. Paul is reminding them that it IS NOT ENOUGH to merely preach the gospel, but that the Lord ORDERS those who preach it — not just priests, or other leaders, but EVERY follower who calls themselves a Christian — to live by it.

By virtue of our baptism, we have a responsibility — EVERY ONE OF US — to live our lives for Christ. Every time we make the sign of the cross, we remind ourselves of our baptism, and of our belonging to God’s family through Jesus Christ. Since we’re part of the family, it is not a suggestion by Jesus — it’s not His “hope” that we’ll preach the good news — it is a commandment; IT IS OUR DUTY.

How do we do it? Glad you asked. Here are a few ways:

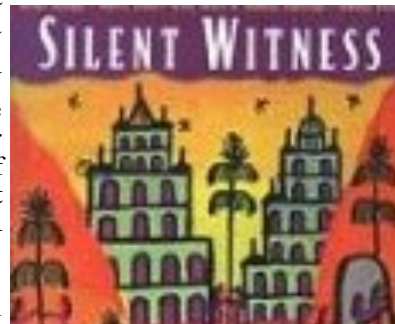
1. By living by the gospel ourselves, just like St. Paul wrote.
2. By letting people know that we are Catholic Christians — never being ashamed of it.
3. By realizing that those who don’t know God, or who don’t want to follow God, will watch us more closely, and even, occasionally, wait for us to screw up — to make themselves feel better about their own decisions.
4. By accepting the challenge to live our lives differently.
5. By growing in knowledge of the scriptures — like we’re doing right now. God is blessing you; Jesus is smiling on you; the Holy Spirit is working in you, and I am proud of you!
6. Lastly — by NEVER taking the Lord’s name in vain. For some of us, this one is no problem; for others — well, it’s a big problem. A lot of people have gotten to a point where it’s just second nature — they don’t even think about it. To break ourselves and those around us of the habit, however, is an incredible sign that we respect God and love God too much to dishonor Him in that way — especially since He has been so good to us. Just think, is there a better, more practical way to live out the gospel daily and live the challenge of Christ, than to make it your mission that no one takes the Lord’s name in vain? One friend of mine even charges the people around her at work a dollar every time they take the Lord’s name in vain in front of her — how cool is that?

As St. Francis of Assisi once said: “I preach the gospel and use words only when necessary.” That’s what it is all about.

—the Bible Geek

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS:

Again this year we will accept memorial donations to help defray the cost of flowers and decorations which we use in our chapel for the Christmas season. If you are interested in making a donation **in memory of loved ones**, please put the names of the loved ones along with your donation in an envelope, mark it “Christmas Flowers,” and either give it to Father John or drop it in the offering basket. We will publish the names of the loved ones in the Bulletin as a memorial.



LIFE TEEN:

December 13th we will be shopping at Aurora Farms Outlet for our Giving Tree and Adopt-a-Family programs. 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. **Our next Life Teen meeting will be on Sunday, Sunday, December 20th as we decorate the Chapel for Christmas.** Please join us for a wonderful experience.



LIFE TEEN

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP — THE EDGE:

Our next meeting of the EDGE is on Sunday, Sunday, December 13th when we will be going shopping at Aurora Farms for some families for Christmas — our Adopt-a-Family and Giving Tree programs. Come and try us out. 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 look forward to your participation. All are welcome. **EDGE will also meet on Sunday, December 20th as we decorate the Chapel for Christmas.** Please join us.



JOY:

Many people have a hard time experiencing joy because life is unfair. Here’s an example: my older brother has a full head of wavy hair. I went bald when I was twenty! People assume he is younger than me. Even though he’s in his seventies — and happily married — women flock to him. Life is unfair! While my example is humorous, other injustices are no laughing matter — they can break your heart and even break your spirit. A good example is when a deadly disease afflicts a young person. Who can have joy in the face of such a tragedy? Hardship strikes one family and not another. Nature — or God — seems unfair. Perhaps even worse than those natural injustices are the ones we inflict on each other. Take the many instances of domestic cruelty, or abuse by those in authority or positions of power. In the face of all this, we can start brooding about unjust treatment — or unfair, hurtful words — and we are robbed of joy.

What is the answer? John the Baptist tells us in Luke’s Gospel that God will sort things out. God comes with a winnowing fan which separates wheat from chaff. The good he keeps, the worthless he burns [Luke 3:10-18]. This does not mean that we do nothing to combat injustice. On the contrary, our hope for final justice strengthens us to work for fairness. Remember, the poor box in the temple in Jerusalem had the word “justice” written on it. Justice is all about right relationships.

The word justice appears 157 times in the Bible. Joy is more frequent — 201 times. That does not include words related to joy such as “rejoice” — 261 times. We can only do so much to bring justice into the world but we can do a lot to bring joy into our hearts. St. Paul reminds us: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again, rejoice!” [Philippians 4:4-7]. Paul is not making a suggestion — it is a command — Rejoice! Rejoice always! And the prophet Zephaniah says: “Sing joyfully, O Israel!” [Zephaniah 3:14-18]. Do you have a joyful song in in your heart?

As the birth of Jesus approaches, our hearts need to be filled with joy — “Sing joyfully, O Israel!” Yes, life can be unfair — painfully and incomprehensibly unfair. And we do live in a world of cruelty and injustice that only God can set right. While we can only do small acts of justice, we can do a lot to open our hearts to joy.

—taken from the writings of Father Phil Bloom which appear on the internet.