

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ **A Prayer for Peace in Ukraine** ~

**O Prince of Peace,
Once more we hear the guns of war,
Once more we see the faces
Of frightened children.**

**We pray for the people of Ukraine,
That they may be granted peace;
We pray for the people of Russia,
That they may demand peace;
We pray for our country,
That we may be a positive part
Of peacemaking in this world.**

**O Prince of Peace,
Lead us from this dark time
To a deeper understanding
Of the global human family,
So all may break bread together
In the secure embrace of peace.
Amen.**

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.

CONFIRMATION:

Congratulations to **Vinney Rayborn**, who was confirmed this past Friday at the **Chapel of the Divine Word**. This is a moment of great grace for him and for each of us, as the Holy Spirit enters in our midst again in a special way. Please pray for all those being confirmed during this special time in their lives. And let us also pray that we will all grow into a deeper appreciation of the blessings of this special sacrament.

**LENTEN NOTES:**

During this sacred time, each of us is called to spiritual growth — particularly through a turning away from sin. Lent is a time for “new beginnings” — a time to grow in our relationship with God and each other. There are 3 major spiritual practices during Lent to which Scripture calls us: **prayer**, **fasting**, and **almsgiving**.

**—LENTEN REGULATIONS:**

Ash Wednesday and **Good Friday** are days of **fast** for all between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine. Fasting means that one full meal for the day is allowed, along with two light meals [snacks]. No eating between meals. Those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to take upon themselves some aspects of the fast, whenever possible.

Ash Wednesday and **All Fridays** during Lent are days of **abstinence** from meat, for those who are fourteen and older. Again, those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to participate whenever possible.

PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CHAPEL FAMILIES:

Through a grant, the Diocese of Cleveland has obtained 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 stfrancisgm.formed.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 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.

PENANCE SERVICE:

Our community celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on **Monday, April 4th at 7:00 PM**. Our service is centered around reflections by the various characters involved in the passion and death of Jesus. There will also be songs and hymns, and a time to bring ourselves from our sinful ways back to the Lord. As we confront our own sinfulness, we realize that we, too, have a part to play in the death of Jesus. The service will last about 45 minutes. There will be a time for individual confessions following the service, for those who wish to avail themselves of this opportunity. Please join us.

**A REMINDER:**

2 Our children will rise or fall to the level of expectations we set for them.

—Scott Shickler

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Lou Chorich,
- For Ray Gruss.
- For James Gorman [‘53]
- For David Troyer, grandfather of former Executive Chef, Damon Mastnick
- For Ralph Pizhmot
- For Marko Saric, father of Mark [‘87] and Nancy [‘90] Saric
- For Curtis DeCrane, Uncle of Basketball Coach and Counselor, Dan DeCrane
- For Gil Plavcan, husband of Linda McGraw
- For Mercedes Carey
- For Father Robert Chabot, S.S.S.
- For John Ostrowski
- For Jackie Puntel
- For Gena Miller, mother of incoming Freshman, Giovanna Miller [‘26]
- For Sister Lorraine Black, C.S.C.
- For Paul Beno

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For the people of the Ukraine; for an end to the war; and for all people of the world to work more continuously for peaceful resolutions to political and social issues.
- 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.
- For a greater awareness of our call to create a more humane and just society.

JESUS IS GOD-WHO-SUFFERS-WITH-US:

God sent Jesus to make free persons of us. He has chosen compassion as the way to freedom. That is a great deal more radical than you might at first imagine. It means that God wanted to liberate us, not by removing suffering from us, but by sharing it with us. Jesus is God-who-suffers-with-us. Over time, the word sympathizing has become a somewhat feeble way of expressing the reality of “suffering with” someone. Nowadays, when someone says: “I have sympathy for you,” it has a rather distant ring about it. The feeling, at least for me, is of someone looking down from above. The word’s original meaning of “suffering together with someone” has been partly lost. That’s why I’ve opted for the word compassion. It’s warmer, more intimate, and closer. It’s taking part in the suffering of the other, being totally a fellow human being in suffering. Jesus is the revelation of God’s unending, unconditional love for us human beings. Everything that Jesus has done, said, and undergone is meant to show us that the love we most long for is given to us by God, not because we deserved it, but because God is a God of love.

—Henri Nouwen 19

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

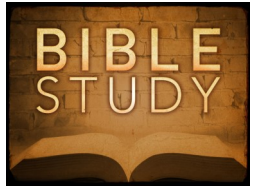
PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Barry Cooper, cousin of AVI associate director, Bobbie Bonner, who suffered a stroke and has brain bleed.
- For Ivy Rose Green, infant niece of Alex ['05], Vince ['07], Nick ['09], and Zach ['15] Hostoffer, who is ill.
- For Paula Fitzgerald, campus Minister at Ursuline College, who is recovering from knee surgery.
- For Eric Penick ['71] who is recovering from surgery.
- 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 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.
- For Paul Tuggey, grandfather of Charlie Tuggey ['21], seriously ill following a heart attack.



NEXT BIBLE STUDY — TUESDAY, MAR. 9th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Tuesday, March 9th 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: The Mystery of the Ark of the Covenant.**



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, March 6: 1 st Week in Lent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, March 7:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 8:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 9:	NO MASS
Thursday, March 10:	4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Friday, March 11	NO MASS
Saturday, March 12: 2 nd Week in Lent	NO MASS
Sunday, March 13: 2 nd Week in Lent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

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 8th [8 PM], Saturday, April 9th [8PM], and Sunday, April 10th [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.

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Lent is such an exciting time of year. There are so many ways to approach it. Lent is meant to be a journey which leads us to the renewal of our baptism; for some of us it will lead to first-time reception of the sacraments of initiation and entrance into the Church. Lent is also a time of decision-making — what does one decide to “give up”, or “give over”, or “give to”, or “give back”?

The real meaning of Lent is about receiving “again”. Through the Scripture readings and prayers of these days of Lent, we are reminded of how God gave to us his Eternal Son with a loving desire that we allow the Gift to be handed to us again and again. We come to each Eucharist to be regathered and reminded of the conditions by which the Son has been given and is now given to us. We prepare for our baptismal renewal by coming together as Church — as Christ’s Body — and we admit our condition to which we receive Him once more.

A large portion of the Book of Deuteronomy is dedicated to proper religious behavior within the Israelite community. On this 1st Week in Lent, Moses describes for us a bit of the history behind the liturgical actions of his day [Deuteronomy 26:1-11]. The role of the priests is to receive the first-fruits of the harvests. Then there is a communal prayer reflective of the reasons the fruits are handed over. God, through Moses, rescued Israel — and each person individually — from the slavery of Egypt. God handed over the soil as a gift, and the people were to multiply as well. The first-born of the family and of the flock were likewise dedicated in thanksgiving to the God. As a sign of dependence and gratitude for the soil, the people were to hand over some of what they had received. After this holy prayer of remembrance and surrender, the liturgical gesture will be to physically bow down in reverence of the presence of the One and Holy God.

In Luke’s Gospel [4:1-13], we hear the familiar drama of Jesus’ being tempted by the devil. Jesus was not alone in the desert. He was filled with the Holy Spirit! How cool is that? Jesus was not alone, nor are we alone on our journeys. Jesus didn’t eat for 40 days — he was hungry; He was empty. In fact, are we not also invited to empty ourselves, decrease our ego, become hungry, so we can more fully be filled with the Holy Spirit? If we can let go of our ego selves and let the Spirit fill us, then, when we are tempted we are better able to respond from a place of the divine, represented in the Gospel by Jesus responding with scripture.

Jesus had received His being baptized according to Jewish custom. Again, as the rescued nation of Israel passed through water from slavery in a foreign land to freedom on their own holy soil, so each Jewish person would enter the Jordan river to then emerge cleansed from personal slavery and again stand renewed on the ground of freedom. During His being baptized, Jesus heard His identity as the Beloved One — he heard it, received it, and then began living it. Now Jesus is led into the desert — a place meant to allow one to get in touch with themselves. The temptations by the devil and the responses of Jesus are at the heart of this struggle — who is Jesus; more importantly, who am I?

The key word in the devil’s presentation is “if”. This conditional word moves the whole scene into the subjunctive — or “contrary to present fact” mood. Jesus remains in the “in the indicative” — in the “affirmed actual fact” mood. The devil offers qualities to Jesus that he already possesses — the devil quotes scripture but adds: “if you are”; and Jesus replies with scripture, but denies the “if”.

Much has been spoken and written about how we too are tempted with offerings of power, domination and possessions — as was Jesus. Those are worthy temptations to consider, but in this context of Lent the more important reality to consider is how we are tempted to deny or relativize our baptism. Jesus lived out His “I am” because He had listened and believed He was the Beloved. We are preparing to enter again the water and grace of being reminded of who God in Christ, has said in the indicative mood and spirit, who each of us really is.

Jesus could listen to all temptations, challenges, and invitations to disown Himself, to fall down, to

bay. What we use, to buoy us up, wards off both chaos and grace, demons and the divine alike.

Conversely, when we are helpless we are open. That is why the desert is both the place of chaos and the place of God’s closeness. It is no accident that Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King felt God’s presence so unmistakably just at that point in their lives where they had lost everything that could support them — they were in the desert. Scripture assures us that it is there that God can send angels to minister to us.

—taken from the writings of Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M., which appear on the internet

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — MARCH 19th:

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. In this critical time, this is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

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].

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION:

What is a temptation, really? We make feeble attempts with ardent effort to overcome our temptations during Lent, but what is it we are really trying to overcome? We are trying to overcome those things in our lives that hinder our relationships with God and prevent us from putting God first. So often we try to decide for ourselves what is right or wrong for us without any thought of God’s will for us. We naturally turn first to our desires for fun, to our inclinations for busyness, to food or alcohol for comfort, and to others for company.

God often comes behind these things in our thinking and often is not even considered as the source that can calm all of the chaos and desires in our lives. Instead, we put our human desires first, and we find ourselves in a state of restlessness, tiredness, or desolation. We feel lost as to the problem — but also to the solution.

When it comes to deciding what is right or wrong for us, we can look to Jesus as our teacher. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert and leaned heavily on his Father during his time there. It is only with his Father’s help that Jesus was able to overcome the temptations presented to him by the devil. Jesus surely felt the desires of his humanity in the desert — hunger, pride, and power. How ardently he must have fought against his human desires! How weak he must have felt! Jesus understood, though, that his strength to overcome temptations came by turning to his Father and letting God help him decide what was right and wrong for him.

This Lent, we are invited to make that same bold turn toward God. And we do not make this turn alone. Both Jesus and the Spirit are here helping us as we turn to God to give us the strength and wisdom to overcome our temptations.



THE DESERT — THE PLACE OF GOD’S CLOSENESS:

In her biography, *The Long Loneliness*, Dorothy Day shares how, shortly after her conversion to Catholicism, she went through a painful, desert time. She had just given birth to her daughter, and her decision to have the child baptized, coupled with her profession of faith, meant the end of her relationship with a man she deeply loved. She suddenly found herself alone — all her old supports had been cut off and she was left with no money, no job, few friends, no practical dream, and no companionship from the person she loved the most deeply in this world. For a while she just stumbled on, trusting that things would soon get better. They didn’t. She remained in this desert.

One day, not knowing what else to do, she took a train from New York to Washington to spend a day praying at the National Shrine of Our Lady. Her prayer there was wrenching and naked. She describes how she laid bare her helplessness — spilling out her confusion, her doubts, her fears, and her temptations to bitterness and despair. In essence, she said to God: “I have given up everything that ever supported me, in trust, to you. I have nothing left to hold on to. You need to do something for me — soon. I can’t keep this up much longer!” She was, biblically speaking, in the desert — alone, without support, helpless before a chaos that threatened to overwhelm her — and, as was the case with Jesus — both in the desert and in Gethsemane — God “sent angels to minister to her” [Luke 4:1-13]. God steadied her in the chaos. She caught a train back to New York, and that very night as she walked up to her apartment, she saw a man sitting there. His name was Peter Maurin and the rest is history. Together they started the Catholic Worker. We should not be surprised that her prayer had such a tangible result. The desert, scripture assures us, is the place where God is especially near.

Martin Luther King shares a similar story. In *Stride Towards Freedom*, King relates how one night a hate-filled phone call shook him to his depths and plunged him into a desert of fear. Here are his words: “An angry voice said: ‘Listen, nigger, we’ve taken all we want from you; before next week you’ll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.’ I hung up, but I couldn’t sleep. It seemed that all of my fears had come down on me at once. I had reached the saturation point. I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. Finally I went to the kitchen and heated a pot of coffee. I was ready to give up. With my coffee sitting untouched before me I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing a coward. In this state of exhaustion — when my courage had all but gone — I decided to take my problem to God. With my head in my hand, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory: ‘I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I’ve come to the point where I can’t take it alone.’ At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced Him before.”

God sends his angels to minister to us when we are in the desert and in the garden of Gethsemane. This incident in Martin Luther King’s life demonstrates how.

The desert, as we know, is the place where, stripped of all that normally nourishes and supports us, we are exposed to chaos, raw fear, and demons of every kind. In the desert we are exposed, body and soul, made vulnerable to be overwhelmed by chaos and temptations of every kind. But, precisely because we are so stripped of everything we normally rely on, this is also a privileged moment for grace. Why? Because all the defense mechanisms, support systems, and distractions that we normally surround ourselves with so as to keep chaos and fear at bay work at the same time to keep much of God’s grace at



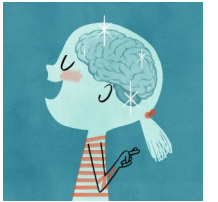
be unreal, because He listened once and often to the prayer of God over and within Him. Baptism — the Easter Sacrament — is our joining the Israelites as they entered often the river of remaining. Jesus lived Who He had received from God. We follow Jesus in and out of the same waters of indicative identity.

We, in our turn, follow Him also in and out of the temptational fields of our lives. We forget so easily. If we don’t tell the stories of our pasts, we will forget who we are. As young Irish children, we would visit our aged relatives often — especially on St. Patrick’s Day. We would be lined up in front of them and we would sing the songs of our ethnic history accompanied with much sentiment. We would hear the old stories and be dressed in appropriate colors. We learned who we were by what we heard and then lived. My siblings continue these traditions with their children and grandchildren to this day. If they don’t celebrate their cultic and family histories, why they’d forget just how wonderful and blest they are.

Our forty days have begun. Our preparing to celebrate our identity has begun. We will listen to the stories, sing the songs, and do the things which reveal to ourselves who we really are. We will receive again our name — our holiness. The real new life flows from the truth that we will do those things which reveal who we know ourselves to be. The people of Israel knew who God named them by their being baptized through the Exodus. They were to live in community doing the holy things of which offering the first fruits was a sign. We too have received our names through our being immersed in the baptismal waters of our identity. We are who God has claimed us to be and we are called to do those actions appropriate to that name. —edited from the writings of Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

TO TELL THE TRUTH:

There was once a nine-year-old boy, his teeth newly in braces, whose mother suspected that he was chewing bubble gum — against the orthodontist’s orders. Under gentle but persistent questioning, he repeatedly and vehemently denied it, right up until the minute when his mother spotted the offending wad of Bazooka in his trashcan. Whether we are nine or fifty-nine, it can be hard to admit that we’ve done something wrong — and even harder to apologize for it. Indeed, the older we get, the cleverer we become at pushing off our wrongdoing. We dismiss: “so what if I had a few beers and drove home?” We excuse: “he made an outrageous comment that I couldn’t ignore.” We rationalize: “it’s her fault for not paying enough attention to me.” Our litanies of self-exoneration can be long indeed. But if we truly want to turn back to God, to reset our lives, to reboot our souls, we have to begin with the truth. Yes, Lord, I shouldn’t have driven while buzzed. Yes, Lord, I should not have responded in anger. Yes, Lord, I should not have flirted at that party. We cannot repair the damage until we acknowledge it, and we cannot be healed until we admit that we are broken. Whatever our offenses — a petty spirit, an envious eye, a judgmental heart — these are what we must acknowledge and offer to God, trusting that he will forgive us abundantly and repeatedly. The means to mercy is not to defend, excuse, or ignore our mistakes and transgressions, but to humble ourselves with the truth, to say to God and to others: “I’m sorry — I was wrong.” —taken from the writings of Betsy Cahill, which appear on the internet



NOVENA TO BLESSED BASILE MOREAU:

Blessed Basile Moreau was the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, to which Fr. John and the Brothers at Gilmour belong. We have two booklets with Novenas to Blessed Basile Moreau. One is used for a personal intention or healing; the other is used when praying for the intention or healing of someone other than yourself. The Novenas were 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. Please see Father John and he will be glad to give you the booklets.



GROWING PAINS:

We forget that to be human means to accept our growing pains. We are incomplete; we are works in progress. Our lives are never entirely integral, whole, and perfectly constructed creations, but a diverse collection of broken pieces. If not welcomed with love, our necessary incompleteness can propel us to consistently, and sometimes compulsively, seek control and satisfaction.

Who am I? Who made me? What is my purpose? These are pivotal and fundamental questions that must be asked and adequately answered. Life's illusions and empty pleasures can distract us from discovering their real answers. When faced with important choices, we are tempted to leave the truth of who we are and who God is aside. Achieving self-sufficiency, power, and prestige can appear to be the perfect fix to the loneliness, angst, and emptiness we experience. Any lie can pretend to be true. But this lie can only keep up its pretense for a short time. At some point, it will be seen as the shallow, self-destructive falsehood. Sometimes it's easier to replace our true God with the one we carry in our back pocket — the god we created ourselves.

We like control and satisfaction. One of the most significant sources of anxiety is the absence of control. We're afraid that we are going to fall apart. We instinctively know that we are a conglomeration of broken pieces rather than a complete whole, but we're scared to admit it. We don't want to appear vulnerable. This gives attractions and lures their power. Forgetting who God is increases the temptation to believe the lie. In the end, it is not the foundation of our homes that will support us, but the foundation of our souls. Therein lies the mystery and beauty of what it means to be human. Our peace, tranquility, purpose, and identity are not tied to the world, but to our Creator. Nothing outside can satisfy and provide better than what comes from within.

We forget some of the fundamentals that can keep us from making wrong choices and falling victim to evil in disguise. Who am I? I am a child of God. Who made me? God made me. What is my purpose? To know and serve my Creator. While these may appear to be simplistic, they are not. For if we can keep these questions and their answers firmly rooted in our minds, hearts, and souls they can be game changers for how we approach the things of this world and life's challenges. We can easily forget who is in charge and to whom we belong. This is the highest and worst of the illusions. Once we give ourselves or others more importance than is rightfully theirs, we quickly stumble down the path of sin. Sin is ultimately an absence of desire for God manifested in various intensities. Once other things become more desirable in fulfilling our well-being, purpose, and happiness, we are in trouble.

Temptation does not need to be our enemy. It can become a means to salvation! St. Basil remarks: "As the pilot of a vessel is tried in the storm, as the wrestler is tried in the ring, the soldier in the battle and the hero in adversity, so is the Christian tried in temptation." Here is the reason for Lent — to make temptation our friend. There is no doubt that we sin — even though we often prefer to forget or deny that fact. We are sinners. Given that fact, every temptation becomes an opportunity to choose either for grace or sin. The more we can choose virtue over vice, good over evil, truth over lies, and others over ourselves, the stronger we will become. Properly confronting and dealing with temptation builds Christian character. Ironically, when we build strong Christian character, we gain control and satisfaction. They come from within.

Ryan Stevenson performs a great song entitled *Eye of the Storm*. Life will always present us with challenges, lures, and promises to tempt us, causing us to succumb to weakness. But when we put God first and give God proper thanks and worship, we are given a strong anchor and no longer need to be afraid. "In the eye of the storm, you remain in control. And in the middle of the war, you guard my soul. You alone are the anchor when my sails are torn. Your love surrounds me in the eye of the storm."

**LIVING THE MYSTERY IN OUR WORLD:**

One of the most powerful convictions of our faith is that we follow a "God of history." Our God doesn't sit around heaven all day just pulling our strings. We relate to a God who is part of us — a God who works through the same history all of us encounter every day. This novel belief goes back to the earliest days of our biblical faith. We are reminded about this as Moses delivers a profession of faith which all Israelites are expected to make — "My father was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien. But there he became a nation great, strong, and numerous". As Moses continues, an amazing thing happens — the very history that he is relating becomes his own history — "When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us" [Deuteronomy 26:1-11].

Biblical faith can't be understood without first understanding the history of those who profess that faith. God didn't work in peoples' lives just once upon a time. For our sacred authors, God continues to work in our lives right here and now.

Paul was convinced of that when he reminded the Christian community in Rome: "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" [Romans 10:8-13]. It's a word that's not only a part of their daily lives — it's also a word which cuts through the human-made distinctions cluttering those daily lives — in the Apostle's day and age, the distinction between Jew and Gentile. No matter our genetic or religious background, God's word is embedded in our history.

Perhaps that's why Luke — along with Matthew — lists three temptations that the historical Jesus faced before he began his preaching ministry. Jesus is not planning on becoming a cloistered monk or a detached philosopher. He's determined to proclaim God's word in the real world. That means that he will have to confront the pitfalls of a real world. In his situation, he'll have to avoid just taking care of peoples' physical needs, to sell out to the forces of evil, or to limit himself to doing only the spectacular. He commits himself for the duration of his ministry to fight against these three real world temptations. Jesus is determined to relate to others on the deepest levels possible — to be guided by God's plan for creation, and to do what's necessary for the people around him, even if it never makes the evening news. This is why Luke ends this scene in his Gospel with the comment: "When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time" — that time could have been just a few hours, or days at most. The historical Jesus had to confront these temptations throughout his ministry.

In this context, it's good to note that one of our Christian Scriptures' most significant concepts is rarely preached on. This concept is buried in the three Synoptic Passion Narratives which are proclaimed on Palm Sunday. And because of their length, there is not much time to homilize on anything — much less on one single line. That line simply says: at the death of Jesus, "the veil of the temple was torn in two" [Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, and Luke 23:45].

The huge tapestry which separated the temple's Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, was regarded as dividing the sacred from the profane. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are telling us that Jesus' death and resurrection destroyed that division. In their theology, now everything and everyone is sacred.

Does it help us do a double take on how we experience the sacred history of our everyday lives, or are we more secure trying to repair the veil?

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

me, did to me.” Again, are hatred and grudges destroying you? Is your lifestyle wholesome? Are you rationalizing your way through immorality? — “Look, Father, things are different now. This is the way that everyone does this.” Are you rationalizing your way through immorality? How easily we sacrifice our wholesomeness to turmoil. How quickly we allow ourselves to be torn up inside. Sin is chaos. Human integrity — the wholeness of body and soul, physical and spiritual — is the focus of the first part of Lent. You and I have to begin Lent by looking within ourselves. Am I in peace, or am I in turmoil? If we are honest with ourselves, we all have to admit that over the past year certain things have crept into our lives.

They might seem small — hardly worth noting; but we rationalize, and bring havoc within ourselves — bringing chaos where there should be peace. Unless we are careful, our integrity can be compromised — we become less spiritual, less human. When we feel disjointed, torn up inside, just not happy with ourselves, then we need to be aware that something is wrong. We also need to know that the Lord does not want us hurting this way. He wants us to be whole and at peace. He gives us His power and strength to preserve and integrate our body and soul. The Psalmist said it best: “Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble, be with me Lord my God, I pray” [Psalm 91]. God is with us — “He is on our lips and in our hearts” [see Romans 10:8-13].

With Him we can conquer any enemy. With Him we can scale any wall. With Him we can fight off temptation. With Him we can preserve — or if needed, restore our integrity. If we want to make a good Lent, our main focus should not be on what we give up, what prayers we say, what charity we practice. These are all good, but if we want to make a good Lent, more than that, if we want to be better Christians, our focus should be on our integrity, the harmonious union of our physical and spiritual lives. Jesus Christ offers us dignity. Jesus Christ offers us peace. Jesus Christ offers us integrity.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Leviticus 19:1-18, Matthew 25:31-46
Tuesday:	Isaiah 55:10-11, Matthew 6:7-15
Wednesday:	Jonah 3:1-10, Luke 11:29-32
Thursday:	Ester C:12-25, Matthew 7:7-12
Friday:	Ezekiel 18:21-28, Matthew 5:20-25
Saturday:	Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Matthew 5:43-48
2nd Week in Lent:	Genesis 15:5-18, Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 9:28-38

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 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.



What we ultimately need more of is love. What we need less of are the cheap imitations that look like it. Love, who is God, fortifies us and keeps us from falling. We come to know and believe that we are guided and led, kept and sustained by a God who is incredibly in love with all he has made. We need to own this truth, and it must be born in our souls.

God is not going to intrude on our space. We have to make the room. Our lives can keep us extremely preoccupied, distracted, confused, tired, conflicted, and task driven. Our existence becomes tied to devices. We interact more with things than with people. We lose touch with the flesh and bones of humanity and risk seeing people more as objects than unique artistic creations. We are becoming widgets who are required to produce and function. There is less time for creativity, imagination, deep thinking, reflection, and focusing our attention on truth. We may even be forgetting how to do these things. This is why we so desperately need Lent. When was the last time you were creative? When did you allow your imagination to soar? When did you last take time to ponder life’s more profound questions, to throw yourself into God’s presence, or consider whether you are really making the right choices?

We can be so easily swayed and convinced that we are walking down the right path and grazing in the right pasture. For all of our supposed brilliance and intelligence, we are easily fooled. We lunge for the attractive and believe that we are entitled to whatever we want. We pretend that emptiness and imperfection do not exist. All that we are and all that we have — especially our poverty — we place before the Lord.

—taken from the writings of Father Mark Suslenko, which appear on the internet

JESUS IN THE DESERT:

Why did Jesus go out into the desert? I suppose the simple answer to that question is because the Spirit led him out — the same Spirit with which he was so intimately united. But there is much more to it than that. The Spirit had something in mind. Remember the context in which this incident occurs. Jesus had just been baptized. He is alone and he is praying, and while praying he hears the voice of the Father saying: “This is my son, my beloved. On him my favor rests” [Luke 3:22]. Now Jesus knows his scripture well enough to be able to recognize the prophet Isaiah in that statement, and what God had said about a servant — a servant who would suffer and who would be the Messiah.

Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert so that he can pray and ponder what that revelation means to him. In his humanity he must find the strength and courage to do what the Father is asking him to do. More than that, Luke has already let us know that Jesus is part of a people, and that his humanity is deeply embedded in the history of that people — Israel.

Now the most significant moment in that history was the liberation of the Jewish people from bondage in Egypt. For forty days Jesus symbolically relives the forty years of wandering of his ancestors in the desert. Like them, he experienced hardships and temptation. But he overcame them all. He was tempted to self-interest, to personal profit and to power. And he rejected them all by relying on the word of God. He will obey and worship and serve the Father — and the Father alone.



It is significant that just at the moment when Jesus goes out to pray about his mission of winning the world back to God, he is subjected to these severe temptations. He is confronted by the reality of evil. And a major part of his mission will be to combat the forces of evil in our world. And perhaps this is where Jesus’ desert experience meets us today as we begin our Lenten journey.

Lent for us means conversion, repentance, and reconciliation — which is to say that we are called upon to join in the work of healing the wounds of sin and division. It would be wonderful if Jesus had completed this work in his lifetime, but he didn’t. He left quite a bit for the apostles to do, and down through the ages that same mission has been passed on to each and every one of us. Christians today

have different notions of the sources of evil in our world. Some people want to put the blame on a highly personal devil or Satan and somehow slough off full responsibility for the negative elements of our culture. As early as the time of the first Christians, Saint James, who wrote the Letter of James in our New Testament, said that the problem was our selfishness and our wrong desires.

But however we describe it, there remains the mystery of evil — an undoubted reality, seducing individuals, infecting whole groups, even nations. Some people recognize principalities and powers in the form of organized evil, deeply embedded in the structures of society. And because we are all confronted by these structures, we cannot simply sit back and say: “It has nothing to do with me.” That is simply not true — it has everything to do with all of us.

We may read in our papers or see on television stories about homelessness on the streets of Washington or violence breaking out at teen-age parties where there are alcohol and drugs, or chaos, vandalism and homicide on the streets, and without even giving it a second thought say to ourselves: “Why don’t they do something about it,” then turn the page or switch the channel to something more pleasant. The question is: “Why don’t we do something about it?” because whether we like it or not, and whether we want to admit it or not, it does concern us. It has something to do with us.

Our reluctance to get involved may stem from an understandable fear or reticence or from the very temptations that Jesus experienced in the desert — self-interest, personal profit, and power. But remember Jesus overcame them, and with the help of God so can we.

A particular instance of evil in our time became even more appalling recently when we have all watched what is going on in the Ukraine. Like any instance of evil in our world it affects all of us in some way or another. No further comment is really necessary, but in the meantime, we must all pray — prayer for the people of the Ukraine; pray for Vladimir Putin; pray for the people of Russia; and pray for ourselves.

—taken from the writings of Father Leo Murphy, S.J., which appear on the internet.

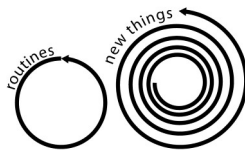
ANOTHER PURPOSE FOR LENT:

There is nothing like a conversation with the devil to seize your attention. A confrontation with the Prince of Darkness certainly breaks the routine of life. The story of Jesus’ temptation is the only scene in the gospels where Jesus and the devil have a conversation. It stands apart from every narrative in the gospels. It is unique. The church has wisely chosen to use this story each year on the first Sunday of Lent because its very uniqueness points to an important aspect of the 40 days we are beginning. This story reminds us that Lent is different from every other time of the year.

There are of course many ways to understand the purpose of Lent. We can view Lent as a time to turn away from sin, as a time to grow as a person, as a time to deepen our relationship with the Lord. All these approaches are valid. But I would like to suggest to you this morning another purpose for this season.

Lent is meant to break the routine of living. This is an important result because the danger of routine is all too easily underestimated. You see, once we become set in our careers, once we establish our families, once we learn the ropes of living, it is easy for routine to take over. We know all the familiar patterns. We settle into the well-worn grooves of habit which move us easily from one thing to the next — “I know this. I’ve done it before. I can do it again.” Our life becomes automatic. In doing so, our living becomes shallow. We slide from one thing to another, without much thought or reflection. We eat, we sleep, we work, we relax. We drive the children to the dentist, we make love with our spouse. Such living may seem easy, but it lessens our life. Because once we let routine take over, we are not really living but simply responding to the routine that pushes us along.

Now routine is not a problem for everyone. If you are still looking at what you want to do in your life, if you are cutting your teeth on a new job or relationship, if there is some tragedy in your life such as



INTEGRITY:

He was alone in the desert. No one would see Him. No one would witness His giving in to the devil. He had plenty of excuses available. He was hungry. He had been fasting for forty days. Why shouldn’t He do it? He needed to eat. He felt within Himself the call to lead His people from oppression. With one meaningless action He could become powerful. Wouldn’t it be worth it if He could establish Israel as the greatest empire in the world? He knew that He was special — chosen. What would be so wrong with His grasping at power when it was offered to Him? Maybe this is what He was chosen to do. Then there was that third temptation. He believed in scripture. Isn’t it reasonable that He should demand a sign from Father?

The Father certainly was demanding a great deal from Him. There were plenty of excuses Jesus could have made if He had given in to the devil’s temptations. But there was something that would be demanded of Him — He would have to sacrifice His integrity. He would have to sacrifice that spiritual part of Him that said: “Trust in God,” for the sake of the physical part of Him that said: “Seize the moment.” In the wilderness, where no one could observe, Jesus chose not self, but service of God. He used the Torah to assert that He quoted that human life is defined by more than physical subsistence, not by bread alone [Deuteronomy 8:30], and that service is owed only to the ultimate source of life, the creator, God Deuteronomy 6:13]. The third testing from the parapet of the Temple was the most severe, for in it the very support for Jesus’ opposition to the devil was subverted. The devil quoted scripture — it would certainly not be the last time that evil would use scripture as a weapon. The devil told Jesus to test His son-ship against the promise of God to protect Him. Jesus rebuked the devil, again using the Torah — “You shall not test the Lord your God” {Deuteronomy 6:13}. He will not force the Father’s hand. He will be the servant of whom Isaiah spoke [see Isaiah 50:10] who walks in darkness yet trusts in the name of the Lord.

Later on, Jesus will leap from another high place — at the end of the Gospel, Jesus leapt into his Father’s hands as He cried out: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” [see Psalm 30]. After the temptations, the devil left Jesus — for a time. He would return when once more the Lord was severely weakened — this time during the emotional turmoil of the Agony in the Garden. The devil would return, but again he would find the Lord strong in faith. Jesus’s integrity was intact.

We are both physical and spiritual. We have the capacity to encounter the love of God. We have the ability to love as God loves. We also have free will. We are capable of compromising our existence, our integrity. When we sin, we lose the union of our body and soul — we plunge into turmoil. Sure, we might make believe that there is nothing wrong with us. We are certainly expert at rationalizing our actions, but inside we are torn up. When we sin we are in turmoil.

When we fight off sin, we are in peace. Every priest has had the humbling experience of walking with people on their journey from turmoil to peace. The experience takes place in the sacrament of penance. The priest is both an intermediary with God forgiving sins, and a witness to a person becoming whole. This is humbling because the priest is acutely aware of his own sinfulness — the times that he has chosen the physical over the spiritual, chaos over integrity. At the same time it is a beautiful experience for a priest to walk with a penitent towards peace. The priest is privileged to be part of a person becoming fully human, integrating the physical and spiritual dimensions of his or her life, trusting in God to be whole. St. Luke’s Gospel [4:1-13] demands that we take the blinders off our heart and see where we are in turmoil. The Scriptures demand that we listen to the Word of God calling us to be the people whom the Lord created us to be. Jesus offers us peace over turmoil.

Where is your turmoil? Where do you lack integrity? Is it in your relationship with family and friends? Are hatred and grudges destroying you? — “But Father, you don’t know what he or she said to



is — as body and soul — we can start to undo the bias in our hearts and minds.

Throughout Scripture, Jesus continually explains that the Kingdom of heaven isn't just for one type of person. He wants everyone — all nations, all races, all languages — to come together as one to worship Him. Pope Francis reminds us: “in diversity, the Church expresses her genuine catholicity and shows forth the beauty of her varied face.” God created our Church to be universal — to resemble heaven. Heaven includes everyone from St. Mother Teresa to St. Josephine Bakhita, St. Agatha Lin to St. José, Sánchez del Río to St. Maria Goretti, St. Francis of Assisi to St. Kateri Tekakwitha. It overflows with people who look like you and people who look nothing like you; people who have similar cultural experiences and people who you have nothing in common with. This is God's vision for the Church.

Think of all the thought you've had about people because of their race. Would you think, say, or joke about those thoughts about Jesus — a Jewish, Middle Eastern man. If you answered no, you shouldn't be okay with discriminating other people, as Jesus dwells in every person. Discrimination against one person is discrimination against Christ. We can't brush off discrimination. It's not something to take lightly — it's dehumanizing, it's offensive, it's sinful.

Saints are saints because they defended Jesus by defending the human dignity of others. They fought unceasingly, and probably uncomfortably, against heresy, poverty, corruption, slavery, and other sins of their time. Racism isn't a sin of the past — it's a sin of our time and remains a battle of our age. We can't be silent. When we're silent, we're not neutral — we're making an active choice to allow people to be dehumanized and contributing to the pain caused by racism. You need to be bold enough to say in the moment, “Hey that wasn't right.” or pull people aside and say, “Have you considered...?” or “When you said ____ it made me feel...”

I challenge you to humbly reflect on your life and recognize areas where you may be contributing to the problem — whether you mean to or not. It's not enough to simply mask racism with flowery ideas of kindness and peace. We have to actively work against it. This means humbly listening. It means taking ownership of the fact that our words and actions have power. It means saying sorry for the times we slip up. It means being bold enough to call others to greatness. Friends, we need to be so in awe of the sacredness of another person that we're scandalized when someone is dehumanized. We have to treat racism like it's blasphemous — because it is.

—written by Teresa Nguyen, a Young Adult

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].**



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/summercamp. 10% discount available thru February 28th.



sickness or divorce or death, routine is the least of your problems. But for those of us who are set, for those of us who have settled in and fallen into habitual living, routine is a lethal danger. For once we have put our lives on automatic pilot, the days and the years slip by without much reflection or depth. Once those opportunities are gone they are gone for good.

Lent then is an opportunity to break the routine of life. This is what Lenten practices are meant to achieve. This is why we decide to make the Stations of the Cross or give additional time and money to the poor. This is why we give up smoking or alcohol. It is like putting a stone in your shoe. It is something to remind you, something to break the normal pattern of living. The hope, of course, is that if we can break the routine, we can begin to ask important questions — Who am I? What do I value? How do I need to change? What am I taking for granted? Those are the questions that the routine of life erases from our consciousness. Those are the questions which must be asked if we are truly going to live.

Therefore, on this first Sunday of Lent, stop and ask yourself: “What am I going to do to break the routine of my life? Do I need add something that is not normally in my life? Do I need to stop something that is commonplace in my living? Do I need to reach out to others in service? Do I need to withdraw into myself and spend some time in reflection? You get to choose what step you want to take.

But please dare to break the routine of living. Dare to change the pattern of your regular routine. You do not need to run out into the wilderness and live there for 40 days. You do not need to arrange a conversation with the devil. But you do need to put breaks upon the forces that are moving you mindlessly from one thing to the next. You do need to create a space in which you can hear the voice of God. And I promise you this. If you create that space to listen, God will not be silent. God will speak a word to your heart — a word that will reveal the shallowness of routine — a word that will thrust you into the depths of living. God will speak to you a word of grace, of forgiveness, and of re-creation.

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

HARVEST FOR HUNGER and THE CLEVELAND FOOD BANK:

This year's Harvest for Hunger campaign is more important than ever. Living through a pandemic has created unthinkable hardships for many Northeast Ohio neighbors, children, and families. In addition to easing the burden of tough choices these people have to make — like choosing between paying for groceries or paying to heat their homes. The Harvest for Hunger Campaign provides the gift of security and hope at a time when it is needed most.

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank has been very grateful for the outpouring of support we've received from the community in response to COVID-19. This crisis has exacerbated the situation for so many families who were already struggling. Even though we don't know what the future will hold, we know that it will take months and even years for our clients and community to recover. With your support, the Food Bank and our agency partners will be here for the long haul.

Beginning next Sunday, and continuing throughout the campaign, we will be collecting food items. Here is a list of food items that the Foodbank needs — Beans, Peanut Butter, Canned or Boxed Entrees, Pasta Sauce [low sodium please], 100% Juice, Cereal, Canned Protein [Tuna or Chicken], Whole Grain Rice and Pasta, and Canned Fruits and Veggies. **Place the items you bring in the boxes in the Narthex** and we will take care of them from there. **Cash donations may also be made. Please put them in the collection baskets at the door of the chapel and make sure that the envelope is clearly marked toward this purpose.**

A GOOD QUESTION:

In the silence God speaks. Or is it just that in the silence, away from the hustle and bustle of the world, we are able to hear him.

—Matthew Kelly



FOOD FOR THE POOR

RACE AND DISCRIMINATION:

Racism exists. It still exists. This is a nasty and humbling truth that we must face. However, I think it would be faulty to talk about racism, politics, and systems, without talking about ourselves first. It's easy to point at groups of people on Twitter and be too prideful to point at ourselves first.

And that's what I want to challenge you to do. I want you and I to look at our hearts and the ways they might be filled with poison and lies. I want to unpack and combat discrimination and prejudices in our own day-to-day lives so that we can rise above the sin of racism and discrimination — on a macro and micro level — in the pursuit of authentic love.

But first, we must get uncomfortable, we have to talk about this. We have to let down our defenses and lay down our need to be right. We have to be humble enough to un-harden our hearts, even the areas we didn't realize we'd allowed to be hardened. We have to listen with compassion and be slow speak and slow to anger [see James 1:19]. We have to be courageous enough to bring to light the issues many of us have been silent about — both consciously and unconsciously.

Bishop Robert Barron calls racism “the original sin” of the United States. He goes even further to say: “it has bedeviled our nation from its inception to the present day — it's our age-old still festering wound.”

Our society has a long, dark history of attempting to use race to define who is human and who is not. Often times, this definition relied on stereotypes and words that dehumanized and destroyed the lives of mass groups of people — as evident in the mere existence of slavery, internment camps, segregation, and labor discrimination.

Thankfully, the United States' government has made many strides to restore the dignity of all human beings by creating laws and policies to eradicate racism and the dehumanization of people. The U.S. Catholic Bishops recognize this effort in a statement that says, on the surface, much of the “ugly external features of racism have been eliminated.” However, whether we're comfortable admitting it or not, the sin of dehumanizing people based on race still exists today, and it manifests itself in both obvious and obscure ways.



The U.S. Catholic Bishops state: “the sinfulness of racism is often anonymous, but nonetheless real. The sin is social in nature in that each of us, in varying degrees, is responsible. All of us in some measure are accomplices.” We are all accomplices, but it goes much deeper than “racist” or “not racist.” Racism and prejudice have a long history in the U.S., and, from a psychological perspective, these tendencies are rooted farther below the surface than we may realize.

Being an accomplice doesn't mean you're violently yelling racial slurs or carrying a KKK flag. Being an accomplice could mean passively allowing yourself to have a bias against people that don't look like you.

You see, our brains take in all kinds of information and categorize it, putting it in folders. Our brains do this for people as well. When our brains put people into categories, they characterize them with good or bad qualities. This is how stereotyping works. When we see a person, we assume certain things — consciously or subconsciously — based on past categorizations and current influences like media, school, friends, and family. For example, if I repeatedly hear the same narrative of how black people are dangerous, I'm probably going to assume that the black person in front of me is dangerous.

This reality of psychology isn't bad. Our brain does this in order to process information efficiently. It is, however, problematic when categorization of people leads to bias towards people of color. God made us for true communion with others of all races, walks of life, and backgrounds. We can best do this

when we overcome our tendencies to develop biases, and, as a result are made free to see the whole person in front of us.

Really think about that. Write it all out. Recall conversations. Times where people have stereotyped you by it. Times where your race enhanced or hindered your life. What would it be like to be another race? Would you want to be another race? Answer that question. And whether or not you've thought of this before, race has played an integral part of how your life has been lived.

I am Asian. I remember when I was in the 1st grade, a boy stretched out his eyes and mockingly imitated Asian languages. I still remember precisely where I was standing on the playground because I remember how much that moment hurt. This boy wasn't born with this idea — it was taught. It was taught to him like how all of us learn racial perceptions, prejudices, and dehumanizing humor.

As this continued to happen growing up, I remember actively deciding to act as least Asian as possible. I wanted to fit in. I went out of my way to not fit into Asian stereotypes, tried to abandon traces of my culture, and even made fun of my own race. I became insecure of the body I was born into. I tried to brush off jokes and racial comments — though they always made me feel ugly, inferior, objectified, embarrassed, and foreign. Even “positive” stereotypes — like being smart — cut to the core of my personhood.

As other people started to be more vocal with their experiences as a person of color, I learned that I wasn't alone in how I felt. I realized that being Asian was not the issue; rather, the issue was with how Asians are treated by others. These repeated experiences of discrimination, led me to truly believe that I wasn't good enough because I wasn't white.

Have people assumed negative things about you because of your race? Do people constantly point out your race in conversation? Do people generally treat people of your race as unique individuals? Do people usually assume good things about you based on your race? You have to ask these uncomfortable questions. You have to be aware of how people interact with you because of your race. You might have trouble answering these questions, but just because it's not something you experience, it doesn't mean it's not happening.

When we think about how God sees us, it can be tempting to think: “Well does He even see color? We're all children of God so our color has no importance, right?” Not quite. God, in His great artistry and grand power, could have made us all the same race. But, He didn't. God made us beings with both body and soul — an incredibly profound unity. Each of us is one being — your soul is you, so is your body you. This is key when approaching race.

Our bodies are sacred. Race is a part of our bodies. So race can't be ignored, but rather, it ought to be embraced and seen as a magnificent, sacred part of how God made us. When God looks at you, when He beholds your face, He doesn't see a floating glowing soul. He sees your body. His creation. He sees the person that you see when you wake up and look in the mirror. And despite the lies you've told yourself or about someone else's physical features, He is in awe of our beauty— including our race.

If we try to ignore race in the name of remaining politically correct, we're missing out on God's artistry. If we ignore race, we're ignoring an integral part of someone's story, family, and history — a part of who they are — part of who God intended them to be, part of who He made us to know and love.

But, race alone doesn't reveal everything about a person. This is the fundamental issue with racism — it detaches the soul from the person and refuses to acknowledge that people can't be reduced to the color of their skin. Discrimination fails to recognize each human as more than just a body — it fails to recognize that each human has a body and a complex soul. If we can understand how sacred each person

