

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for Women ~

Lord, make me an instrument of peace:
Bless all women who daily strive to bring peace to their communities,
their homes and their hearts. Give them strength to continue to turn
swords into plowshares.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love:
We pray for all women who face prejudice, inequality and gender dis-
parities. Help us see and to face the discrimination against women in
all the many forms it may take.

Where there is injury, pardon:
Comfort all women who suffer from the pain of war, violence, and
abuse. Help them to become instruments of their own reconciliation
and peace.

Where there is division, unity:
Forgive all women and men who let differences breed hate and dis-
crimination. Let your example of valuing all of creation help us to see
that we are equal partners in the stewardship of your world.

Where there is darkness, light;
where there is untruth, truth: Comfort all women who struggle in the
darkness of abuse, poverty, and loneliness. May we stand with them
in light to acknowledge their suffering and strive to remove the bur-
dens of shame or embarrassment.

Where there is doubt, true faith:
We pray for all women who live in fear of their husbands, fathers, and
forces that control their lives. Help them to be empowered to be their
true selves through your everlasting love and faith.

Where there is despair, hope:
We pray for all women who live in the despair of poverty, violence,
trafficking, slavery, and abuse. May the light of your love bring them
hope.

Where there is sadness, new joy:
Help us to see the strength and goodness in all women and men.
Transform our hearts to celebrate the love and grace of all people.
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.

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.

**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 collected 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.**

MAKING IT RIGHT:

Acknowledging our mistakes, iniquities, transgressions, errors, sins — call them what you will — is hard work. To admit fault goes against the grain for many of us who think of ourselves as generally well-intentioned people, who prefer to occupy the morally high ground. But sooner or later, we will come face to face with our own wrongdoing. It may be a friend or family member, or even a stranger, who points out our selfish action or our unkind word; at other times, we may come to it on our own in self-reflection — in quiet conversation with God. And when we do — when we bring ourselves to the point of uttering those humbling words — “I’m sorry; I was wrong; I have sinned” — we will then know the incredible freedom of God’s life-giving mercy. And that freedom is nowhere more beautifully expressed than by the psalmist who writes: “A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me” [Psalm 51:10].

What the psalmist describes is a “hinge” moment when we swing from the misery of sin to the joy of restoration and forgiveness. However quickly it may pass, it is a wonderful moment of spiritual renewal. But we must always remember that this transformation is wrought by God — not by us. The verb for “create” occurs in the Hebrew Bible only in reference to God’s actions — never human ones. It is not ours, but God’s prerogative to refresh our spirits and renew our hearts. As Quaker scholar and missionary Thomas Kelly observed: “God Himself works in our souls, in their deepest depths, taking increasing control as we are progressively willing to be prepared for His wonder. We cease trying to make ourselves the dictators and God the listener, and become the joyful listeners to Him, the Master who does all things.”

—taken from the writings of Betsy Cahill, which appear on the internet

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Gena Miller, mother of incoming Freshman, Giovanna Miller [‘26]
- For Sister Lorraine Black, C.S.C.
- For Paul Beno
- For Thomas Fitzgerald [‘56], brother of Bill Fitzgerald [‘52]
- For Clarence Dabney
- For Thomas Victory
- For Theresa Bontempo, C.S.C.,
- For Sister Michael Marie Griffin, O.S.U.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For the people of the Ukraine and the people of Russia; for an end to the war; and for all people of the world to work more ardently 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.

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. Thanks for not forgetting about us.

Offerings-----[Saturday, February 19]-----[Weekly Mail-in] -----	\$ 1,360.00
Offerings-----[Sunday, February 20]-----	\$ 300.00
Offerings-----[Saturday, February 26]-----[Weekly Mail-in] -----	\$ 0.00
Offerings-----[Sunday, February 27]-----	\$ 337.00
Offerings-----[Wednesday, March 2]-----[Ash Wednesday] -----	\$ 5.00
Offerings-----[Saturday, March 5]-----[Weekly Mail-in] -----	\$ 1,500.00
Offerings-----[Sunday, March 6]-----	\$ 460.00

HUMILITY:

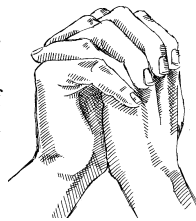
Humble yourself lovingly before God and before others, because God speaks to the lowly. —Padre Pio

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

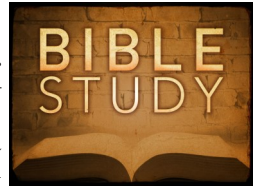
PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Chiron Alderman, who is seriously ill in the hospital.
- For Barry Cooper, cousin of AVI associate director, Bobbie Bonner, who suffered a stroke and has brain bleed.
- 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 Chiacchiari, mother of Mark [*94], mother-in-law of Michelle DeBacco [*96] who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian [*09], Rosa [*12] and Edwin [*17] Heryak, who is 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 — WEDNESDAY, MAR. 23rd:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, March 23rd 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 Passion of Jesus.**



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 13: 2 nd Week in Lent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, March 14:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 15:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 16:	NO MASS
Thursday, March 17:	4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]
Friday, March 18	NO MASS
Saturday, March 19: 3 rd Week in Lent	NO MASS
Sunday, March 20: 3 rd 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:

Mountains in Scripture are very sacred places. Sacred experiences are often referred to as “mountain experiences.” We are in a continual movement toward the Holy Mountain of God — the Eucharistic altar. Many churches have been built on rises and hills to emphasize the “above-ness” of God. Yet, we live on “level ground”. Our call is to realize that the Holy “above-ness” of God is revealed to us so that we live holy lives in the “below-ness”. We prepare to approach the Holy, and the Holy is always approaching us. There are sightings and whispers which do lead us through our “ups” and “downs” of our unlevel ways.

When I was a young child, Sunday afternoons were dedicated to attending the Liberty Theater in Milwaukee — they had cowboy movies, cartoons — and, of course, coming attractions. These — though we didn’t know it — were designed to make sure that our Sunday’s obligation would be fulfilled again next week. There were fantastic visions of beauty and bravado — promises made and broken. There were delightful love-encounters which made us all squirm and laugh and feel good about life. It was all very real — until we had to walk out into the late-afternoon “shadows”.

All of the Scripture Readings for this 2nd Week in Lent envision seeing God. The Old Testament makes clear that no person can see God and live. But Jesus continually reminded us that seeing God will not lead to death, but to life. St. Paul encourages us not to focus on and live for earthly things, but to lift up our heads and live for God. He reminds us that “our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself” [Philippians 3:17-4:1]. Right now we have a lowly body — one that has eyes that cannot see the spiritual world in all its glory. But Jesus is going to give us new, glorified bodies which will include eyes to see the face of God, and we need to desire to see God and to know him, even as he knows us.

The Book of Genesis is a complex collection of stories which lead the reader to an understanding of how Israel depicted its history and beginning identity as God’s Holy People. The story of Abram is a foundational experience for that history [Genesis 15:5-15,17-18]. Fertility of body and land is a definite blessing from God. Infertility would be a sign of God’s displeasure.

When this encounter takes place, Abram has no son, and he wonders how his name and family will continue — will he ever have a legitimate son of his own flesh? God promises Abram that his descendants will be plentiful and Abram does put his trust in the promise and the Promise-Maker. Thus trust for Abram is huge — fertility is huge.

This act of faith sets up the conditions for an important display or revelation by God. A covenant — or bonding — is made by God with Abram. Both parties agree, and walking between two parts of a slaughtered bull or ox would be like shaking hands. Even more so, each party states by this walk that if either breaks the contract, what happens to the animal should be done to the violator. The covenant is made by the more powerful to the less powerful, and it is based on the awareness that the more powerful has been abundantly benevolent in the past and plans to continue. A promise for that future is made to Abram, and it will be an abundance of land. So, land and descendants predicting fertility are the beginning of Israel’s relationship with their mysterious God. Abram has to believe that what he has seen and heard is real.



Now for the Coming Attractions. Luke’s Gospel has presented Jesus as speaking to the disciples about how following him will involve suffering. Then Jesus takes three of his followers up a mountain — a sacred place — and while there, is “transfigured” or seen differently [Luke 9:28-35]. It is quite a light-show, complete with sound effects. More dazzling than his brightness was the state of his disciples after Jesus comes back to their senses. There are important elements offered by Luke to his readers about Jesus and discipleship during this experience. They have to do with “coming attractions” in the life of

ENTERING INTO SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTER:

How long can an insight last? All of us have a sudden flash of knowledge that we don’t reason to, but is suddenly there. One I distinctly remember occurred in the middle of a sophomore study hall almost 65 years ago. I’d always studied — even did all my homework. But I did these things just to get good grades. Then out of nowhere came the conviction that there’s something valuable in study itself — even if I never took another exam. That thought only lasted a split second, but it’s been guiding me all my life.

I bring up insights today because most Scripture scholars believe that we’re dealing with an insight when we hear the gospel accounts of Jesus’ transfiguration. The narrative contains the classic trademarks of a biblical myth. For instance, it’s chucked full of biblical symbolism — the cloud, the voice, and the unique participants. Notice also that the name of the mountain isn’t mentioned — we can’t track down the geographic place. These elements — and others — seem to imply that the story is rooted in an insight many of Jesus’ followers experienced in their encounters with him. This particular itinerant preacher was unlike anyone they’d ever chanced upon.

In their minds, God not only sent and confirmed this Galilean carpenter, but to follow his teachings and example placed one squarely in the middle of the teachings and example of the Hebrew Scriptures. The special person the Chosen People had anticipated since the days of the Exodus is in their midst right here and now. No matter how one put that insightful experience into words, their biblical attempts tell us some of Jesus’ few followers at least had a hint Jesus of Nazareth was the one.

Yet it’s clear from what St. Paul tells us that no matter how intense the original insight, for some Christians that “illumination” eventually faded away. Due to Paul’s reference to “their stomach,” scholars believe the fallen-away Philippians to whom he refers could be within the community’s Christian Jews who have returned to keeping Judaism’s dietary regulations [Philippians 3:17-4:1]. Instead of giving themselves over to the ever-changing risen Jesus, they feel more secure in giving themselves over to a set of never changing concrete laws.

Our Jewish faith ancestors no doubt had parallel insights revolving around God at work in their daily lives. The historical Jesus certainly did. The story of God and Abram reminds us they locked some of those insights into a covenant with God [Genesis 15:5-15,17-18]. When they’d gather to renew that agreement — as they did yearly during Passover — they’d recall those special moments. In the world before photographs and tape recorders, remembering them would be the only way to make them live again. In the case of the Passover, they would especially recall the moment when they realized for the first time that God — not a set of accidental circumstances — was freeing them from slavery.

Based on his Jewish heritage, Jesus also weaved his community’s insights into a covenant — an action especially to be remembered in their celebrations of the Eucharist. But as Paul warned the Philippians, unless people imitated him, they could fall into the same trap as those whose glory became their shame. We know from his letters that imitating Paul revolves around learning how to die and rise with Jesus.

As we learn in Paul’s letter to the Church at Corinth, there is no doubt that the best place to experience that dying for others is in the community’s celebrations of the Lord’s Supper [see 1 Corinthians 11]. If the celebration is done correctly — and we actually give ourselves to and for one another — there’s a great chance many of us will have frequent insights about the presence of the risen Jesus among us.

Afraid there just aren’t any lasting insights that come from mouthing empty rituals.

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



house into the night where he will see something few moderns have ever witnessed. God shows Abram the stars of the sky — undimmed by electricity — with no satellites wandering among them, no smog to blur their brilliance. “Take a look!” says God, “Give me a count!”

Anyone who has escaped civilization's haze and gazed at stars in a clear sky knows what soul-shaking wonder they can inspire. What could Abram say? If God could create those stars, descendants would seem a rather small order! As we know, Abram believed, and descendants came — in God's good time, with collaboration from Hagar and Sarah.

This leads us to the mountain where Peter, John and James went to pray with Jesus [Luke 9:28-35]. As they watched, Jesus' expression changed. Like a person who has fallen in love, like parents gazing on their beloved child, everything about Jesus was transformed as he prayed. Somehow, his communication with the God he called “Abba” permeated and illuminated every fiber of his being. Whether or not he knew it in the moment, Jesus was revealing a preview of the resurrection appearances and humanity's future of ecstatic loving union with God.



The evangelists don't tell us what the experience was like for Jesus. But they do tell us that witnessing it was overwhelming for his closest friends. They saw his glory. As he prayed, they understood him in the context of everything their people had been through, from Abram to Moses and the prophets. In Jesus, the disciples saw the fulfillment of God's long, plodding history with the chosen people. With that, they were ready to say: “Heaven on earth! No more waiting, no more wondering! We can remain right here.”

They had no clue. The mountain was but the prelude. A cloud came over them. Their certainty disappeared. Then they heard the voice: “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” Now they were beyond frightened or overawed. They became silent and walked down the mountain with Jesus, their well-known friend and mysterious revealer of possibilities they never could have imagined.

The Transfiguration teaches about our basic vocation to listen to Jesus as Son of God. At the same time, this scene subtly reveals much about the mystery of prayer. The story of the Transfiguration shows us that it was while Jesus prayed that the disciples glimpsed the depth of who Jesus truly was. Jesus was not reciting the psalms or teaching them; he was caught up in contemplation.

Lest we think that contemplation is too esoteric for ordinary folk, Pope Francis says it's really quite simple. He describes contemplation with the words: “I look at him and he looks at me.” Contemplation is a matter of a heart that spends time simply being in the presence of God. Francis says: “Everything comes from this — from a heart that feels that it is looked on with love. Then reality is contemplated with different eyes.” In the light of the Transfiguration, we might say, the person who realizes that God gazes on her or him with love will begin to glow in their own unique way.

Today, we sing the refrain from Psalm 27: “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear?” That could work as a one-line summary of the effect of faith. When we take the time to allow God to love us as we truly are, we will gradually begin to realize that there is nothing to fear, and that life is made for sharing that love. Francis summarized Jesus' mission saying that knowing God's love changes everything. Knowing the love of God will change us and illuminate and permeate our work for justice, our worship, our prayer and our every relationship. That was what set Jesus aglow.

The Gospels preserved the story of the Transfiguration not to prove that Jesus was divine, but to lure us toward believing in what God offers us human beings. That's the essence of Paul's message as well. We are invited into transfiguring contemplation. Whether we do it before the Blessed Sacrament, under the stars, or gazing at another of God's beloved creatures, God's invitation is the same: “Spend time with me and you will know your glory” [Philippians 3:17-4:1].

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

Jesus and the lives of his followers. Moses and Elijah are pictured as speaking to Jesus “of His exodus”. This “exodus” of Jesus will be his living out the Paschal mission of being the Lamb to be slain.

The disciples would rather build three tents of gratitude as in the traditional celebration of Sukkot or Booths. Jesus is presented on this particular mountain as being in his glory. What is the “coming attraction” will be on another hill's top and in a definite, but different manner, it will be even a greater scene of glory. It will be a “figuration” which will claim God's people again from slavery to freedom and service.

There is an increasing sense in the more affluent countries of the world, of “entitlement”. The disciples have this sense of requesting selfish possession of Jesus' glory and truth. Jesus heads them back down the mountain, inviting them to put aside, again, their self-preoccupation. Entitlement flows from a sense that we deserve only the glorious, intimate experiences of relationships and full meaning. Our wealth can provide many things, so much so, that we can begin to believe that we actually deserve everything. We should have power, health, ease, first-places at the head of lines. Life is owed to us and at the highest experiences. It is natural to desire this, but to expect it, demand it from God and others is not relational. The “exodus” referred to by Moses and Elijah moves Christ's followers off their mountains of entitlement to the acceptance of their actual “titlement” as followers who will suffer with and for him.

Jesus' coming down that mountain and heading for Jerusalem is the invitation to us to not take the Jerusalem bypass, but live with and through our own experiences of exodus. We are “titled” Human, Beloved, Called, Sent in and with him. These titles entitle us to all the graces of God's love as we walk his walk into our final transglorification with him.

The disciples walked out of their own Liberty Theater having participated in quite a show. They, like myself as a little boy, had to face the real. As the movie might have inspired me to be more brave, loving, and quick on the draw, the disciples were encouraged to live more closely with the Master and more faithfully as receivers of his call to follow.

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

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.



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].



TRANSFORMATIVE MOMENTS:

Quite a few years ago, there was a film around called *It's My Life*. It's about a couple who learn that the wife is pregnant, and at the same time find out that the husband has terminal cancer. In one scene, the husband decides to face his fear of roller-coasters by taking a ride. He sits in the lead car in the front seat, next to a twelve-year old boy. The man's knuckles turn white from grabbing onto the bar in front of him — even before the car begins to move. The boy sitting next to him turns to him and asks: "First time, huh?" When the car almost reaches the peak of the first climb, the boy says: "It's more fun if you let go." The car careens downward, the boy joyously reaches upward, but the man holds on even tighter. At the end of the ride the boy jumps out, turns to his seatmate and says: "You can let go now."

Later on in the film, as the man is dying, the screen flashes brilliant, blinding white. The husband is seated again in a roller-coaster car at the peak of the ride. He joyously lets go, and throws his arms upward. It's a moment of liberation, a moment of transformation — even of transfiguration — and it comes in death.

Many of us can, I suspect, appreciate the metaphor of life as a rollercoaster ride. How often though have we managed as yet to let go and throw our arms joyously upward?

The Scripture Readings for this 2nd Week in Lent speak of some profound moments of transformation. Yet at the most crucial moment of transformation, most of the people involved seem to be completely passive — Abraham is in a trance [Genesis 15:5-15,17-18]; Peter, James, and John are in a deep sleep [Luke 9:28-35]; the "citizens of heaven" — of whom Paul speaks — are waiting to be remade by Jesus [Philippians 3:17-4:1].

I suspect that very few people today realize that the most profound transformation of all is not in our hands. The Gospel story contains moments that are awesome — perhaps even terrifying — but its focus is more on the joy of fulfilled relationship — the joy of letting go. Face to face with God, Jesus is filled with light. The experience of Jesus and his relationship with the Father is, of course, unique. Yet the same ingredients can be found in our own transfigurations. Whenever we feel wholly loved, we experience feelings of joy and light and goodness.

The trouble is such moments are not in our own hands. Though we are born to love, we remain — from birth to death — utterly dependent on the grace of another's love — especially on the grace of the other's love, the love of God. If that grace is withheld from us, we fall apart; if given to us, we are transformed. In the case of the love and grace of God, we know that it is always given to us. Transformation — transfiguration — depends on how we receive that grace. Pope St. Leo the Great, writing about this mystery back in the sixth century, said this: "The great reason for this transfiguration was to remove the scandal of the cross from the hearts of his disciples and to prevent the humiliation of his voluntary suffering from disturbing the faith of those who had witnessed the surpassing glory that lay concealed. With no less forethought Jesus was also providing a firm foundation for the hope of the church. The whole body of Christ — including us, of course — was to understand the kind of transformation that it would receive as his gift. The members of that body were to look forward to a share in that glory which first blazed out in Christ their head."

Mountains in the Bible are symbolic places. They are places where people meet God — where they hear the voice of God speaking to them: Moses on Mt. Sinai, Elijah on Mt. Horeb. Together these two who appear with Jesus represent the Law and the Prophets — everything that the Jewish people hold dear. The Law and the Prophets is what Jesus fulfills in his life, death, and resurrection.

On the mountain top, Peter, James, and John also hear God speaking. Peter, we hear, becomes ecstatic, delirious. Luke tells us he doesn't know what he is saying. Let's stay here; let's prolong this



Faith, properly understood, is precisely a trust beyond betrayal, a surrender beyond despair, a love beyond fear, an intimacy beyond human intimacies, and a spiritual sinew and communion that holds beyond all disruption. Faith is as much present beyond the head and heart as within them.

—taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., 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.

**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.

LIVING RIGHT:

We begin to move under Jesus' standard when we join him in the living conviction that everything we have and are is God's gift.

INVITED TO AWE AND WONDER:

Last week, Luke invited us to be with the vulnerable Jesus as he was hungry, tempted and debating with the devil. This week, we glimpse his glory as a person wholly caught up in God. The Scripture Readings for this 2nd Week in Lent invite us to awe and wonder.

Before we get to the revelation on the mountain, we spend time with Abram [Genesis 15:5-15,17-18]. The scene opens with Abram telling God that it's all well and good that God protects and promises him a great future, but without children, what does it matter? In response, God leads Abram out of his



MYSTICISM:

Bernard Lonergan once suggested that faith is God's brand on us. God has seared our souls, as by a great fire, in a way that goes beyond what we can conceptualize, imagine, and even consciously feel. Ruth Burrows, in trying to define mysticism, says basically the same thing. For her, mysticism is being touched by God in a way that is too deep for words, thoughts, and even feelings. Real faith then, it would seem, takes root beyond thought, imagination, and feeling. But how is this possible? There must be something within us deeper than thought and feelings, and it's here where faith ultimately takes root.

How can something be real and touch us beyond thought, imagination, and feeling? Is faith something magical, or para-normal? Not at all. All of us have experiences of being influenced by, and making decisions by, something beyond what we can explain. We know things that we cannot think, we sense things that we cannot consciously feel, and often make decisions based on something beyond the imagination. Faith tends to operate like this. It is not the stuff of thought or even of feelings, but something deeper. How does it work?

We commonly speak of three centers within the human person — head, heart, and gut. The first two are a bit easier to grasp — the head is where we think and imagine, while the heart is where we feel and experience emotion. So what does the gut do? Most of us spontaneously confuse the gut with the heart, thinking of the gut as simply a deeper center for our feelings. It is a deeper center alright, but not of conscious feelings. The gut is not so much a center for feeling as it is precisely something beyond feeling. In the gut, we sense more than feel, intuit more than imagine, and are addressed more in the conscience than in the intellect and heart. The gut is our “ought” center. It's where we sense those things that we “have to” do rather than those we would want to do. Moreover, the gut is not much moved by our feelings but often goes against them.

All of us, I suspect, have had some experience of this. For instance, we sometimes find ourselves in a commitment to someone or something — in a marriage, in a family, in a church, in service to the poor, or even just in some civic duty — within which both our thoughts and feelings are not in agreement with what we are doing, but are overruled by something else. More simply put, we sometimes find ourselves in a situation wherein our heads aren't in it; our hearts aren't in it; but we're in it. Why? What holds us there? Why are we staying within something for which neither the head nor the heart can supply adequate justification? Obviously, something else is holding us — something beyond the head and heart, beyond thought and feeling. Clearly there must be something within us deeper than thought and feelings and it's here where faith ultimately takes root.

It is important to understand this — not for theoretical reasons, but so that when we are pushed to the wall, as we all inevitably will be by the dark night of doubt, we will then not be too easily overcome, but, like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, will know that God's love is something beyond what fires the imagination and the emotions. Thus, we see that Jesus, even while he sweats blood in the Garden and then later on the cross feels as if God is absent, remains faithful and is able to surrender himself in love, despite everything in his thought and feelings telling him to do otherwise. Why was he able to do what he did? As Henri Nouwen puts it: “I can't fully answer that question, except to say that beyond all the abandonment experienced in body and mind Jesus still had a spiritual bond with the one called ‘Abba.’ He possessed a trust beyond betrayal, a surrender beyond despair, a love beyond all fears. This intimacy beyond human intimacies made it possible for Jesus to allow the request to let the cup pass him by becoming a prayer directed to the one who had called him “my Beloved.” Notwithstanding his anguish, that bond of love had not been broken. It couldn't be felt in the body, nor thought through the mind. But it was there, beyond all feelings and thoughts, and it maintained the communion beneath all disruptions. It was that spiritual sinew, that intimate communion with his father, that made him hold on to the cup and pray: ‘My Father, let it be as you, not I, would have it.’”



experience. It's too good to let go. But when he finally comes to his senses, he hears God say: “This is my Son, my chosen one. Listen to him.” And when he looks up, he only sees Jesus.

They can't stay on the mountain. They have had their grace-filled moment; their time to gain strength for the task ahead, and so the must go down and face the work that remains to be done. There are people to be fed; there are hurts to be healed; there is a journey to be completed.

Dear friends, we come here every week to hear the word of God and to be fed with the bread of life. We come to experience the bonds that make us the one Body of Christ, and the transforming power of the Eucharist. This is our mountain top. But like Peter, James, and John, we can't stay here. There is work to be done. We take with us what we have felt and experienced and learned back to our families, our friends, the places where we live and work — the market-place, the office, the class-room, the hospital, the factory, the home, wherever — and we share the transforming love of God with all those we meet — especially those who have not already felt at least a little of that love in their lives. It's our way of letting go, of throwing our arms up in the air in the joy and happiness that real service can bring — not just to others but to ourselves as well.

Lent reminds us each year that our lives, too, are journeys — ultimately through death to new life — when, as St. Paul tells us, “the Lord Jesus Christ will give a new form to this lowly body of our and remake it according to the pattern of his glorified body” [Philippians 3:17-4:1].

Lent also challenges us to deeper experience of prayer. That, too, can be a transforming experience, giving us a sense of God's presence that equips us for the daily mundane and often tedious journeys of our lives. This is our Christian calling — our vocation to follow the Lord Jesus. This is what inevitably must happen if only we do as God told the Apostles: “Listen to him.”

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

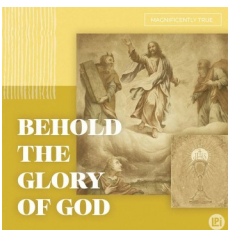
IT IS GOOD WE ARE HERE:

Jesus guided Peter, James, and John up the mountain to pray. There Jesus was transfigured before them — showing his glorified self with his face changing in appearance and his clothes becoming dazzling white — a foreshadowing his heavenly appearance. What a glorious moment for all to behold, and for us two thousand years later to witness as we read the detailed description offered through the Scriptures. The Lord's “face shone like the sun”, and “His garments became white as light” [Luke 9:28-35].

As if the sight of their transfigured friend and master were not enough, suddenly standing alongside Jesus were Moses and Elijah. These men represented the law and the prophets — Moses, one of the greatest of the lawgivers, alongside Elijah, one of the greatest of the prophets. Both figures from salvation history shared encounters with God on a holy mountain and experienced an exodus. Both represented significant moments in salvation history and prefigured Jesus' mission.

How could the three apostles not doubt what their eyes observed? The mystical works of our unfathomable God are often unexplainable and even inconceivable. Yet that does not make them any less magnificently true! We may not be witnesses to Jesus transfigured upon the mountain, but that does not mean we do not glimpse his glory as we gaze upon him in the Eucharist. How often have we looked upon the consecrated Host — which we know through faith to be the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ — and doubted? We behold an ordinary wafer of bread, our senses fight to accept what we cannot see, and we ask whether Jesus is truly present before us.

Peter, James, and John — followers, disciples, and friends of God incarnate — were now privileged to stand in the presence of the living God in all his heavenly glory. As they stood bewildered, God's voice broke through a cloud overshadowing them, with the words: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” Jesus had asked them to hold everything they had witnessed in their



hearts until the appropriate time to share. Because the Apostles and countless disciples witnessed, believed, and shared, we too can now hold fast to our hope in the joyful faith that the One we behold in the Eucharist is indeed Jesus — actually present and not a symbol.

This transfiguring moment is more than history — something special only for those who participated — but holds meaning for every Christian who continues to hear the Good News. It shows the glory of God revealed in the Son, Jesus, and furthermore provides a peek into what awaits all who persevere in faith — accepting the law and the prophecies. In believing Jesus is the beloved Son of God, in whom God is well pleased and opening our ears and hearts to listen to him.

During our Lenten journey, we, too, are shown the glory of God and given an outpouring of grace. As we participate in Mass or visit Jesus in the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit will help us see Who appears before us if we quiet our hearts and listen. These sweet glimpses shed light and offer anchors of hope even when the world around us seems dark and confused. Regardless of our circumstances or whatever we lack in understanding our faith, God is always with us — especially when in the presence of the Eucharist. Although Peter may have been slightly off in his assessment of the situation that day, he did get one thing right: “Master, it is good that we are here.” Master, it is very good, you are here!

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

ON NOT BEING STINGY WITH GOD’S MERCY:

To their credit, their motivation is mostly sincere, however misguided. They sincerely fear playing fast and loose with God’s grace, fearing that they might end up dispensing cheap grace. Partly that’s a valid motive. Fear of playing fast and loose with God’s grace, coupled with concerns for truth, orthodoxy, proper public form, and fear of scandal have their own legitimacy. Mercy needs always to be tempered by truth. But sometimes the motives driving our hesitancy are less noble and our anxiety about handing out cheap grace arises more out of timidity, fear, legalism, and our desire, however unconscious, for power.

But even when mercy is withheld for the nobler of those reasons, we’re still misguided and out of tune with the God whom Jesus proclaimed. God’s mercy, as Jesus revealed it, embraces indiscriminately, the bad and the good, the undeserving and the deserving, the uninitiated and the initiated. One of the truly startling insights that Jesus gave us is that the mercy of God — like the light and warmth of the sun — cannot not go out to everyone.

Consequently, it’s always free, undeserved, unconditional, universal in embrace, and has a reach beyond all religion, custom, rubric, political correctness, mandatory program, ideology, and even sin itself. We must risk proclaiming the prodigal character of God’s mercy. We must not spend God’s mercy, as if it were ours to spend; dole out God’s forgiveness, as if it were a limited commodity; put conditions on God’s love, as if God were a petty tyrant or a political ideology; or cut off access to God, as if we were the keeper of the heavenly gates. We aren’t. If we tie God’s mercy to our own timidity and fear, we limit it to the size of our own minds.

—Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I.

A STEP TOWARDS TRUTH:

A young priest was paying his first pastoral visit to a nursing home in a new parish. He was running late. He had skipped lunch and was hungry. As he entered the room of an elderly bedridden woman and introduced himself, he couldn’t help but notice a large bowl of peanuts sitting on her nightstand. Although it was not his normal practice, he excused himself and said: “Ma’am, do you mind if I have some of those peanuts?” “Of course, Father,” she said with hospitality. “Help yourself.” So he took some, and although the peanuts had a strange texture and a faintly stale taste, it was good to have something in his stomach. So he kept eating handful after handful as the old lady rambled on about her connection to the parish and the achievements of all of her children and grandchildren. By the time he caught himself, he realized that he had eaten almost all the peanuts in the bowl. Somewhat embarrassed,

On this 2nd Week in Lent, we consider the way we are following the Lord. Do we allow ourselves to be exposed to the spiritual? Do we pray, really pray? Do we allow the spiritual to become real in our lives? Are we allowing God’s plan to take effect in our world? Are we living as citizens of heaven, or is our glory the mere external following of our religion? If someone were to ask any of us: “What exactly is a Catholic?” in what terms would we form our answer? If we were to answer the question in terms of religious practices, such as “a Catholic is a person who goes to Church on Sundays, receives the sacraments, says the Rosary, etc,” we would be given far too much importance to what we do and not enough importance to what God is doing. However, if we were to answer the question “What is a Catholic?” in terms of what God does, if we were to say: “A Catholic is someone united to God in such a way that others experience the Mystery of God working in him,” then it is God and his works that are the essence of lives. Few people are drawn to Catholicism because they want to do the things that Catholics do. People are drawn to Catholicism because they want to experience God as Catholics experience Him.

Spiritually alive, living with God, united in the Holy Spirit, we can become the Divine Magnet for the world. We began Luke’s Gospel with Jesus at prayer, in union with the Father, entering into the mystery of his Being. He is transfigured. The disciples call out: “It is good for us to be here.” Yes, it is. It is good for all of us to be here in the presence of the Lord. We also are called into the mystery of our being — the depth of whom we are where physical and spiritual unite. We are called into our depth, into union with the Holy Spirit so others might say: “It is good for us to be here.”

Transform us Lord. Transfigure us, Lord. You want the spiritual to be real in our lives. You knock on the door of our hearts. Help us to let you in. Help us to fight for the reign of the spiritual, the mystical. Help us to be vehicles of your presence.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Daniel 9:4-10, Luke 6:36-38
Tuesday:	Isaiah 1:10-20, Matthew 23:1-12
Wednesday:	Jeremiah 18:18-20, Matthew 20:17-29
Thursday:	Jeremiah 17:5-10, Luke 16:19-31
Friday:	Genesis 37:3-28, Matthew 21:33-43
Saturday:	2 Samuel 7:4-16, Romans 4:13-22, Matthew 1:16-24
3rd Week in Lent:	Exodus 3:1-15, 1 Corinthians 10:1-12, Luke 13:1-9

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.



ON BEING TRANSFIGURED:

There is some seriously strange stuff going on in the Scripture Readings for this 2nd Week in Lent. Abram — that’s Abraham before he got promoted — asked God for a sign that he really is going to possess great lands and have countless descendants. God tells Abram to cut a cow, a goat, a ram, a dove and a pigeon in two. Where was PETA when they needed it? Abram guards the carcasses — shoeing the vultures away — and then, at night a smoking pot and fiery torch appear and pass between the pieces. Seriously strange [Genesis 15:5-15,17-18].

Jesus takes Peter and the boys up a mountain, and then his face and garments start glowing. Moses and Elijah appear. Jesus and Moses — the Father of the Law — and Elijah — the greatest of the prophets — talk about what Jesus was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Then there is the voice: “This is my Chosen One, listen to Him.” Again, strange, seriously strange [Luke 9:28-35].

These are mysteries — mysteries in the sense of mystical. Something takes place which is beyond normal human actions to express a deeply spiritual event. The ancients of Abraham’s time would seal a covenant by walking through the halves of sacrificed animals, saying: “May God cut me in half if I am not true to my word.” The smoking pot and torch that pass through the pieces of animals is God saying that He will be true to the promises made to Abraham, his descendants would be as numerous as the stars of the sky. His land would be all the land he saw. Why did God give this assurance in such a mystical way? He did this to demonstrate that he would be true to mystery.

The Scripture Readings for this 2nd Week in Lent focuses on the spiritual in our lives, calling us to refocus on the mystical. The mystery of God has entered human history in the covenant God made with this wandering Armenian — Abram — whom he now names Abraham. St. Paul tells the Philippians that they should not be like the Pharisees who are so concerned with Jewish dietary laws that “Their God is their belly,” and so proud of their circumcision that “their glory is in a shameful part of their body.” The problem was that they were not allowing mystery, the mystical, to enter their lives. “Our citizenship is in heaven,” St. Paul says [Philippians 3:17-4:1]. The spiritual is what matters. We have to allow God to transform our minds by his spiritual reality. We cannot allow ourselves to be reduced to a mere external following of physical laws. The spiritual must reign. The spiritual must transform the world.



We come upon Jesus at prayer on the Mountain. Even though the Transfiguration is presented in all three of the Synoptic Gospels — Matthew, Mark and Luke — only Luke begins the account with the Lord at prayer. This is significant. The Lord is opening Himself to the presence of the Father. At peace, at prayer, He is transformed, transfigured, into a state that reflects the glory of God. Moses and Elijah appear. They also are radiant, reflecting the glory of God. Moses — the representative of the Books of the Law; , Elijah — representing the Books of the Prophets. They come to speak to Jesus — the very Word of God. They are speaking of God’s plan for his people — the conquest of the spiritual. Of course, the disciples — Peter, James and John — don’t understand this. They are still looking for a physical kingdom. The spiritual is beyond them. The voice in the cloud is meant for them and us: “This is my Beloved Son, Listen to Him.”

God wants to transform the world. He has established the Kingdom of the Spirit and called us as the new Chosen People. Following him does not mean merely performing certain external actions — like not eating pork or being circumcised, or simply coming to Church, showing up to get married, having our children baptized, receive communion or be confirmed. Following God means entering a spiritual, mystical relationship with him — a relationship that is present through our daily duties as well as when we are together at prayer.

he took the bowl and extended it to the woman saying: “Excuse my rudeness. Would you like some of these peanuts?” “Oh, no, Father,” she said with a smile. “I don’t like peanuts. I just like the chocolate coating. After I have sucked that off, I put the peanuts in that bowl.”

Things are often different than they seem. It is amazing how often we walk around with a false picture of who we are, who other people are, and what is the true condition of our surroundings. We can know someone for many years and suddenly find out that there is a part of that person—a gift, a flaw, a dream—to which we were blind. Someone that we always trusted can turn out to be false. Someone we never understood can suddenly step forward as a friend. And when this new truth hits us, it can confuse us and disorientate us.

This is what happens to the disciples in Luke’s gospel. In the Transfiguration they see a new truth about Jesus. They had always seen Jesus as a teacher and a friend, but in this experience, they see him as a being in glory, as a companion to Moses and Elijah. That new truth overwhelms them. Peter doesn’t know what he is talking about. They are all terrified. Yet, when the vision passes, the disciples realize that they have grown. For now they see clearer who Jesus really is [Luke 9:28-35].

Even though truth can be confusing and disturbing, we always take a step forward when we can claim it. Even though truth can be painful, it is better to own it than to continue on in illusion and denial. Lent is a time where we try to take a step closer to the truth. And in a particular way where we try to own the truth about ourselves, because self knowledge is always incomplete. The height of Greek wisdom was inscribed on the temple of Apollo in Delphi, and it read: “Know yourself.” The Greeks understood that following that command was the task of a lifetime.

So how do we come towards greater self knowledge? How do we move towards knowing ourselves? Let me suggest two steps: Know who you are not, and know where you are going. No one is good at everything. None of us have all the gifts. Yet it is amazing how we continue to frustrate ourselves by trying to be people who we are not. We have always dreamed of being on American Idol, and so we sing at parties even though we have no voice. We are determined to help other people. So we give advice — even though we don’t know what we’re saying.

We want others to see us as successful, so we talk about our talents and our accomplishments, but instead of impressing people we make ourselves look foolish.

All of us have gifts. But the first step to discovering the gifts we have is admitting the gifts that we do not have. It is freeing to be able to admit: “I’m not good at organization. I’m not good at listening. I’m not good at communication.” When we can admit who we are not, we take a step towards knowing ourselves.

We also need to know where we are going. This truth is fundamentally a matter of faith. We believe that we are daughters and sons of God, and that our final end is union with God — that we are bound to eternal life. When we know where we’re going, when we know what our final destination is, it gives us strength to face the troubles of life. When I was serving in a parish in Akron, I remember visiting a great Christian woman who was dying of cancer. She was in great pain, not only because of the cancer but also because of the treatments that were trying to arrest it. I remember saying to her: “Louise, how you doing?” She responded by saying to me: “It’s a good thing that I’m bound to glory, because I’m getting pretty tired of this.”

Knowing yourself is the work of a lifetime. But knowing who you are not and knowing where you are going are two steps towards greater self-knowledge. The season of Lent encourages us to take those steps. The transfiguration of Jesus reminds us that moving towards the truth will lead us to growth. Even though it is difficult to face the weight of truth, it is better than living in illusion. For claiming the truth of who we are gives us power. Or as Jesus says in John’s gospel: “The truth will set you free” [John 8:32].

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

5 UNDERRATED WOMEN IN THE BIBLE:

It is an uncomfortable truth that throughout much of history, women have often been forgotten about, silenced, and mistreated. Yet God's plan for women, from the beginning of time, has been so much more perfect, so much more fruitful than what the world has been able to offer. Sojourner Truth, in her speech *Ain't I A Woman*, given to the Women's Rights Convention in 1851, reminds us of this reality when she wrote the following: "Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman!" The Catholic Church and the Bible are overflowing with women who have played monumental roles in helping to advance God's salvific plan.

While Mary is certainly the pinnacle of women who have helped to achieve God's plan, there are many other biblical women who were strong, brave, and courageous in giving their own "yes" to God.

Jochebed [see Exodus 6] & **Miriam** [see Exodus 15]. **Their virtues: Faith and Courage.** Imagine giving birth to a son and being faced with the reality that at any moment this child will be killed just because the leader is afraid of his power being overthrown? It's unfathomable! Yet that is exactly the situation Jochebed found herself in when she gave birth to her son — Moses. Rather than relinquishing her maternal role to the greedy pharaoh, Jochebed devised a plan to give her child life, but this would mean surrendering her desires — to raise her own son — and entrusting this child to God. When Moses was three months old, and she could no longer hide him, she put him in a basket and placed him in the banks of a river, near a place where Pharaoh's daughter frequented. Jochebed sent her older daughter, Miriam, to watch. Provisionally, Pharaoh's daughter sees Moses, takes pity on him, and decides to raise him as her own. Miriam boldly asks Pharaoh's wife if she needed someone to nurse the baby, Pharaoh's wife said yes, and Jochebed was hired to take care of her own son.

Though their stories are short, we learn from Jochebed the importance of trusting an unknown future to a known God and not succumbing to fear and caving under corrupt leadership; from Miriam, we see the power of being brave and asking for the things which our heart desires: "how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" [Matthew 7:11].

Deborah [see Judges 4]. **Her virtue: Wisdom & Right Judgment.** Deborah is a prophetess, and the only known female judge of Israel — which is pretty radical given that it was a male-dominated society! Deborah encouraged a military leader — Barak — to conquer the Canaanites, people who were oppressing the Israelites — God's chosen people. Sisera — the leader of the Canaanite army — was especially powerful. Barak asked Deborah to accompany him. She agreed, but warned Barak that the victory would not be his, but of woman's, and ultimately, God's: "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" [Judges 4:9], and when Barak doubted that they could overcome Sisera's powerful army, Deborah reminded Barak that God was on their side: "Up! For this is the day on which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. The Lord is indeed going out before you" [Judges 4:14]. All of the army of Sisera was defeated, but Sisera escaped to the home of a local woman, Jael. Then, just as Deborah had predicted, Jael, recognizing that Sisera was an evil man, killed him. Deborah and Barak praised God, and Israel had peace for 40 years. From Deborah, we learn how wisdom and right judgment can help us to follow God's plan and that following God's plan always brings about peace.

Ruth [see the Book of Ruth]. **Her virtue: Loyalty.** Ruth is one of two women in the Bible who has an entire book named after her [Esther being the other]. In this book, we first meet Naomi's family, comprised of her husband and her two sons. Naomi's husband dies, her sons go on to marry Ruth and Orpah, but they also end up dying. So all that's left are these three widowed women — a very vulnerable status for a woman. Naomi decides to move back to Israel, where she's from, knowing life would be difficult for her as an old, widowed woman. But Ruth — a Moabite — vows to stay by Naomi's side:



"Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God" [Ruth 1:16]. Ruth meets a nobleman named Boaz, who despite Ruth's status as a foreigner and a widow, shows mercy and helps provide food for her and her family. Ruth eventually approaches Boaz and, in a bold move, asks if he will marry her and provide for her and Naomi. Boaz agrees and comments on Ruth's virtuous character remarking on her incredible loyalty. Ruth goes on to be the great-great-grandmother of King David and a descendant of Jesus. Ruth teaches us that loyalty to others is also a way of being loyal to God. God rewards our loyalty and turns our sorrows into joys. Ruth's little actions surmount to her being in the lineage of Jesus, never underestimate the power of little, loyal actions in the eyes of God!

Anna [see Luke 2]. **Her virtue: hope.** Anna — an elderly widow — is 84 years of age, and has lived in the Temple, fasting and praying, every day since her husband died after a short, seven-year marriage. We can gather that Anna has been in this temple for decades. She has heard the promise of the Messiah — the Chosen One who would redeem all of Jerusalem. She has been waiting, hoping, and praying. How many people, I wonder, did Anna see come in and out of that temple? Did she ever wonder if she would live to see her salvation?

When Joseph and Mary — a poor couple from Nazareth — arrive in the Temple to consecrate their son, Jesus, to God, per the Jewish custom, Anna is able to recognize the Savior in the face of a tiny, poor infant and "at that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" [Luke 2:38]. From Anna we learn the power of hope — hope that we have a God who will fulfill his promises. And we also learn something else that is powerful — when we fix our eyes on God instead of being distracted by the world, worshipping him through prayer and fasting, we will be given the grace to recognize him. God is present in ordinary moments, ordinary people, he is present — perhaps especially — in lowly, if only we have the eyes to see.

—written by Caitlin Sica, a High School Teacher

LIFE TEEN and EDGE:

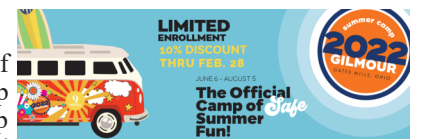
Our Life Teen and EDGE youth group is meeting in-person again. We will meet for an hour beginning at 11:30 AM following our 10 AM Sunday Mass in the Lennon Board Room. If you are unable to join us, there are many resources available for you on the Life Teen website — lifeteen.com. There are numerous 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].**



LIFE TEEN

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.



GRATEFULNESS:

Gratefulness draws on the best of the human spirit in all of us. It renews and refreshes us, and best of all, it is contagious.

—Amy Edelstein