

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

~ A Prayer of My Whereness ~

The question "Where Have I come from?"  
rises up and haunts me;  
lingering, it floats like a flower  
in the backwaters of my mind.

From somewhere deeper than I know,  
in the place where I am held to the divine breast,  
the voice of God echoes in reply:  
"You, my beloved little one,  
were hidden in my heart  
before your sun burned bright.

"You were the dream of my delight  
before the Earth was born  
of the dust of long-dead stars.

"Before I shaped a single star,  
I nursed you for endless ages,  
feeding you with the essence of my life.

"In my great lap I played with your infinite childlike form  
and gazed with love upon your original face,  
the mirror form of my own image.

"I laughed with delight at the marvel of your being,  
the flesh and bone of my bone.

"And you laughed with glee as I winked,  
as the four winds sprang to life  
and suns like dandelions  
lit up the dark lawn of space.

"Where did you come from? O my child,  
you in whom live all my hopes and loves,  
you came from me."

**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

# 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.*

**FEAST OF ST. BLAISE and THE BLESSING OF THROATS:**

In the United States, the annual blessing of throats is a traditional sign of the struggle against illness in the life of the Christian. The blessings is normally bestowed on the Feast of St. Blaise [February 3<sup>rd</sup>], but because we were in the midst of a snow storm this year, **we will bestow the blessing during Mass on this Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.**

Saint Blaise was the Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Very little is known about his life. What we do know is that prior to becoming a Bishop, he was a doctor. Devotion to him spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the 8<sup>th</sup> century, he has been invoked on behalf of the sick — especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat. **The blessing will be given after the Universal Prayer at Sunday's Mass.**

**PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CHAPEL FAMILIES:**

Through a grant, the Diocese of Cleveland has obtain the wonderful spiritual program called **FORMED**. We are able to participate in this program through St. Francis of Assisi Parish since we lie within their boundaries. **FORMED** has many aspects to it. You can prepare for Sunday Mass by watching an insightful five-minute video by renowned Catholic teachers; you can enjoy a movie with your family that is both nourishing and entertaining; you can enrich your marriage with the award winning video series *Beloved: Finding Happiness in Marriage*; you can help your children grow in character and embrace the beauty and wonder of the Faith; and many more.



**FORMED** provides amazing content 24/7 for you to grow in your faith. **It's free and easy to register.** Go to [stfrancismformed.org](http://stfrancismformed.org), click "Register" and enter your name, email address, and desired password; if you have previously registered with **FORMED**, you will need to know or update your password. You can only enter **FORMED** this this way. Once you are logged in, you can download the app from the App Store or Google Play Store — just search for **FORMED**. Enjoy. Please contact Father John if you have any questions.

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — FEBRUARY 19<sup>th</sup>:**

Our Savior Lutheran Church, across the street from Gilmour, has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on **the third Saturday of each month**. They welcome volunteers. If you want to volunteer, they have instituted some **new procedures** because of the Coronavirus. **Thus they help pre-pack nonperishables in bags on Thursday evening beginning at 5 PM.** They continue this prepacking on Friday if needed. Check with Elina Gurney on this. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help putting 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](mailto:gurney.oh@gmail.com).** In this critical time, this is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For John Blazek, father of Father John [birthday].
- For Tom O'Brien ['59], father of Terence O'Brien ['81], brother of Tim ['60] and Dan ['63] O'Brien, uncle of Sean ['89] and Colleen ['92], Matthew ['97], Patrick ['01], Nobert ['06], Michael ['07] O'Brien, great uncle of PJ ['30] O'Brien.
- For Sister Mary Clennon, C.S.C.
- For Rosemary Nagy.
- For Rita Rybalt, wife of Kevin Marrie, ['81], daughter-in-law of Carol Marrie, sister-in-law of Sean ['85] Marrie and Megan Schlickmann ['90].
- For Dorothy Hoelker
- For Elizabeth Wiertel, grandmother of Aegeas ['18] and Elijah ['00] Wiertel
- For James Steward
- For Bandith Suttiratana, father of Eddie ['94] and Mickey ['95] Suttiratana.
- For Trent Walker
- For Jennifer Care, mother of Patrick Boje ['23].

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For Thomas ['65] and Carolyn Brigham, and Hannah LeBerteaux ['05], whose homes were destroyed in the Colorado fire.
- For all those suffering from COVID.
- 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.

**TETELESTAI IS COMING:**

Our Lady Chapel is blessed to be only 1 of 2 places in the Cleveland Area to host the Passion Play, *Tetelestai*, this coming Lent. **Cleveland Performing Arts Ministries' musical passion play will be presented at Our Lady Chapel on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> [8 PM], Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> [8PM], and Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> [2 PM] — Palm Sunday weekend..**

*Tetelestai's* dramatic stage production and timeless music tell the story of Jesus' trial, execution and resurrection in a visual way that will leave a lasting impression. Having *Tetelestai* here as we begin Holy Week will be a great way to enter into our observance of the Paschal Mystery.

There is no charge for the presentation, but free-will offerings will be accepted. **Covid Protocols will be in effect — exactly what these will be will be announced closer to the date.** For more information, please contact the chapel office [440-473-3560] or visit the *Tetelestai* website: [www.livethepassion.org](http://www.livethepassion.org).

**GRREAT ADVICE:**

To achieve greatness, start where you are, use what you have, and do what you can.

—Arthur Ashe

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

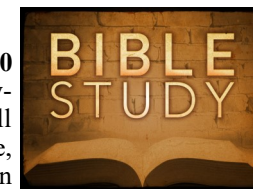
**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Mark Ferfolia, Sr., Varsity B hockey coach, who suffered a stroke at practice.
- For Renee Mills, Wife of Terry Mills, sister-in-law of John Mills, and aunt of Morgan Coverse ['11], who is undergoing treatment for colon issues.
- For Lou Chorich, who is in rehab following shoulder surgery
- For Eric Penick ['71] who is recovering from surgery.
- For Gil Plavcan who is under the care of hospice.
- For Thomas Hughes, who is in rehab for injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Frank Nannicola, grandfather of Cassie ['17], Frank ['18], and Mia ['19] Nannicola, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Visconsi, brother of Tom ['61] and Tony Visconsi ['75] and Paulette Poklar, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For William Rogal, father of Jill Thompson, who is undergoing rehab following surgery
- For Cassandra Williams ['15], sister of Sebastian Williams ['18] who is undergoing treatment for inoperable cancer.
- For Vicki Giancola, mother of Vince Giancola ['23], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Joseph Borkey ['82], brother of Jeff ['80] and Jerrod ['87] Borkey, father of Christian Borkey ['16], and uncle of Jerrod ['12] and former Gilmour student, Ian Borkey, who is undergoing treatment for cancer
- For Mary Goers who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Serena DiCillo, daughter of David DiCillo ['84] and Polly Duval DiCillo ['84], and granddaughter of long-time Gilmour teacher, Bonnie DiCillo, and niece of John ['83], Dawn ['86], and Dan ['88] DiCillo and Laurie Duval Muller-Girard ['81], who is recovering from a bone marrow transplant
- For Ray Gruss who is battling cancer.
- For Mary Curran, mother of Megan ['10], Carolyn ['12], and Catherine ['17] Curran, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Addison McKito, sister of Aidan McKito ['24], who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkin's Lymphoma.
- For Darlene Lonardo, mother of Joseph Lonardo ['00], and grandmother of Angelina ['22] and Giana ['22] Lonardo, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- For Christine Maharg, mother of Lily Maharg ['21], who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Margaret Malarney ['24] who continues rehab and medical care.
- For Bernice Girgash, aunt of Basketball Coach and Counselor, Dan DeCrane, 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 Chiacchiarri, 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 seriously ill
- For Tom Podnar, father of Lower School art teacher, Eileen Sheehan, who is awaiting a heart transplant.
- For Father James Caddy, former pastor of St. Francis, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.



**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, FEB. 16<sup>th</sup>:**

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. 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: Holy Cross Spirituality — the Charisms [Part 2]**



**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, February 13: 6 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, February 14: St. Cyril and Methodius	NO MASS
Tuesday, February 15:	NO MASS
Wednesday, February 16:	4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Thursday, February 17:	NO MASS
Friday, February 18:	NO MASS
Saturday, February 19: 7 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	NO MASS
Sunday, February 20: 7 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

**CAMP GILMOUR 2022:**

Camp Gilmour is back and safer than ever. With nine weeks of new offerings and old favorites for children as young as 3, Camp Gilmour has something for everyone! Join us for Preschool Camp [ages 3-5]; Day Camp [ages 5-12]; sports camps; and experiential camps exploring the fine and performing arts, drones, outdoor adventures, service, engineering and more. **Camps offered June 6-August 5.** Complimentary math and reading enrichment offered each morning for day campers. Before Care available beginning at 7:15 AM and After Care available until 6 PM. Register today at [gilmour.org/summerncamp](http://gilmour.org/summerncamp). 10% discount available thru February 28<sup>th</sup>.



**REMEMBER:**

Fear is a reaction; courage is a decision.



**REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:**

Have you ever gone through the “process” of moving? Most people move from one place to another in their lives because it is time to move forward. And with that in mind, the packing begins. In the packing process, you begin to realize how much “stuff” you have acquired. You are faced with decisions about what moves with you, what can be repurposed for others, and what can be left behind. It becomes clear that the more of “stuff” that you carry with you, the harder it will be to move forward. You find yourself weighing how much of what you thought was connected to your identity really is part of you. You begin to consider what will enhance and sustain your mission in life, and what is no longer needed.

The Prophet Jeremiah [17:5-8] speaks to the heart of false worship. Many people have let go of the temple worship of their tradition; they have forsaken the God of their history. Jeremiah compares and contrasts those who are faithful, and those who are not. In a sense, there are two kinds of persons as there are two kinds of trees — how they are planted will make all the difference. The challenge is about where are our roots? What strengthens us? What is the source of our life’s activities?

Those who rely on the shallowness of the immediate “now” will live in the barrenness of the changeless. They will be propped up by their hope totally in human support that makes sure that everything remains predictable and stable. What they receive is the experience of the changeless desert. The only spice in their lives is the salt of preserving an endless thirst.

Those who reverence the “now” as it leads to the “then” are like trees rooted near a nourishing stream. They trust the beyond and are available to distress and thirst during the times of the unknown. Their strength derives from something other than themselves or their kind.

This picture of contrasts challenges God’s people to return to trusting God rather than themselves for strength and security. They have pulled up their roots from the fertile soil of God’s goodness which apparently has not been good enough. They have forgotten who they are, and are trying a new way of being their own persons. This leads to God’s anger and their ultimate punishment by exile.

In Luke’s Gospel [6:17-26], Jesus gives his early disciples the Good News of the Beatitudes. Luke has four Beatitudes and four “woes” or maledictions. These are four strong statements about how things or conditions now will be reversed by those who will follow Jesus. Matthew has eight Beatitudes which predict the good life later in heaven for those who live the blessed life here on earth. Luke presents Jesus as telling His disciples that they, personally, are responsible for bringing about material justice and peace. He tells them that by doing this they will provoke resistance, and they should expect persecution and rejection.

Jesus is fulfilling His role as prophet. He is announcing how He intends to live, and predicting how He expects to be heard and received. He is inviting His listeners to follow Him as prophets of “root-changing”.

Luke’s presentation of Jesus here — and often in his Gospel account — emphasizes the poverty of riches and esteem. There are the poor and hungry as well as the rich and full. There are those who weep and those rejected and hated as well as those who enjoy being thought well of. From the moment of His unrolling the scripture in the synagogue to his unrolling of His life on the cross, Jesus is inviting His followers to reverse their own value-system and assist the value-re-rooting of others. Jesus called Peter out of his boat — away from the identity by which he was known and knew himself. The question will always be about where are your roots — what or who tells you who you are — and what are you going to do with it all.

It is safe to assume that some of Jesus’ disciples may have been a little more well-off than others. They would not have considered themselves “rich” of course, so they were okay. It is also true to say



alone because no one cares enough to be with them. We weep for all who suffer various addictions. We pray for all who have been conned by the world into worshipping the god of materialism. We pray for all who have been deluded by society into embracing immorality acting as though living a sleazy life is acceptable. We weep for all those who have bought into these lies. They are missing so much. They are throwing everything away for so little. And so we mourn.

And **Blessed are you** when people hate you, and exclude you and insult you and call you names on account of me. Putting Christ in our lives can lead others to the Lord. But there are people who transfer their own guilt over their lives to those who are doing their best to be Christian. They don’t talk to you. They don’t invite you to join them in anything happening in the school, work or neighborhood. You walk down the hall at school, and they look at you and someone says something and the rest start laughing. And you hate that. And so do I when I’m in the grocery store or someplace and people see me wearing a cross, or in clericals and make some sort of comment under their breath. But we would rather have people laugh at us for our commitment to Christ than abandon Jesus.

We really have only one choice in life — to be for God or against God. We can’t have both. Either we live for the Kingdom and die to our superficial wants, or we live for ourselves and lose the Kingdom of God. Everything in life has a cost. There is a cost to pay for following Christ. Sometimes it seems like a high cost. It means pushing our selfish desires to the side, filling our hunger for the Lord, grieving over those who are rejecting Him while at the same time enduring their scorn. Everything has a cost, but the reward we are seeking is worth all costs. Jesus Christ — His Life now and for eternity — is worth whatever sacrifices we are called to make, whatever mockery we are called to endure. Considering what He gives us, happiness and meaning to our lives here, union with Him in complete joy for all eternity, the cost is little. Possessing Christ is the greatest bargain we will ever be offered. Pray for the courage to be Catholic.

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

**SPIRITUAL FITNESS PROGRAM:**

Lent is coming — it’s 2 weeks away. It’s time to start thinking about goals. The theme of Lent fits in well with this week’s theme and Scripture Readings — **how would we describe our life as it is now, and what is it that Christ is inviting us to?**

- Take some time to create a list of spiritual goals that you would like to attain during the season of Lent. Begin a new or renewed time of prayer.
- Spend some time involved with the lives of the wider community — the poor, the lonely. Remember, those in need may be living in your own house, or in your neighborhood, or among your relatives. Then there is the even wider community of the poor and lonely in our city and in the world.
- St. Paul calls us to a life of love. How can you become a more loving person — your tone of voice, your reaching out, your making time — the list is endless
- Use daily devotionals. There are so many of them on line. There are also devotionals on the table in the narthex of the chapel. Devotionals are a wonderful way to help you maintain the spirit of the Christian and Gospel life each and every day.

**LEARN BY DOING:**

We may read volumes and volumes on the art of swimming, yet we’ll never understand what swimming is like unless we get wet. So we may read all the books ever written on the love of God, but we will never understand it until we allow God to truly love us.

—Brother David Steindl-Rast

**THE LUCAN BEATITUDES:**

Luke's Gospel for the 6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time presents us with Luke's version of the Beatitudes [Luke 6:17-26]. Luke's version is quite a bit different from Matthew's version — there are only four beatitudes in Luke followed by four antitheses or “woes”. Most of us are more familiar with the beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel [5:1-13] which has eight beatitudes and no woes. Matthew speaks about the proper attitudes of the Christian, like “Blessed are the poor in spirit”; Luke speaks about the present reality of the Christian — “Blessed are you who are poor now.”

Why the difference? The Gospel of Matthew is written for Jewish Christians — as such, it speaks about the new attitudes, the new mind set necessary for the Kingdom of the Lord. The heart must be pure, the Spirit must be poor, those who mourn the plight of Israel fallen from God will be comforted, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will receive the Kingdom of Heaven. There must be a transformation from the Old Testament mentality to a new life — a new testament, a new Kingdom. The Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew present some of the fundamental changes that the ancient Jews must make to become Christians. In Matthew Jesus gives the Beatitudes from a mountain — just as Moses gave the Law of God from Mount Sinai.

The Gospel of Luke is quite different from Matthew. It was written by a gentile convert — Luke — and addressed primarily to gentile converts to Christianity. Luke's audience was poor — many were slaves or low born. Their choice of Christianity only exacerbated their situation. They were persecuted and suffering. In presenting the Lord's words to them, Luke places Jesus on a plain — He was on a level with them. He was poor, suffering and persecuted.

Let's look at the four Beatitudes in Luke — Blessed are you who are poor now, hungry now, mourn now and are excluded or persecuted now. They have a lot to say to all of us.

First of all, those who are poor now are those who recognize their dependence on God — not on material possessions. We have all probably met many people who are very wealthy, who yet are very poor because their stuff really means nothing to them — all that matters is to possess Jesus Christ. When the only treasure that matters in life is the Lord, we can be poor regarding our stuff, but we are rich in what matters. Sometimes I ask myself: if my house were to burn down and everything would be destroyed, would I also be devastated? I hope not. I also hope that I would be devastated if I made a pact with the devil and gained everything in the world for the price of Jesus Christ. Then I would have nothing.

Why does Luke even mention the beatitude: Blessed are you who are hungry now? Isn't this covered in the poor stuff? Not really. Luke is referring to being hungry for the Lord and his Kingdom. Many of us have been hungry this way and are still hungry for the Lord. We made retreats, had spiritual experiences and felt hungry for more. The song is really right: "I can't get enough of you, Jesus." He's a meal that never fills us, who always leaves you searching for ways to find new and fuller experiences of His Presence, ways to be nourished with His Spirit.

Blessed are you who are weeping has nothing to do with funerals. It has to do with the sorrow we feel for those people who are living in darkness — who reject the Lord, who are in a hole and refuse to come out of it. We can look at ourselves, our lives and know that we have been there. We reach out to them and say: "you can be better; you are better". And we mourn for those who are hurting so much existing in a meaningless life. We weep over the celebrities who appear to have it all — money, fame, beauty, and, intelligence — but whose very talents have destroyed them. We weep for those who die



that the rich of our days always want more; so they do not consider themselves “rich”, so they are okay. There are the hungry and those who weep because of their own poverty and hunger and that of others. Jesus says that they belong to the kingdom. Those who will speak about the poor and hungry will belong too, but they will be spoken against and will be given a sense that they do not belong. Those who will follow Jesus in His prophetic denunciations will receive what He received. They will belong to the Kingdom. It all boils down to who or what are you thirsting for in life.

The rich, the unconcerned, the full and the esteemed, belong to the “Now Generation”, and they are already receiving all that they desire. The “Then Generation” will live the unusual way of grounding their roots in the “now” only as a way to bring about a better kingdom on earth. The Rich sing: “It's now or never”, so they take the “now road”. The poor, hungry and aware sing: “Here comes the son” and live invested and rooted in the prophetic ways of Jesus. As we bless ourselves with holy water as part of our entering the worshipping community, we re-immers ourselves into the nourishing stream of Christ and His being immersed in the poverty and hunger of His family. We become the “son” that is coming. We are the “now” and “then” generation begotten by the Spirit and given life in Christ to do something with it all.

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

**A VALENTINE'S DAY STORY:**

Since tomorrow is Valentine's Day, I'd like to tell you about a man who had a beautiful trust in God. It's a Valentine story because it's about how he found his wife. It happened back in 1920 — long before on-line dating services. What the man did was place an ad in a newspaper. This is what the ad said: “Middle-ranking civil servant, single, Catholic, 43, immaculate past, from the country, is looking for a good Catholic, pure girl who can cook well, tackle all household chores, with a talent for sewing and homemaking with a view to marriage as soon as possible. Fortune desirable, but not a precondition.”



Believe it or not, a woman named Maria Peintner answered the ad. She was 36 years old, a trained cook and the illegitimate daughter of a baker. She did not have a fortune, but even so, they married four months later. In spite of their somewhat advanced years they had three children — two boys and a girl. The youngest child received the same name as his father — Joseph Ratzinger, who became better known as Pope Benedict XVI.

After his election to the papacy, someone dug up the “wife-wanted” ad and showed it to the new pope. The pope, of course, smiled. He knew that his parents gave a beautiful testimony to married love. Pope Benedict would speak often about that love. In fact, his first encyclical is entitled: *God is Love*, and it describes marriage as the pre-eminent figure of God's love for us.

Joseph and Maria Ratzinger illustrate the love we hear about as we celebrate Valentine's Day. They had a love based on trust in the Lord — a love that endures because it places God first. Listen to what Jesus says in the Gospel of Luke: “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord” [Luke 6:17-26].

If a person gets up into their mid-thirties — or forties — and they have not found that special person, they can feel life has passed them by — maybe even that God has forgotten them. That was not the case with Joseph and Maria Ratzinger. From all we know, they were people of deep faith in God. Because of their trust in God, they had an admirable marriage and deeply united family. And it all began with their trust in the Lord.

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

**IS IT ABOUT YOU?**

Do not be too quick to condemn people who no longer believe in God, for it is perhaps your own coldness and avarice, your mediocrity and materialism, your sensuality and selfishness that have killed their faith.

—Thomas Merton

**BLESSED:**

Jesus has a way of really shaking us up, doesn't he? As you read or listen to St. Luke's Gospel, there is some real conflict going on here — there might be even a little bit of resistance to what Jesus was saying. Consider what happens.

Jesus had spent the previous night in prayer. All night he prays because he is going to do something important and he wants special help from the Father. This is a good example to all of us. The next morning, Jesus calls his disciples and from them he picks 12 to be his special followers — his apostles — those who would be sent forth to preach the Gospel. But before he sends them forth, he has some important lessons to teach them. So Jesus leads them down the mountain to the plain where a large crowd of people are gathered. Then he looks his disciples in the eye and says to them: "Blessed are you poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. [Luke 6:17-26]. Now can you imagine how Peter and the others react to something like that? I can just see Peter turning to his brother Andrew and their fishing partners, James and John, and shaking his head, saying something like: "What's this all about? Where's he coming from? Who ever heard of a kingdom that was full of poor people?"

And what came after was no better! "Blessed are you who are hungry?" "ho weep?" "Who are hated?" "Who are excluded and insulted?" What's going on here? Well, the very least that's going on is that Jesus is letting them know that something different is happening. His kingdom will not be the same as other kingdoms. It will be a place where the poor are respected because they are children of God. It will be a place where the homeless will find shelter, where the hungry will be fed, where the mourning will be comforted, and those who are sad will rejoice.

Well if the disciples felt some resistance to what Jesus was saying — and we, too, perhaps feel some resistance — consider Jeremiah, whom God called to be a prophet. Now this was the last thing in the world Jeremiah wanted to do — and he resisted. He knew how prophets were treated — people didn't want to hear their message because it was challenging, challenging in much the same way as was Jesus' message in Luke's Gospel. And so Jeremiah said, "Don't call me, I'm only a boy" [see Jeremiah 1:6]. God said: "Don't worry, I'll take care of you." Jeremiah said: "I can't talk, I'm a stutterer." God said: "Don't worry. I'll put my word into your mouth." And you know what? That's exactly what happened.

And once Jeremiah got a taste of God's word, he could not stop talking. He could not stop preaching the message of God to the people. That brings us to what Jeremiah is speaking about today [Jeremiah 17:5-8]. Jeremiah has spent some years preaching, and exactly what he expected to happen, has happened — he has been persecuted and his message has not been heard and he is feeling bad about that. So God speaks to him to console him. God tells him that he is blessed. He is blessed just like those people Jesus talks about in Luke's Gospel. He is blessed because he has accepted the task God gave him, and in spite of the difficulties he has placed his trust in the Lord.

So, what about us? Basically, I think we can all be blessed if we, too, place our trust in the Lord, no matter what. Do we have to give up all our possessions and become really poor — economically poor — in order to be blessed and be part of the kingdom of God? I don't think so. But we do have to be ready to do things — maybe some very big and important things — to respond to God's call. Here are some examples. I once met a French doctor, a physician who gave up a lucrative practice in Paris to go and work among lepers. He has spent over twenty years in one of Mother Teresa's facilities for lepers in India. His situation is not unique. There are many others who have done similar things.

Less dramatically perhaps — but no less importantly — I know a business man who spends eight or ten hours in an office and then dedicates at least two evenings a week to mentoring an inner-city boy, helping him with homework, taking him to a ball game, or just shooting some hoops in the back yard. And again, there are others like him. Then, too, there are the countless mothers and fathers whose lives



love the most. Craft some cute little notes or share some sweet treats with your closest friends to let them know you care.

7. **Do celebrate Galentine's day if you're a lady.** "What's Galentine's day?" Well, as the great Leslie Knope would say: "Oh, it's only the best day of the year." Although Galentine's day is traditionally celebrated the day before Valentine's day, you can celebrate it on February 14<sup>th</sup>, by getting a group of your closest girlfriends together, sharing sweet affirmations and gifts with one another, and maybe popping in a rom com or a chick flick to giggle at together!
8. **If you're a gentleman, have some quality bro time.** Get some of your buddies together, shoot some hoops, play some Madden NFL or Settlers of Catan — whatever it is you boys do. Just enjoy the company of your dude friends while doing something fun together.
9. **Do treat yo-self.** There's a cornucopia of sweet Valentine's day treats at your local grocery store, just waiting to be consumed by you! Certainly, don't treat yourself too much and make yourself sick, but enjoy some tasty, heart-shaped goodness on this glorious day!
10. **Do pray for your vocation.** Whether you're called to marriage, religious life, or consecrated single life, God wants to lead you to your vocation so that He can sanctify you through it. Give Him some freedom to do that, by being honest with Him about your fears, hopes, dreams, and desires, and also by listening to Him and the ways He's loving you right now.
11. **Do let Jesus love you and bask in that love.** Valentine's day celebrates love, the expression of God's own nature. We wouldn't know what love is if God didn't love us first, and no love on this earth will ever be as deep, whole, perfect, selfless, and complete as the love God has for us. He is enamored with you and wants to be everything to you. Let Him do that. Maybe spend a little extra time in prayer, seek out His grace in Confession, or enter into the most intimate union with Him by receiving Him in the Eucharist at Mass. Let the Valentine's day celebrations of love lead you to the Love that truly satisfies.

—written by Lean Murphy, a LifeTeen staff person

**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](http://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].**

**EUCHARISTIC 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 a Senior in High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are in 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'S and DON'TS FOR SINGLES ON VALENTINE'S DAY:**

I love love. And I love celebrating. So you better believe Valentine's Day is one of my favorite days to celebrate love. Having celebrated 24 Valentine's Days as a single person and as I approach my 25<sup>th</sup>, I've realized that not all single people like to embrace the day as passionately as I do.

That's ok. I can be a little too passionate about things at times. However, I also know that sometimes single people feel like Valentine's Day is just one big reason to feel extra alone. I would like to argue that that doesn't need to be the case. Valentine's Day is a great day to celebrate love — even as a single person. In order to help my fellow single people most fully enter into that celebration, I've laid out some practical do's and don'ts for the holiday. Being single for a season is a really good thing and being single on Valentine's day is a really good thing too. Don't let your desire for something else let you miss out on that!

- Don't whine about being single.** First of all, being single on Valentine's day, like being single on any day, is a very good thing. The time we have in our lives to be single is a gift and we can't forget that. Secondly, no one really wants to hear you whine about how you wish you weren't single — no offense, but it's true. So, don't post a depressing photo by yourself with a "Singles Awareness Day" caption. Nobody wants to see that. Celebrating singlehood and living it well is far more attractive than being a downer about it. So if you're feeling extra aware of your singlehood on Valentine's Day, be aware of the many good things you're able to do and experience as a single person at this phase of your life.
- Don't throw a pity party.** Parties are fun, but pity parties are the worst. Feeling bad for yourself because you don't have a significant other on Valentine's Day is not even "kinda" the way to celebrate this holiday! Valentine's day is about love, which is an enormous reason to celebrate. Even if you don't have a romantic love to celebrate, you can be sure you have lots of other love in your life to celebrate — the love of your heavenly Father, your family, your friends, your youth minister, your teachers, and many others!
- Don't act like you're better/cooler/freer/happier/fill-in-the-blank than people that are in relationships and celebrating with their significant others.** While it's important to celebrate the good aspects of single life, it's also important to remember that being single is not better or worse than being in a relationship — it's just a different phase of life. Don't let your love for single life become so self-centered that you begin to act superior to your friends that aren't single. Appreciate your state in life and respect and appreciate theirs.
- Don't act like people that are in relationships and celebrating with their significant others are better/cooler/freer/happier/fill-in-the-blank than you.** As I said in my last point, being in a relationship isn't necessarily better or worse than being single — it's just different. So don't act like your friends that are dating are having a better Valentine's Day than you are. Just because theirs might look a little different doesn't mean it has to be better than yours! So just group hug it out and keep on celebrating.
- Don't wish for something that isn't your reality.** You're not in a relationship right now — that's your reality. Don't pine away for something different or be deceived to think that you'll be happier once things change. Be grateful for your present moment, and make the most of your reality. Wishing, hoping, or daydreaming for things to be different isn't going to make you happier — you might end up like this kid choking on a dandelion. So just don't.
- Do give Valentines to friends.** Valentine's Day is a great excuse to spoil the people you



are filled with the many tasks and responsibilities involved in bringing up their children — loving them and teaching them to love one another and their neighbor as well. This is not always an easy thing to do.

Finally, I think of my grandnephew. We celebrated his eighth birthday with a fine dinner and a big birthday cake and ice cream. After dinner, we were watching the news on TV and there was a story about people starving in Africa. We saw pictures of little children with swollen bellies, and my nephew asked his mother: "What's the matter with them?" She told him that they were hungry, that they did not get enough to eat. After a few seconds of reflection he looked at his parents and said: "We ought to send them the rest of the birthday cake." I thought: "Isn't this great! We have a budding social activist in the family."

In *America* magazine this week, Daniel Harrington comments on Luke's Gospel in this way: Jesus knows that true happiness consists in a right relationship with God, and that of themselves money, food, laughter, and celebrity cannot bring real happiness. He insists that what can make us truly happy and really blessed is a singular dedication to God and God's Kingdom.

The question for us of course is how do we in our lives show that singular dedication? Like the doctor and the business man and so many others who dedicate their lives to direct service of the poor? Like so many good mothers and fathers whose lives are filled with providing a healthy, loving home for their children? Or like my grandnephew willing to share what we have with those in need?

Lent will be here in less than two weeks. It's a special time to think about our response to the needs of the world. Last Sunday we heard God say to Isaiah: "Whom shall I send, who will go for us?" And the prophet answered: "Here I am, send me" [Isaiah 6:8]. Can we be bold enough to respond with the grace of God: "Here I am, send me"? —taken from the writings of Father Leo Murphy, S.J., which appear on the internet.

**2021 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS:** If you would like a copy of your 2021 Contributions to Our Lady Chapel, please call the chapel office [440-473-3560] and we will be glad to send it out to you. Since many have their own records and do not need to receive this statement, we have found that this is much more economical for us — as good stewards, we are trying to cut postage expenses from a mass mailing. Let us know if you need the statement sent to you and we will be glad to get it to you. Thanks for your understanding.

**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-----[Saturday, February 5]-----[Weekly Mail-in] ----- \$ 165.00  
Offerings-----[Sunday, February 6]----- \$ 687.00

**CHILDREN'S BULLETINS:**

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



**THE GOSPEL AND CONSUMERISM:**

Two old friends were catching up on their lives over drinks at a sidewalk café. The one said to the other: “Why is it that you have not yet been married?” The other friend said: “Well to tell the truth, I have been looking my whole life long for the perfect woman. There were several times where I thought I had found her. Once in Barcelona I met a woman who was beautiful and intelligent and I was smitten to the heart. I thought certainly this is the woman that I should marry. Then I found out that she was vain and conceited, and so that relationship came to an end. Then once in Boston I met a woman who was outgoing and generous. She seemed perfect to me in every respect. Only later I found out that she was flighty and irresponsible. Clearly, she was not the one I was looking for. Then recently I met a woman in Montreal who was intelligent and beautiful, generous and warm. She had a great sense of humor and dedicated herself to others. I said to myself: this indeed is the perfect woman. This is the woman that I should marry.” “Well,” said the friend, “Why didn’t you marry her?” The other man fingered his glass and replied in a quiet voice: “Because she, was looking for the perfect man.”

To be an American is to be a consumer. Dangerous things begin to happen when we allow consumerism to influence our relationships — the way that we relate to others, and the way that we relate to God. You cannot choose a wife in the way you would shop for a new car. You cannot analyze your relationship to God in the way that you would analyze an investment on the stock market. For all the differences in our culture of race, religion, education, economic status, Americans are united in the fact that they are consumers. We do not all have the same amount of money to spend, but it is our money and spending it gives us power. Whether we spend it at *Walmart* or *Nordstroms*, when we are consumers, we are in control. The customer is always right. Clearly the primary mode of recreation in the United States is shopping. When we are depressed, we shop. When we are happy we spend. When we are bored we buy. Shop ‘til you drop! It’s the American way.

Now the point of this is not to attack consumerism. Consumerism is a part of our culture — whether we like it or not. The point is to warn you that it is dangerous to allow consumerism to influence and to warp our relationships. Because we as American are so fundamentally consumers, we can begin to approach our relationships as a kind of commerce. Taking that step is asking for trouble.

Therefore, I want to name three expectations of consumers and illustrate how none of these are helpful in directing our relationship to God or our relationships to others.

Consumers expect that life is going to be fair, beneficial and free. Consumers expect that life is going to be fair. We are always looking for a fair price for what we buy. We would love to find a bargain, but no one wants to be cheated. By and large we are pleased with the price that we pay for the things that we buy. Otherwise we would not buy them. Yet, if something is defective, we want our money back. We want to be compensated, otherwise it would not be fair. Now this kind of commercial fairness should not be an expectation for living. The truth is that life is often unfair. Is it fair to be born with a handicap? Is it fair that our wife is dying of cancer? Is it fair that innocent people die by violence every day? Now none of these evils should be dismissed or tolerated. But clearly the commercial view of fairness is inadequate to deal with the complexities and the mysteries of life.

Consumers expect life to be beneficial. We only buy things because we think they will be good for us. If we don’t like it, we don’t buy it. The question which drives the consumer is: “What benefit will be in this for me? How will my life be better with this new house, with this new sweater?” The consumer needs to know: “What will I get out of this purchase?” Now transferring the idea of commercial benefit into relationships is not helpful. We do, of course, benefit from or relationships to God and others. But unlike the purchases that we make, relationships need to be mutual. Not only do we benefit, but others must benefit as well. Therefore, the commercial idea of benefit skews our



approach to relationships. Once we start thinking: “What do I get out of being a Catholic? What do I get out of this friendship?” Then the mutuality in our relationships is obscured and a healthy approach to relating is undercut.

Consumers think that life should be free. Consumers expect to have the discretion of choosing one thing over another. We might be simply buying a napkin ring, but we expect to have the freedom to decide which napkin ring we will purchase. We expect to decide when we are tired of one napkin ring and want to buy a new one. When that commercial freedom is transposed into relationships, it can be harmful. Such freedom reduces the permanency that relationships require. If I don’t like this church, I’ll go to another. If this person is not meeting my needs, then the friendship is over.

Consumers value fairness, benefit, freedom. But these categories are inadequate to the realities of human relationships and our relationship to God. We need wider categories, deeper categories. In Luke’s gospel [6:17-26], Jesus shows us where to find them. By claiming that the poor are blessed and the wealthy are to be pitied, he lifts up counter-cultural values. He is asking us to look at those parts of life that are not esteemed by our culture and to recognize in them a necessary part of living. He is asking us to widen our categories and values. Instead of being preoccupied with what is fair, we need to develop within ourselves a sense of acceptance, of humbly making our peace with those things in life that we do not understand or we cannot control. Instead of worrying only about our own benefit, we need to make room in our life for compassion and service, reaching out in love to others. Instead of treasuring simply our own freedom and discretion, we need to espouse commitment and loyalty, binding ourselves to others even when it is difficult, even when it demands sacrifice.

We as Americans are consumers, and consumerism extols fairness and benefit and freedom. But Jesus calls us to look in a countercultural direction. He calls us to open ourselves to acceptance, to service, to commitment. His gospel insists that it is only when we enlarge our attitudes in that direction that we can truly appreciate the breadth and mystery of life. It is only when we make room for countercultural values that we will have the clarity to see the Kingdom of God.

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

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

<b>Monday:</b>	James 1:1-11, Mark 8:11-13
<b>Tuesday:</b>	James 1:12-18, Mark 8:14-21
<b>Wednesday:</b>	James 1:19-27, Mark 8:22-26
<b>Thursday:</b>	James 2:1-9, Mark 8:27-33
<b>Friday:</b>	James 2:14-26, Mark 8:34-9:1
<b>Saturday:</b>	James 3:1-10, Mark 9:2-13

**7<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** 1 Samuel 26:2-23, 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, Luke 6:27-38

**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].

