

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer of Mary ~

My soul proclaims your greatness,
O my Lord
and my spirit rejoices in you,
my Savior,
for You have looked with favor
upon your lowly servant.
From now on all generations
will call me blessed,
for You, the Almighty,
have done great things for me.
Holy is your name.
Your mercy reaches
from generation to generation
for those who respect you.

You have performed mighty deeds
with your arm;
You have scattered those who are proud
in their inmost thoughts.
You have deposed the mighty
from their thrones
and have raised up the lowly
to high places.

You have filled the hungry
with good things
but you have sent the rich away
empty handed.
You have helped Your servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful,
as You had promised Abraham and Sarah
and their descendants forever.

—Luke 1:46-55

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.

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.
phone: [440] 473-3560 or 216-570-9276 [cell]. e-mail: blazekj@gilmour.org

THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY:

Today, August 15th is the **Feast of the Assumption** of Mary into heaven. How great is it that we get to celebrate this Feast of the Assumption on a Sunday this year. When the course of her earthly life was completed, the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body. [Catechism of the Catholic Church, #974].

Mary, by uniting herself to God, does not distance herself from us. She does not go to an unknown galaxy, but whoever approaches God comes closer, for God is close to us all; and Mary, united to God, shares in the presence of God, is so close to us, to each one of us.

"Mary, totally united to God, has a heart so big that all creation can enter this heart — she has a heart as great as the heart of God. But there is also another aspect. In God not only is there room for humankind; in humankind there is room for God. This too we see in Mary, the Holy Ark who bears the presence of God. In us there is space for God, and this presence of God in us is so important for bringing light to the world with all its sadness, with all its problems. . . .

What is there to say then? A great heart, the presence of God in the world, room for God within us and room for us in God — this is the symphony of this Feast, the instruction that meditating on this Solemnity gives us. Mary is the dawn and the splendor of the Church triumphant; she is the consolation and the hope of people still on the journey."

—Pope Benedict XVI

**FAITH EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN:**

We are going to resume Faith Education Classes for our children, beginning in the fall. So it is important that you register your child. If you have a child — or know of a child — who is not enrolled in a Catholic School, and who needs to receive faith education, please enroll them in our Faith Education experience. Our Faith Education Program will help to fulfill your on-going religious education. Our program runs from grades K-8. Students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to participate in our Life Teen Program. We look forward to having your child join us in learning about and sharing our faith. Please call the Chapel office [440-473-3560] with the needed information in order to enroll your child in our program. Enrollment for next fall can be made at this time.

SATURDAY EVENING MASS TO RESUME ON SATURDAY:

Both Saturday Evening Mass and Daily Weekday Mass will resume with the beginning of the New School Year. Saturday Evening Mass will resume on Saturday, August 21st at 5:00 PM. The Daily Weekday Masses will resume on Monday, August 23rd. The Daily Mass Schedule will be announced each week; the schedule will fluctuate based upon the many other Masses that Father John says throughout the School days. So mark your calendars..

**CLEAN OUT THOSE CLOSETS AND SERVE OTHERS:**

The Fatima Center is currently accepting clothing donations from us, so if you have any fall clothing that no longer fits, it can become a great item for someone else. Please bring your *gently used* men's, women's and children's clothing to the Lennon Board Room, or place them in the Cedar Chest which is in the Chapel narthex. **Business work clothing for this season is especially needed; The Fatima Center helps men and women prepare for job interviews.** Thank you!

THE PROCESS:

Sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

—William James

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Serena DiCillo, daughter of David DiCillo [*84] and Polly Duval DiCillo [*84], and granddaughter of long-time Gilmour teacher, m Bonnie DiCillo, and niece of John [*83], Dawn [*86], and Dan [*88] DiCillo and Laurie Duval Muller-Girard [*81]
- For Virginia DiPuccio, mother of Dominic DiPuccio [*82], and grandmother of Dominic [*14], Matthew [*17], Sophia [*19], Armand [*19], Lena [*20], Michael [*22], and Izzy [*25] DiPuccio, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Katie Poelking [*01], sister of TJ Poelking [*98], who is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- For Judy Hale, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Elaine Hocevar, wife of Assistant Hockey Coach, Greg Hocevar, and mother of Greg [*97], Matt [*98], Ryan [*00], and Sarah [*01] Hocevar, who is undergoing treatment for a serious heart condition.
- For Dwuan "Juan" Smith [*32], who is undergoing medical treatment for breathing issues.
- For Gary Buck who is undergoing medical procedures on his eyes.
- For Richard Weakland, grandfather of Alex [*05], Vincent [*07], Nick [*09], Zachary [*17], and former Gilmour Student, Sarah Hostoffer, who is seriously ill.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For God's blessing on the Tokyo Olympics and on all the athletes participating in them.
- For a family going through a difficult time.
- For an end to violence and racial injustice in our society.
- For a growth in awareness of the blessing of family life.
- For all those struggling with various addictions.
- For an end to sexual abuse and lack of respect for human persons.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.
- For a greater awareness of our call to create a more humane and just society.

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — AUGUST 21st:

Our Savior Lutheran Church Food Pantry has instituted **new procedures** because of the Coronavirus. **Thus they help pre-packing nonperishables in bags on Thursday evening beginning at 5 PM.** They will continue this prepacking on Friday if needed. Check with Elina Gurney on this. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help packaging the items from the foodbank into the prepacked bags.** Only volunteers will be allowed in the Church building, so you will be protected against the virus. Clients will remain outside in their cars. **The food pantry is then open from 9:30 AM—1:30 PM on Saturday.**



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.

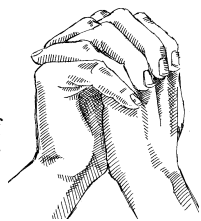
Please let Elina Gurney know if you would like to help. You can do this through the chapel office [440-473-3560] or by emailing Elina Gurney at gurney.oh@gmail.com. In this critical time, this is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

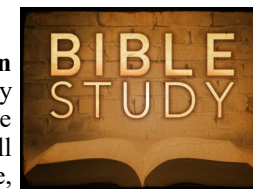
PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For John Weathers, who is undergoing treatment for liver cancer.
- For Bruce Schwartz, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Bill Barrett, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Dale Rusnik, uncle of Jakob Bennish [*30], who is undergoing treatment for many medical issues.
- For Michelle Redmond who is having ongoing health issues
- For Cheryl Dukes, grandmother of Juan Smith [*32], who is undergoing treatment for COVID-19
- For David Patterson [*83], brother of Charles [*79] and Neil [*81] Patterson, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Cailin Stubbs, mother of Kiki [*23] and Trevor [*26] Bilant, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Mary Curran, mother of Megan [*10], Carolyn [*12], and Catherine [*17] Curran, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Zippay, who is critically ill.
- For Addison McKito, sister of Aidan McKito [*24], who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkin’s Lymphoma.
- For Vicki Veldon, aunt of Allie [*11] and Joseph [*12] Lencewicz, who is critically ill as the result of Myloma
- For Gary Knupp who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Darlene Lonardo, mother of Joseph Lonardo [*00], and grandmother of Angelina [*22] and Giana [*22] Lonardo, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- For Frank Nannicola, grandfather of Cassie [*17], Frank [*18], and Mia [*19] Nannicola, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jill Shemory, mother of Adam Shemory [*08], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Christine Maharg, mother of Lily Maharg [*21], who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Dave Howard, uncle of Gilmour Art instructor, Susan Southard, who is battling cancer.
- For Brian Fitzgerald, who is seriously ill with brain cancer.
- For Margaret Malarney [*24] who continues rehab and medical care.
- For Bernice Girgash, aunt of Basketball Coach and Counselor, Dan DeCrane, and great aunt of Lexie DeCrane [*34], who is undergoing treatment for cancer..
- For Krishna Gupta, Sister of Science teacher, Neena Goel, aunt of Nikhil [*13] and Nupur [*17] Goel, who is undergoing treatment for a brain bleed
- For Tara Hyland [*07], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Chris Nash, cousin of Basketball Coach and Counselor, Dan DeCrane, and 2nd cousin of Lexie DeCrane [*34], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Karuna Singla, Sister-in-law of Science teacher, Neena Goel, aunt of Nikhil [*13] and Nupur [*17] Goel, who is undergoing treatment for bone cancer.
- For Melita Chiacchiari, mother of Mark [*94], mother-in-law of Michelle DeBacco [*96] who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian [*09], Rosa [*12] and Edwin [*17] Heryak, who is undergoing treatment for MSA.
- For Tom Podnar, father of Lower School art teacher, Eileen Sheehan, who is awaiting a heart transplant.
- For Jan Poorman, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Sam Barrick, who is recovering from cancer surgery.



NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WED. AUGUST 18th:

Virtual Bible Study will return to our usual Wednesday evening gatherings on Wednesday, August 18th at 6:30 PM. We will continue to meet bi-weekly throughout August and into the school year. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word. **Our topic for this Bible Study will be: Discernment.**



If you text or email Father John [blazekj@gilmour.org] he will send you the zoom link and password. This is an important step to prevent negative intruders.

We also need your help — we need future topics. **So, if you have a topic that you would like us to discuss, please let Father John know.** Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. **We will meet every other week — topic to be decided at the end of the previous meeting.** Join us. You’ll have a blast, and celebrate your faith along the way..

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, August 15: Assumption of Mary	10:00 AM Public Mass & Live Stream
Monday, August 16:	NO MASS
Tuesday, August 17:	NO MASS
Wednesday, August 18:	NO MASS
Thursday, August 19:	NO MASS
Friday, August 20: St. Bernard	NO MASS
Saturday, August 21: 21 st Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM Public Mass & Live Stream
Sunday, August 22: 21 st Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM Public Mass & Live Stream

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.



REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

We live in a culture today which professes to be founded on Christian belief, but which functions with no real sense of our being on a faith journey, a pilgrimage — with our ultimate home being with God. Consumer cultures focus on putting down roots in this life — acquiring, protecting, discarding to acquire the latest, becoming rich. We seek pleasure, gratification, and fulfillment — sometimes with obsessive passion. There is a denial of death — living without thinking about death.

The tremendous irony is that we live our everyday lives, confronted with the reality of death all around us. Those of us in Colombia, Haiti, or the Sudan — in so many parts of the world — know violence and death, chaos and poverty, an unsure future. Those of us in the U.S. know the death that is sweeping across our nation, and we hear it everyday in the news — especially with COVID. Every morning we wake up to stories of drive by shootings, robberies, and murders. There are poor kids in despair, rich kids in despair, shooting other kids. In our futile fear, we execute more and more often. And we all know the reality of the mortality of our bodies. Who of us hasn't experienced the reality of aging and death in our own bodies, who hasn't grieved the loss of a loved one, or who doesn't know someone with cancer or heart disease?

As we celebrate this Feast of Mary's Assumption, our Scripture readings begin with one of the many visions related by the author in this Book of Revelation. It is somewhat of a picture-book of symbols and images which all take time to interpret. Presumably the author did not have Mary of Nazareth in mind during his description of the "woman" in this narrative. Rather, John — the presumed author — pictures the "woman" as a symbol for the nation and people, Israel. She is pictured as giving birth as Israel, through its pains, will bring forth the Messiah. The "dragon" is the "evil one" — perhaps Egypt. The "third" of the stars which are swept away by the "dragon" are the fallen angels seduced by pride. The Evil One is seen as prepared to devour the newly born, but like Moses, the One who would rule over all the earth was snatched up to divine safety. The "woman" — Israel — is kept in a desert prepared for by God. The final verse specifies the picture as might a headline. Roughly paraphrased it proclaims that the birth of the true savior has taken place. The kingdom of the Christ has begun [Revelation 11:19-12:6, 10]!



Luke's Gospel has two parts [Luke 1:39-56]. After Mary has exercised her freedom in responding to Gabriel's invitation from God to be the "woman" of life, she visits her cousin Elizabeth. After their joyful encounter Mary proclaims a great song of God's ways. We refer to this passage as the "Magnificat" — or how Mary relates that her human spirit makes God magnified or enlarged. Hannah, in the First Book of Samuel sings a similar praise of God's being kind to the poor [1 Samuel 2:1-10]. Mary is presented as singing such a song because she knows herself to be lowly and yet God has chosen her. It has been God's way to take what little, poor, rejected and express divine greatness is using such as Israel and Mary.

So much for the Scriptures which say nothing directly about Mary's being taken up body and soul into heaven. There are all kinds of questions and historical elements attached to this feast. Where and when it did happen and why is it not in any of the Gospels; these are good questions. The Catholic Church has held this belief for as long as it has records, but not until the middle of the last century was it made an infallible dogma. This means it was, is, and always will be held as true and indisputable. There still remains the question about Mary's being physically in heaven, and as she was, a human person. Seeing that she is not divine, how does she hear our prayers?

I don't know!

I am celebrating this liturgy in a small church on an American Indian reservation in northern

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Helen Blazek, mother of Father John [birthday]
- For Thomas Rickelman, father of Auxiliary Programs Director, Rhonda Rickelman, and Admission Associate, Jeanne Tippen, grandfather of Cody ['20] and Michael ['22] Tippen.
- For Loony Alshire
- For Olga Susana Rios, grandmother of Nicholas Rios ['24]
- For Brother Robert Weinmann, C.S.C.
- For Sister Therese Zammikiel, P.P.C.
- For Beverly Wamelink, mother of John Wamelink
- For Father Robert Stein
- For Oliver Murphy, grandfather of Grace ['08], and former Gilmour students Kevin and Brian O'Rourke
- For John Gallagher, father of Bill Gallagher ['78], and grandfather of Andrew ['15] and Jack ['15] Gallagher.
- For Sister Albertine (Kramer), C.S.C.
- For Sarah Kuhar
- For Ulysses McNair.
- For Dee Pipik, friend of Gilmour's Music Director, Andy Andino.
- For Joyce Smith, sister of Track Coaching Associate, Jim Chappelle.
- For Rose Fantelli.
- For Mike Hiscar.
- For Barbara Ann Fontecchio.

NOVENA TO BLESSED BASILE MOREAU:

We have two booklets with the Novena to Blessed Basile Moreau. There is a blue booklet which is used when one is praying for a personal intention or healing; there is a gold booklet which is used when you are praying for the intention or healing of someone other than yourself. The Novena was composed by Father Thomas Looney, C.S.C. Many have received blessings and healings through the intercession of Blessed Basile Moreau, and now we want to extend this invitation to you and your family to join in prayer through the intercession of Blessed Basile Moreau. Please see Father John and he will be glad to give you the booklets.



CHAPEL ENVELOPES:

Over the course of COVID-19, many people have been mailing in donations to the chapel. Now that we have begun to assemble again, many are also looking to replace their envelope supply. We really appreciate this, as our collections are obviously way down. **If you would like us to send you a supply of envelopes, please call Father John or Patty at [473-3560], and we will get them right out to you..**

WEEKLY OFFERING:

Thank you to those who have begun to send in weekly offerings. We really appreciate it. Here are the offerings that we have received throughout **the week prior to July 18-19.** Thanks for not forgetting about us.

Offerings-----[week of July 31]-----[paypal]-----	\$ 0.00
Offerings-----[week of August 1]-----	\$ 1,057.00
Offerings-----[week of August 7]-----[paypal]-----	\$ 0.00
Offerings-----[week of August 8]-----	\$ 964.00

MARY — THE PERFECT DISCIPLE:

If Luke hadn't written his two-volume Gospel, we'd probably have no parishes dedicated to Mary. Matthew barely mentions Mary. Mark describes her as being part of a family delegation going to "take charge" of Jesus because they believe He's gone off the deep end [Mark 3:32]. John places her in two narratives — the Wedding at Cana [see John 2], and at the cross [see John 19].

But, from the very beginning of Luke's writing up until her appearance in Jerusalem's upper room on Pentecost Sunday, Mary is depicted as the perfect disciple of Jesus — the person that all Christians should be imitating. This so true that the bishops at the Second Vatican Council employed Luke's image of Mary when they included her in their document on the Church.

Luke's definition of the perfect disciple is short and uncomplicated — it's simply someone who hears God's word and attempts to carry it out. Not only does Luke describe Jesus' mother performing these two actions, he also employs others to point out her uniqueness. Notice what Elizabeth says about Mary — "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled" [Luke 1:38-59].

Jesus himself confirms the beautiful discipleship of Mary when he speaks with the woman from the crowd — while on his way up to Jerusalem — who yells: "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed." Jesus yells back: "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it" [Luke 11:27-28]. Mary isn't to be praised because she's His mother, but because she's the perfect disciple.

In his must-read *Birth of the Messiah*, author Ray Brown contends that the three major canticles which Luke places on the lips of Mary, Zachariah, and Simeon are actually prayers frequently used by Jewish/ Christian *Anawim* — the "poor ones". Though Luke seems to have used someone else's prayers, he adds a line to each canticle to make it fit snugly into its Gospel setting.

It's important to note Father Brown's comments on the *Anawim* — "Although this title may have originally designated the physically poor and frequently still included them, it came to refer more widely to those who could not trust in their own strength but had to rely in utter confidence upon God: the lowly, the poor, the sick, the down-trodden, the widows and orphans. The opposite of the *Anawim* were not simply the rich, but the proud and self-sufficient who showed no need of God or God's help."

Luke believes that Zachariah, Simeon and Mary fit the category of these Jewish/Christian *Anawim*. They recognize God as the one force in their lives who can raise them from their state of helplessness and actually bring about the life which God's word promises.

This is how the evangelist presents Mary, proclaiming her "magnificent" — she really is one of us, someone who totally relies on God.

St. Paul would totally agree that if Jesus' mother has risen from the dead, it's not because she's God's mother, but, like us, as followers of Jesus, she's made her son's faith her own. That means whatever happens to Him, happens to her — both death and resurrection [1 Corinthians 15:20-26].

Though the vast majority of Scripture scholars contend that the Book of Revelation's "woman clothed with the sun" refers more to the church than to Mary, she, as the exemplary member of that community, encourages us not only to give birth to her son daily — the risen Jesus in our midst — but also warns us about the suffering we'll have to endure for doing so [Revelation 11:19-12:6, 10].

There obviously are elements in some of today's "Mariology" with which we ordinary *Anawim* can't identify. Fortunately, our biblical authors knew nothing about those elements.

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



Wisconsin this weekend. What will I say to the congregation assembled for this feast. They will want to know, but want also for me to keep it simple and short. I could give them the short history of how this dogma came to be. I could mention the place of tradition within the Catholic Church. I could talk about infallibility too. About heaven I have beliefs, but no first-hand knowledge except by comparing it to the surroundings there in northern Wisconsin. I think I will stay away from make-believe about heaven and Mary as well.

Mary trusted her prayer and the life which led to it and from it. Mary was troubled by the invitation and the events of her "yes". Mary allowed things to pass in and out of her life, but allowed everything into her heart. Mary allowed God to be both God and then Made-Man. Mary had earth on earth. She allowed mystery to be treated as fact, while remaining mystery. For her fidelity she deserved only what comes from fidelity — and that is pain, joys, loss and finding, deaths and risings. As a human she deserved only what humans deserve — being created, sustained and always loved by God. Mary did not deserve her being assumed into heaven; she did not earn it, but received what was offered. We believe she was offered herself, her journey, and the consequences of her "Let it be done". So it was. It was all done even to her being taken to where our "yeses" will take us.

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

MOST GRATEFUL FOR MARY:

Gratitude begins when we stop taking things for granted. Then we can thank God for things small and great. We can be grateful even during affliction. We are able to choose a life of gratitude which means to choose happiness.

The ancient Catholic Prayer — Hail, Holy Queen — recognizes the inevitable suffering of human life: "Hail Holy Queen...to thee do we cry poor banished children of Eve." On account of sin, we have been banished from paradise. In spite of our clever schemes, we cannot create heaven on earth. We have all tried and failed miserably. We dream about some perfect day in the future. When the day arrives, it usually disappoints. Once I talked with a bride on the morning of her wedding day. They had spent a year planning the event. "I can hardly wait," she said, "for all this to be over." Stunned silent, I looked at her, touched her shoulder and said: "big smile."

Even in best moments, a puzzling sadness can come over us. When we pray the Hail Holy Queen, we acknowledge that we are "mourning and weeping in this valley of tears." No matter how you cut it, this world not perfect — it is incomplete. We live in a valley of tears, and some happiness is possible.

It is only when we enter the fulness of life with God in heaven that our happiness will be complete. Heavenly happiness is based on things that transcend this world — truth, beauty and goodness. Jesus said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" [see John 14:6]. He enables us to have a relationship with God who is perfect truth, beauty and goodness.

We see this degree of happiness in Mary. She is God's most perfect creature. In the Hail Holy Queen prayer, we call her "Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope." This does not take away anything from God — in fact, it glorifies him.

A young man might say to his beloved: "I adore you. You are the most beautiful. You are my life." We don't say: "Stop. You are idol worshipping." No, we know he is seeing a glimpse of the divine. Soon enough, he will know she is a fellow human being — not a goddess. Their relationship will last if they come to God together. That's what Mary wants for us. So we say: "pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

For today we see that we cannot create paradise on earth. We mourn and weep in this valley of tears. Of all creatures we are most grateful for Mary — she points to her Son Jesus — the one way to happiness that lasts. So, we pray: "After this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

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



A CUTE ACCOUNT OF MARY'S ASSUMPTION:

A charming story is told of the nineteenth century Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes fame. Contemporary artists were anxious for her to describe the woman she had seen in the grotto. So, one after the other, they showed her the most famous pictures of Mary. The young Bernadette was shown the beautiful Madonnas done by Murillo, Da Vinci, Raphael, Botticelli, El Greco, etc. To each she shook her head in disappointment. To their surprise, she said: "The lady looks like none of these paintings." To herself she said: "My mother, why do they minimize your beauty?"

Mary is the woman whom we come together to honor today.

There is a large amount of centuries-old apocryphal literature dealing with the Assumption of Mary into the Heavens. While historically the material is at best unreliable, nonetheless, it does tell us what many early Christians believed about this feast. One such centuries old piece is allegedly authored by a St Melito of Persia — today's Iran.

After her Son's Ascension, Mary goes to live with the family of young John the Evangelist. It is situated in the Mount of Olives with a splendid view of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, John and the other apostles have been posted to their various missionary assignments around planet earth.



Two years have disappeared since the Ascension. Still Mary grieves for Jesus. An angel appears and informs Mary that she will rejoin her Son in several days. Mary is delighted. She says to the angel: "I have but one request of you. I wish to see the apostles one last time." And who is a mere angel to turn down this last request of the mother of the Son of God? So, the angel gets to work immediately rounding up the famous twelve around the world. We are talking about a can-do angel.

The angel discovers John working in today's Turkey. John finds himself scooped up on a cloud. He is deposited in front of his parents' home on the Mount of Olives. After several bowls of chicken soup from his concerned mother, Mary fills him in on her approaching death. She informs John that she suspects enemies of her Son will desecrate her body. So, clever Melito is preparing his readers. They will not be unduly surprised by an assumption of Mary soul and body into Heaven.

Meanwhile the non-stop shuttle of Angel Airways continues at a furious pace. One suspects no baggage was lost. And surely there was no reason to worry about terrorists. The other apostles have been all picked up in various countries. They find themselves placed at Mary's residence before the flight attendant can say: "Fasten your seatbelts and put your chair in the upright position". Even Paul of Tarsus, who was not an apostle, is airmailed. For once he is speechless. All are assembled and Mary briefs them on the approaching happenings.

Mary dies as programmed. Jesus appears and gives her soul to the archangels Michael and Gabriel to take to Heaven. He tells His apostles to carry His mother's body to the family plot. On the way, the procession is attacked by a mob. As Mary had predicted, they wish to desecrate her body. They are fought off by a blustering Peter wielding still another sword.

Once again, the Christ appears. A sweating Peter fills Him in on the would-be desecration. Not surprisingly, He asks them all: "What would you advise I do with my mother's body?" To a man, they reply: "Please take her body to heaven for safety."

The Master instructs the archangels to return His mother's soul to her body. So, she experiences a resurrection of body and soul both to her Son's Kingdom. We of course hope to achieve something similar in our turn. After all, the rejoining of our body with our soul is an article of our faith. This then is the tale of the woman whom Wordsworth, calls our "tainted nature's solitary boast."

Even back in the early Church, Mary was the object of veneration. Dare we contemporary Christians honor her less?
—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooly, which appear on the internet.

the universe. At a certain point, we have to accept limit. We're creatures — not God. And what we can't have, must be grieved or it will make us bitter.

- **Mysticism:** Sex is earthy, real, and produces life. But there are other, real, forms of love-making. These too produce life. The Body of Christ is, at one and the same time, radically physical and radically mystical. Even as sex plays such a life-producing role in this world, there are deep, invisible embraces inside the body of Christ where seed and womb too meet and produce life in ways beyond what we can phenomenologically trace.
- **Trust:** Maybe, as we see in Mary's response, the real answer is trust, faith that if we live out our lives according to what we deeply believe, no matter how far from human fertility that may seem at times, God will make us creative in ways that we cannot now imagine. The Holy Spirit too makes us pregnant.

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

GRACE FILLS IN THE GAPS:

To experience grace is one thing; to integrate it into your life is quite another. This reality hit me while I was walking along the Pacific Ocean during my Lenten hermitage in 2012. The goodness of God fills all the gaps of the universe, without discrimination or preference. God is the gratuity of absolutely everything. God is the "Goodness Glue" — the love that holds the dark and light of things together, the free energy that carries all death across the Great Divide and transmutes it into Life. Grace is what God does to keep all things God has made in love and alive — forever. Grace is not something God gives — grace is who God is. If we are to believe the primary witnesses, an unexplainable goodness is at work in the universe.

Death is not just our one physical dying; it is going to the full depth, hitting the bottom, going the distance, beyond where I am in control, and always beyond where I am now. We all die eventually; we have no choice in the matter. But there are degrees of death before the final physical one. If we are honest, we acknowledge that we are dying throughout our life, and this is what we learn if we are attentive — grace is found at the depths and in the death of everything. After these smaller deaths, we know that the only "deadly sin" is to swim on the surface of things, where we never see, find, or desire God or love. This includes even the surface of religion, which might be the worst danger of all. Thus, we must not be afraid of falling, failing, going "down."

When we go to the full depths and death — sometimes even the depths of our sin — we can always come out the other side — and the word for that is resurrection. Something or someone builds a bridge for us, recognizable only from the far side, that carries us willingly, or even partly unwilling, across. All that we hear from reputable and reliable sources — mystics, shamans, near-death visitors, and nearing-death experiences — indicates no one is more surprised and delighted than the traveler himself or herself. Something or someone seems to fill the tragic gap between death and life, but only at the point of no return. None of us crosses over by our own effort or merits, purity, or perfection. We are all — from pope, to president, to princess, to peasant — carried across by an uncreated and unearned grace. Worthiness is never the ticket, only deep desire, and the ticket is given in the desiring. The tomb is always finally empty. There are no exceptions to death, and there are no exceptions to grace. And I believe, with good evidence, that there are no exceptions to resurrection. Love truly is stronger than death. —taken from the writings for Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M., 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].**



SEXUALITY AND CREATIVITY:

Some time ago, a friend of mine left the priesthood. He loved being a priest and was a good one. His problem? He was a man who worked with hands and fashioned beautiful things out of wood. At a point — rightly or wrongly — he felt that he couldn't be really creative if he remained celibate: "I can't be creative without sex!" is how he put it. That was more than hormones speaking. He was an artist, with an artist's temperament. Most artists, I suspect, will understand exactly what he is saying, even if they don't necessarily agree that this necessitates his particular decision.

Creativity and sexuality are linked at the very source of things. There's a creativity that is released by sex, just as there's a sterility — "dried-upness" — that can come about by its suppression. Artists know this — too well in fact. It's one of the reasons they're so prone to artistic license in this area. Countless artists have expressed this fact that creativity and sexuality are linked at the very source of things.

Anne Michaels, for example, in her recent book, *Fugitive Pieces*, makes a virtual spirituality of creativity out of sex. Her two main characters — both male — have their personalities and creativity opened up only through sex. The intimation of course is that this is true for everyone. This is not a simplistic thesis. Artistic license in the area of sex is fired by more than hormones, ego, or irresponsibility — though one would have to be blind to not see that these often too play a role. What drives artists here is the connection between sex and creativity. There is a powerful link. And why shouldn't there be? All life is after all created through sex, in some fashion or other of that word.

Given this background, we see that Mary's question to the Angel, Gabriel, at the time of the Annunciation, is more than a simple query in biology: "How can this be since I am a virgin?" [Luke 1:26-38]. She had just been told that she was to be the most creative of all artisans — the artist of artists — the mother of the fountain of creativity itself. So her question is a good one, a deep one: "From what source can this life spring, given the limited way that I am living out my sexuality?"

This is indeed the real meditation for celibates like myself: "How can I be creative without sex?" It is also just as crucial a meditation for everyone else — even for those who do enjoy healthy sexual lives. Given our congenital propensity for polymorphous embrace, we still all have to live out a certain sexual asceticism. Ultimately everyone has Mary's question: "how can I truly bring forth new life, given that I can't sleep with the whole world?"

There's no easy answer to that question — for artists, for married people, for celibates, or for anyone else. Sometimes, in terms of Christian spirituality, we have been too simplistic in our answer. We're paying the price for that. Too prevalent is the artist who finds our theology of sexuality stifling and anti-life and has walked away from the church — and sometimes the faith — for just that reason. What is the answer? How can any of us be creative, given that we may not give ourselves irresponsible license in the area of sex?

I'm not sure that there is a theoretical answer — some clear spiritual formula that can be articulated, canonized, and then applied in each case. We have, of course, a few non-negotiable principles, like the ten commandments, but these only define the outside parameters. Inside, innate within the very concepts of love, sex, respect, and responsibility themselves, lies a deeper set of moral principles that are much less easy to name and codify. We learn these more by living morally than by studying anything. So how should we live so that our sexuality properly fuels our creativity?

The answer to that, I suspect, will involve three things: a certain grieving, a certain mysticism, and a certain trust.

- **Grieving:** we can't be God, either in our talents to create or in our capacity to sleep with

**BELIEVING AND REJOICING:**

One of the most poignant moments in John's Gospel comes from the meeting between Jesus and Thomas the Apostle after the Resurrection. "Doubting Thomas" refused to accept the truth of Jesus' triumphant return until he had physically touched the wounds in his hands and side. In their exchange, we witness Jesus invite Thomas to "put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him: "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" [John 20:24-28].

While this event is not part of the scripture readings for the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, connecting moments in Scripture can help us to cultivate a more profound understanding from the blessing of, in essence, remembering the rest of the story. St. Elizabeth's words to Mary at the Visitation illustrate the faithful response to God's promises and the markings of true faith. She says of Mary: "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled" [Luke 1:45]. Jesus would echo these words in his exchange with Thomas 30-plus years later [John 20:29].

Mary believed in God's promise of a Messiah before experiencing the miraculous Resurrection — truly blessed by not needing physical evidence in order to accept the truth. She trusted in the prophecies, in the promises of God, recognizing He is our ultimate salvation. Mary did not allow any obstacles to hinder her faith, and for that, she was blessed and rejoiced.

How easily we can falter to believe, looking for signs and wonders as caveats of believing. Obstacles against seeing and accepting the truth of God's promises fulfilled can mount daily if we fail to view the world with the eyes of a heart willing to see God at work and embrace Jesus' glorious victory over sin, death, and the trouble of this world.

Mary allowed grace to fill every ounce of her being — strengthening her to give a daily "yes" to follow and believe. Before Jesus even explained to the disciples that the work of God is to believe in the One sent by God — Mary believed. As she stood before Elizabeth with the Fulfillment incubating within her, her Magnificat's bursts forth: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" [Luke 1:38-56].

We receive the same promises through the Eucharist — we see these Mysteries unfold with Jesus literally within us every time we receive the Eucharist. The grace that filled every ounce of Mary's being is available to us abundantly; we merely need to ask, accept, and cooperate with it — "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" [Matthew 7:7]. What keeps us from asking? Although credited as doubting, Jesus did not withhold from St. Thomas what he asked for to help him believe.

Mary reminds us that God "has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation." Believing without seeing, however difficult, is not impossible. God would never ask the impossible. He is a loving God that works the impossible within us through cooperation with grace. No one exemplifies the powerful results of allowing ourselves to be filled with the grace of God more than the Blessed Virgin Mary. May we turn to her intercession, especially today, so we too may be counted among the blessed who have not seen and yet believe.

—taken from the writings of Allison Gingras, which appear on the internet.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Father John is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you. Please call him [440-473-3560] to arrange for this experience. All social distancing will remain in place. Always remember the Lord's invitation: "I will give them a heart with which to understand that I am the Lord. They shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart". [Jeremiah 24:7].



THE BEAUTY OF THE ORDINARY:

There are many stories in the Gospels, and most of them are filled with wonder and drama. A choir of angels sing at Jesus' birth. The heavens open as Jesus is baptized in the Jordan. Jesus heals the blind and walks on water. And, of course, the great event of our faith how Jesus on the third day is raised from the dead. The Gospel for this Feast of the Assumption of Mary does not seem to fit into this august company [Luke 1:39-58]. It recalls a simple event — Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth. There is no miracle, and there is little drama — just two pregnant women rejoicing in God's goodness. Now, at first we might be inclined to dismiss this gospel and consider it secondary to the other more dramatic scenes in the New Testament. But that would be a mistake, because the purpose of this simple story is to be the scriptural witness to the importance of the ordinary. The ordinary does not only comprise the majority of our lives, it is often the most important part of our lives.

Most of our lives are ordinary. We have some dramatic moments that we recall — like the day we met our spouse, or our first job, or the birth of a child, or the death of a parent. But most of our days are comprised of the ordinary routine — the repeating schedule of events. After they pass it is even hard to recall what happened, to remember what we did last Tuesday. Luke's Gospel helps us to appreciate such ordinary time. Mary's visit to Elizabeth does not change the course of history. But it does bind these two women together in a relationship of friendship and love. It nurtures between them a relationship of trust and a relationship of faithfulness. That is no small matter. Because I believe that when we look back at the end of our lives, it will not be the dramatic highlights but rather the ordinary days of our lives that determine who we are.

So how do we live ordinary time well? Mary is our model here. Mary's life in fact gives us a pattern of how to live in ordinary time. The pattern is this — ask and act. When Mary hears that Elizabeth is pregnant she does not get bound up in her own concerns and affairs, but rather she asks: "What does my cousin Elizabeth need?" And when the answer comes that a visit would be appropriate, Mary acts. She runs in haste to the hill country to pay a visit to her cousin Elizabeth.

You and I are recalled to repeat Mary's pattern of asking and acting. Asking is not easy, because in order to ask the question "what does the other person need", we have to move beyond our own preoccupations and schedules. We have to place ourselves in the life of another. We have to imagine what good thing would bring them a blessing. And so, it's important for us to ask: "What does my 8 year old son need from me? What does my spouse need from me? How could I make my mother's life easier? How could I be present to a friend who just lost a parent? How can I show the colleagues with whom I work that I honor and respect them?" When we ask those questions, the way opens for us to act, and acting is good. But acting will not happen unless we make the space in our life to ask.

In each of our lives, there are a handful of highlights — dramatic events that we will always remember. But most of our lives are ordinary days of living. It is in those ordinary days that we must follow Mary's example, asking what do the people in my life need from me and then acting on the answer we receive.

This might seem a very simple pattern, but if we put it into action the result will be more than we imagined. Because when we ask what others need then act on the answer, we like the pregnant Mary not only bring ourselves to others. We also carry Christ who is within us to everyone we serve.

—taken from the writings of Father George Smiga, which appear on the internet

LIFE-CHANGING:

All you can change is yourself, but sometimes that changes everything.

—Gary Goldstein

**THE MAGNIFICAT — MARY'S CREED:**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin celebrates the belief that at the end of her earthly life, Mary was "taken up body and soul into heavenly glory" in a "singular participation in her Son's resurrection." Although the Book of Revelation does not identify Mary as the woman portrayed therein, tradition has seen her in this mother whose son was in danger and as the woman clothed with the sun and crowned with stars [Revelation 11:19-12:6, 10]. These images morphed to portray Mary as a queen. The message of the assumption also affirms that ordinary people of flesh and blood are created with the capacity to share divine life.

In truth, neither church nor society has probably ever been quite ready for Mary of Nazareth and all that she implies for the rest of our race. Rather than celebrate her simplicity as one of us, we typically depict her with crowns and halos, imagining her as the pinnacle of beauty. And we rarely depict her with a skin tone that is anything but white. But what about the Mary of the Gospels? Who was that Jewish woman?

Luke tells us more than anyone else about Mary — primarily in the infancy narratives. At the Annunciation, Mary spoke in the name of humanity and gave her yes to God's desire to dwell among us [see Luke 1:26-38]. After that, Mary began the down-to-earth activity of preparing for what would happen, and she sought out Elizabeth, the elder whose experience came closest to her own [Luke 1:38-59].

In telling of that visit, Luke portrays Mary singing a song of praise based in the Hebrew Scriptures and prefiguring the essence of what her Son would preach. When sung out of liturgical context, the song could be labeled subversive or even communist. But Mary's Magnificat has no pretensions. Decidedly non-regal, she refers to herself as a slave, using the same word that St. Paul uses to describe Jesus [see Philippians 2:7]. But except for proclaiming God's goodness to her, the focus of Mary's song is not on herself. Her song is a proclamation of faith, a practical creed praising God's ways without any philosophical concepts.

The first article of Mary's creed proclaims that those who stand in awe of God's majesty — fear of the Lord — will learn how God's mercy outshines even the splendor of all creation. Then, perhaps as an explanation of God's mercy, she goes on to sing of how God upends all worldly values and expectations. The proud lose their way; the mighty discover to their terror that their power offers no ultimate safety net, while the lowly who trust in God fear nothing. The hungry who know how to share enjoy fulfillment while there will never be enough to satisfy those who count on their own wealth.

At the end of her psalm, where Catholics might pray the "Glory Be," Mary sings the praises of the God of Israel, the God who has remained faithful throughout their history and promises to be their future.

The song of the mother of God is Luke's gift to us. As we ponder her assumption into the realm of God, Luke invites us to contemplate the God of real life and history whom she proclaims. Mary's song urges us to recognize God's activity in the everydayness of our world. She points to where we can find God working among us and warns us about the possibilities of losing our way. As we celebrate her Assumption in body and soul, Mary's canticle tells us where we will find our own salvation.

Mary's creed leads us to seek God in the times and places where the lowly are cherished and the hungry filled. Everything about this feast urges us to appreciate flesh and blood — to appreciate it so much that we do everything possible to save the powerful from their pretensions, to help nourish every kind of hunger and to receive and share God's own mercy.

The more we are able to do that, the more we will sing with her: "My soul proclaims the greatness of God who loves and blesses the lowly — including me."

—taken from the writings of Sister Mary McGlone, C.S.J., which appear on the internet



MARY — THE GREATEST AMONG US:

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary into heaven. The Dogma of the Assumption was solemnly declared by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950. This was the declaration that after her life on earth was completed Mary was taken up to heaven body and soul.

The belief in Assumption dates back to the early centuries of the Church. Christians always believed that Mary's death was a falling asleep in the Lord — or "dormition". She was immediately taken up to God. Actually, the Dormition of Mary — or, to use our terminology, the Assumption of Mary — was one of the most popular themes in religious art of the medieval times.

With the exception of Jesus Christ, who is the Eternal Word, conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary is the greatest person to ever exist. She is the greatest person to be conceived through a human mother and a human father. She is greater than Buddha, or Mohammed, or Moses, or David, or any of the great people of history. She is the one who was conceived without sin. She gave her life so we can have a Savior. She is the greatest of us all.

The greatest of us all is a woman. Mary brought a new dignity to every woman who has ever lived and who ever will live. Women bring life into the world and nurture this life. Because Mary sacrificed herself for us, our women bring unique reflections of God into the world, and nurture His Image with their bodies and with their lives. Women are life givers. Christian women give life to the Divine. Women are sources of love, carriers of love and nourishers of love. In these days when the most lucrative industry in the world is the pornography industry, where mainly young girls are exploited, Mary reminds us of the Dignity and Respect that are the natural rights of every female among us. We men are reminded that it is our obligation to care for and protect our women — be they little girls, teens, wives, singles, widows or the elderly. Recently, the young men in our youth group have been meeting to pray for our young women. All men need to pray for those among us whose biblical origin was a gift from God to Adam.

In these days of the glorification of the self, Mary reminds us of a person whose body and spirit were created for another. She said "Yes" to the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation and allowed God to radically change her life. She nurtured and cared for the child that others wanted dead. She supported Jesus as a young man when some thought he was deranged. She stood with Him as He was tortured to death to complete the Father's plan of redemption. She accepted John and us into her heart and became our mother. For all this and more than we could ever imagine, Mary was rewarded with her total union with God at the conclusion of her earthly life. She was assumed into heaven. Now, seated the closest to her Son, the judge of the Living and the Dead, within whisper length from his ear, she brings our prayers before Him. She brings the prayers we offer when we honor her in the Rosary. She brings the prayers we offer when we just call out, "Mother, help us."

And we pray today on the feast of her assumption. We pray for our ladies, young and old. We pray for our brothers and sisters who are hurting. We pray for peace. We pray for ourselves.

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

SILENCE IS THE LANGUAGE OF GOD:

Silence is the first language of God. But, as it is in the face of emergency or of tragedy, we desire to make a lot of noise in our stumbling efforts to solve something, anything. We desire to fill the yawning chasm in our hearts and in our world, with sound so as to avoid facing some unsettling, uncomfortable truth. This is an understandable impulse, of course, whether facing a crisis within your immediate family or our global one. But that truth isn't going to go away just because you shout it down. You might just have to be present to it. This week, take time to listen to the silence of the people around you. What truth is that silence pointing to? How might you accompany others to it? What does it stir within you?

A GREAT SIGN OF HOPE:

This weekend, we celebrate the liturgical feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary — a holy day honoring Mary every year on August 15th. The dogma of the Assumption, promulgated on November 1, 1950, by Pope Pius XII, states that Mary "when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven." This is the first and only explicit exercise of papal infallibility since that dogma was proclaimed at the First Vatican Council in 1870. The pope did not claim any direct biblical basis for this belief, but did consult bishops worldwide, who almost unanimously said that affirming the doctrine was both possible and opportune. It was left to theologians to justify, explain, and interpret the official teaching on the Assumption of Mary.

Shortly after Pius XII promulgated the dogma, the German Jesuit Karl Rahner — in 1951 — took on this task of completing a major work on the Assumption. He submitted his book to Jesuit censors, who judged it "insufficiently grounded" and not fit for publication. It was finally published in 2004, 20 years after his death in 1984. However, Rahner did manage to make known his position on Mary and her Assumption through articles in theological journals and public lectures. His fundamental point is that we should think of the Assumption of Mary not so much as a special privilege of Mary, but as a foretaste or harbinger of our common destiny to enjoy eternal happiness with God as whole persons, body and soul. At the Second Vatican Council [1962-1965], Rahner and others argued that the Council should not produce a separate document on Mary emphasizing her special privileges, but should treat Mary in the document on the Church as a model of Christian discipleship. In the only close vote in the whole Council — 1,114 to 1,074 — the bishops decided to treat Mary in the final chapter of the Constitution on the Church, which describes the Blessed Virgin assumed into heaven as "the image and first flowering of the Church" perfected in heaven. "Likewise, Mary shines forth on earth" as "a sign of sure hope and solace for the pilgrim People of God" [#68].

The feast of the Assumption is indeed a sign of hope and solace for us today in our troubled world. It reminds us that God will the salvation of all people, that divine grace is more powerful than all the dark forces that assail us, and that we are all destined to the eternal life of heaven. In his treatment of the Assumption, Rahner encourages us to view death not as the separation of body and soul, but as our personal passage, body and soul, from our limited earthly life to share in the risen glorified life of Christ. Just as God brought Mary to heaven body and soul, so will the Father of Mercies ultimately fulfill our deepest human longings as whole persons. Our bodies, which are a source of joy and sorrow on this earth, will share in the life of heaven, where there will be no more suffering and no more tears. Without going into Rahner's further thoughts on the fate of the human body, we can still understand his primary insight that Mary is a model of faithful discipleship and her Assumption a precursor of our own heavenly destiny.

Not all Catholics are in tune with the direction on Marian theology suggested by Rahner and adopted by Vatican II. Some are more inclined to emphasize the special blessings bestowed on her by God, to count on her as an effective advocate in difficult times, and to view her as a comforting mother paving the way to heaven. However, despite these diverse Marian theologies, all Catholics can celebrate the Assumption as a much needed sign of hope in our troubled world.

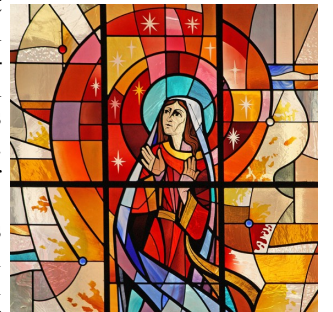
In what aspect of your life do you most need reflection on the Assumption?

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

LIFE-GIVING HABITS:

Sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

—William James



SEEING BEYOND THE POOP — MARY’S PERFECT LOVE:

Hands folded, eyes closed, head tilted; perfect face, pristine lips — this is Mary. At least, this is the Mary we see. This is the Mary sacred art depicts. This is the Mary I encountered growing up. This is the Mary I thought I knew.

Mary is a gentle woman, stainless and beautiful. These images of Mary that peer in from the stained-glass windows and stand stoically as a statue in the corner are indeed accurate and true. But, what we see is only the exterior — like the Instagram pictures we post. What took my heart longer to discover was the caption, the chaos, the story that exists beyond those tender snapshots.

In many ways, I understood who Mary was, but I didn’t quite understand what her role was in my life. That is, until I became a mother myself. Okay, okay, before I lose you — as I’m sure many of you are not mothers — here is the straight talk: Mary is as much my mom as she is yours, and Mary is such an incredible advocate. What I’ve learned about Mary’s role as our mother in the year that I’ve been a mother is something that I find valuable enough to pass on to you.

Have you ever felt as though you can’t relate to Mary because she is so perfect? Being a mom has taught me that Mary actually doesn’t mind all of our “poop.” Before my daughter was born, I probably changed a total of three diapers, and each time I gagged a whole lot. I was a little bit surprised upon spending the first few days with my little girl that I didn’t care one bit about her poop. It was still poop, it was still gross, but it was somehow different — she was my daughter. Mary looks at all the “poop” in our lives — those dumb situations we often weasel ourselves into — and she doesn’t bat an eye. It doesn’t bother her, but the best part is that she doesn’t leave us in our filth. She sees the messiness in our lives, and with her assistance, she offers us a change of heart and practice.

Do you ever feel undeserving of Mary’s attention and love? Me too. But the good news is this — by simply being her child — despite any insecurity or impurity — Mary loves us. My daughter hasn’t done much of anything to win my love. She poops, she sleeps; she does smile, but she also has a terrifying scream. There has been no conversation, no plea in which she’s vied for my attention or poetically tried to win me over. She is my daughter regardless of what she has, says, or does. And, I love her intensely. Mary’s love for us is even deeper than this, and thank goodness for that! Because, my insecurities and impurities are overwhelming sometimes. And my constant attempts to prove myself is exhausting. We don’t need to prove anything to Mary — her love is unconditional.

Do you ever wonder if Mary gets sick of picking up the pieces after us?

I thought I was a patient person at red lights, and then God gave me a screaming infant. Even when I’m at the end of what I think my limit is for patience, there is more somewhere deep down inside that I dig out. Mary’s patience is even greater. I’m convinced her love is too great to give up on us. She’s patient with us because she understands the disposition of our hearts. And as I try to understand why my daughter cries and respond patiently to her needs, I know that Mary does the same. She sees the value of continuing to extend her hand out to us when we’ve fallen away from the Lord. Because she knows that every time she reaches out her hand to us there is another opportunity to know our Lord greater and love Him deeper.

In the end, no matter how many times we ponder these questions about Mary and ourselves, she is always there for us and she is always cheering us on. When we feel defeated, when we feel directionless, Mary is there. She is always there.

When Jesus handed Mary over to John — and subsequently all of us — at the cross as our mother, He didn’t place any conditions on the relationship [see John 19:26-27] — He didn’t say “behold your mother for the next 10 years or until you do something stupid.” No! He said: “behold your mother.”

Period. End of sentence. She has been placed into our lives permanently, as our own mothers are permanently bonded to us in the same way. There is nothing we can do to lose her favor as her children. Even when we don’t deserve it. I think of my own mom who always stood right by me in the mess I made but then pointed me to something greater. I want to be just like that — always there by my daughter’s side guiding the way; always there with her while she chases her dreams, even running right by her side if necessary. This is Mary, Our Lady. She has hope for our future and is always leading us back to the One — the only One — who has the power to fulfill our every hope and desire.

Prayer this prayer often:

Mary, my mother, I desire to know you better this day. Lord, teach me about your mother — may I know her in the stories of Scripture but also in the depths of my heart.

Mary, pray for me, please pray for my soul. Always take my hand when I fall and always lead me back to Christ. May I love you more deeply today than yesterday and may my love for you and others reflect the love of your son. Amen.

—taken from the writings of Rachel Penate, Assistant to the Executive VP of LifeTeen.

LIFE TEEN and EDGE:

Our Life Teen and EDGE youth group is meeting in-person again. We will meet for an hour beginning at 11:30 AM following our 10 AM Sunday Mass in the Lennon Board

Room. If you are unable to join us, there are many resources available for you on the Life Teen website — lifeteen.com. There are numerous blogs and videos for you to connect with. The Life Teen national office continues to release many new programs. Please contact Father John for more information. And please join us each Sunday for our Mass at 10 AM — in person or live-streamed, and then come to our Life Teen/EDGE gathering after Mass. And above all, let us continue to join each other in prayer. Father John is available for you. Please contact him [cell: 216-570-9276].

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Judges 2:11-19, Matthew 19:16-22

Tuesday: Judges 6:11-24, Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday: Judges 9:6-15, Matthew 10:1-16

Thursday: Judges 11:29-39, Matthew 22:1-14

Friday: Ruth 1:1-6, Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday: Ruth 2:1-4:17, Matthew 23:1-12

21st Week in Ordinary Time: Joshua 24:1-18, Ephesians 5:21-32, John 6:60-69

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.

