

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

~ A Prayer on the Feast of the Ascension ~

Jesus,  
I rejoice with all my heart  
at the glory into which You entered  
to reign as King of heaven and earth.  
When the struggle of this life is over,  
give me the grace  
to share Your joy and triumph in heaven for all eternity.

Jesus,  
in Your love for me  
You have brought me  
from evil to good  
and from misery to happiness.  
Give me the grace  
to rise above my human weakness.  
May Your Humanity  
give me courage in my weakness  
and free me from my sins.

Through Your grace,  
give me the courage of perseverance  
for You have called and justified me by faith.  
May I hold fast to the life You have given me  
and come to the eternal gifts You promised.

By Your unceasing care,  
guide my steps  
toward the life of glory You have prepared for those  
who love You.

Help me to grow in holiness  
and thank You by a life of faithful service.  
Amen.

# Our Lady Chapel



*Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.*

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

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

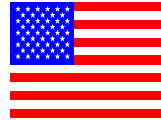
**THE CLASS OF 2022:**

Congratulations to the members of the Class of 2022 who are **graduating this Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup>**. We celebrate all that you are, and we salute your many achievements. May the Lord’s blessing and peace go with you in the days and months ahead as you enter a new stage in your life. Congratulations also to the parents and grandparents of our graduates for your steadfast love, encouragement and support throughout the years. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all during this very special time. God bless you.



**MEMORIAL DAY:**

**Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>**, is the observance of **Memorial Day**. Holidays are always time for family and friends; the time off from the routine of the workday, offers us an opportunity to give attention to other important aspects of our lives. Let us take time this Memorial Day to celebrate the heritage of those who have gone before us, particularly those who have given their lives in the service of our nation. Please join us for **Mass at 9:30 AM** in our chapel.



**SATURDAY EVENING MASS TO RESUME JUNE 4:**

Now that we have moved a distance from COVID, and people are beginning to return to “in person” Mass, **we are going to resume our Saturday evening, 5 PM Mass, beginning on Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**. We have had a number of people again express interest in our having this Mass, and with the coming of the summer months, many people look forward to having the opportunity to attend Mass on Saturday evening. **We look forward to having you join us once again for this celebration of the Eucharist.** The Saturday Evening Mass will not be live-streamed.



**BACK TO THE BALLPARK:**

Our Lady Chapel is going back to the ballpark. Join us on Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup> as we head to Classic Park in Eastlake to watch the Lake County Captains attempt to slay the Dayton Dragons at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$25.00 each and include game ticket, picnic dinner and postgame fireworks. The picnic begins at 6:30 PM and will continue until 8 PM. Sign up on the easel in the narthex. Final day to RSVP is Sunday, June 26



**CHAPEL PICNIC IS COMING BACK:**

**Put this date aside; mark your calendars! Sunday, July 10<sup>th</sup>** is the date for our annual Chapel outdoor picnic, which will be returning this year. Every year, the Chapel picnic has been a great event for the entire family. The picnic will be held rain or shine from **11:15 AM – 1:30 PM. Family Mass takes place at 10:00 AM** and the picnic begins right after Mass — what a wonderful way to continue our celebration of community. Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Pulled Chicken, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, and beverage are provided. **Families are asked to bring a favorite [for 4-5 people] desert to share if you can.** More information to follow shortly, including sign up procedure.



**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].



**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Brother Philip Smith, C.S.C., who is recovering from Surgery.
- For August Speziale, son of Aquatics Director, Jackie Speziale who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Dale Rusnik, uncle of Jakob Bennish [‘30], who is undergoing treatment for many medical issues.
- For Sabrina Hood Kumer, who is recovering from Brain Surgery to remove a cancerous tumor.
- For Ann Griggs, mother of Father Gabe Griggs, C.S.C., who is under the care of hospice.
- For Brother Larry Stewart, C.S.C., who is ill.

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For William Shaughnessy, uncle of Linda Sipos
- For Shirley Cayton
- For Sister Delphine Kennedy, C.S.J.
- For Sister Julie Marie Gilmore, S.N.D.
- For Sister Barbara Eppich, O.S.U.
- For Patrick O’Byran
- For Donald O’Toole, father of Athletic Director, Sean O’Toole, and grandfather of Owen [‘18], Connor [‘20], Kelsey [‘24], and former Gilmour student, Erin O’Toole.
- For Soomeyah Hilal, grandmother of Gia Hilal [‘23]
- For Bill Denihan

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For our country. With God’s help may be more courageous in confronting the issues that surround us.
- 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 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.

**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.

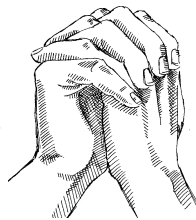


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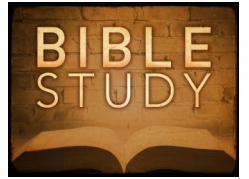
**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Matthew Gebhart, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Thomas Hughes [\*56], who is undergoing treatment for memory issues.
- For John Roddy, brother of Tim Roddy [\*87], son of Kathleen Roddy, former teacher's aide in the Montessori, and brother of Mary Roddy-Stretar, Marketing Associate at Gilmour, and cousin of Daniel [\*83], Mike [\*85], and Matt [\*86] Roddy, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Marty Zingales, who is undergoing medical testing
- For Herb Pahoresky, grandfather of Rebecca [\*19], Joseph [\*21], and Eve [\*22], who is under the care of hospice.
- For Tom Hanna, who is preparing for heart bypass surgery on June 1.
- For James Law, husband of LS resource associate, Elana Law, who is undergoing treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- For Sam Barrick, who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- For William Zhun [\*70], brother of Peter [\*66], Paul [\*69], and Bob Zhun [\*71] who is experiencing complications following surgery.
- For David Matis, husband of former Middle School Director, Paula Mattis, father of Kim [\*89] and Bill [\*91] Mattis, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Fletcher Linsz, brother of incoming student, Logan Linsz [\*26], who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkin Lymphoma.
- For Agnes Mirando, grandmother of David [\*12], Agnes [\*14] and Matthew [\*25], who is seriously ill with a tumor.
- For Brendan Hearn [\*26], brother of Kelsey [\*22], who was seriously injured in a lacrosse game and is recovering from surgery.
- For Frank Nannicola, grandfather of Cassie [\*17], Frank [\*18], and Mia [\*19] Nannicola, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Michael Nestor [\*98], who is undergoing treatment for a rare form of cancer.
- For Brian Fitzgerald who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Vicki Giancola, mother of Vince Giancola [\*23], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Elaine Hocevar, mother of Greg [\*97], Matthew [\*98], Ryan [\*00], and Sarah [\*01] Hocevar, who is awaiting a heart transplant
- 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 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 — WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1<sup>st</sup>:**

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 PM. Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can.



Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word. **Our topic for this Bible Study will be: The Holy Spirit. 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, May 29: <b>Ascension of Jesus</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b> In Person & Live Stream
Monday, May 30: <b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b> In Person
Tuesday, May 31: <b>Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Wednesday, June 1: <b>St. Justin</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Thursday, June 2:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Friday, June 3: <b>St. Charles Lawanga</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Saturday, June 4: <b>Pentecost</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b> In Person
Sunday, June 5: <b>Pentecost</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> In Person & Live Stream

**WE ARE THE WINDOWS OF GOD’S LOVE:**

The discipline of community makes us persons — that is, people who are sounding through to each other a truth, a beauty, and a love that is greater, fuller, and richer than we ourselves can grasp. In true community we are windows constantly offering each other new views on the mystery of God’s presence in our lives. Thus the discipline of community is a true discipline of prayer. It makes us alert to the presence of the Spirit who cries out “Abba,” Father, among us and thus prays from the center of our common life. Community thus is obedience practiced together. The question is not simply: “Where does God lead me as an individual person who tried to do his will?” More basic and more significant is the question: “Where does God lead us as a people?”

—Henri Nouwen



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

The Catholic faith is perhaps the earthiest of all the religions on our planet. Not only is it bedecked with tangible symbols — bread, water, song, oil, images, incense — it takes time seriously as well. For example, although we don't know exactly when Jesus was born, we celebrate his birthday on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Naturally, given the nine months of human pregnancy, we place the Annunciation exactly 9-point-zero-zero months earlier. Anything shorter might have been embarrassing; anything longer might have been an undue burden for his mother. Nine months — very concrete, very earthy.

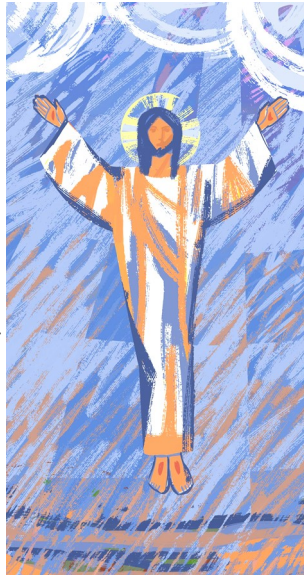
This weekend, we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of Jesus. Matthew [see chapter 28], Mark [see chapter 16], and Luke [see chapter 24] all tell us that after the Resurrection and various appearances, Jesus was taken up into the heavens — no hint of when. But if we had no other information, it could have been as early as Easter evening [see John 20]. John's Gospel concludes with a post-resurrection appearance in Galilee, and Paul cites a tradition of several appearances. But more concretely, the Acts of the Apostles mentions that these appearances occurred over a period of 40 days — which is why the Church has chosen to celebrate the Ascension when we do — exactly 40 days after Easter [Acts 1:1-11].

Although interesting, it's a mistake to focus on the chronology, as I have just done, or to wonder about Jesus' whereabouts during those post-resurrection days. Jesus' glorified body wasn't constrained by the usual limits of time and space. The Feast of the Ascension is not about "when" something happened — Jesus left the earth — rather, it's about "what happened." Psalm 47 points us in the right direction — "God mounts His throne to shouts of joy". Today is a celebration not about "where Jesus is", but of "what he is" — King of the world — of the cosmos. And Psalm 93, which the Church uses for the scripture response during Eastertide, makes the point yet again — "The Lord reigns. He is clothed in majesty."

Knowing this opens the avenue to deeper understanding of many of the things that Jesus said in the Gospels when he was preaching about the Kingdom. Some examples would be when Jesus "sent his disciples out to proclaim the Kingdom of God" [Luke 9:2]. The Lord's Prayer is specifically asking God to establish his Kingdom — his rule — on earth, now — "thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" [Matthew 6:9-13]. Pilate asked Jesus whether he was a king; "King" was the charge placed upon the cross at the crucifixion of Jesus [John 19:19]. Just before his being taken up into heaven, Jesus tells his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" [Matthew 28:18].

The Ascension is about Jesus assuming the authority he has won in his death and Resurrection. Christians have generally underplayed this aspect of Jesus' victory. As believers, we know that God created everything — God sustains everything in existence. So, of course Jesus is King — always was, and always will be. But the fact remains that humans have a propensity to sin. We call that tendency "original sin". Every human except two have it — Mary's being freed from it is what we have meant by her "immaculate" conception. What Jesus did in his death and resurrection was to call into being a new creation — a creation freed from slavery to sin. In the first creation God breathed on the clay out of which he had fashioned Adam, who thereby became a living being [Genesis 2:7]. In this second creation, Jesus likewise breathed on his disciples on that first Easter evening [John 20:22], thereby forming them into a new humanity. The Greek word used for "breathed" occurs in just those two places in the entire Bible — that can't be an accident. Clearly John was intending to remind us of the creation story when he tells us that Jesus "breathed" on his disciples [John 20:22].

Our old selves die in Baptism. We emerge from the font with Christ's Spirit enlivening and

**LIFE TEEN and EDGE:**

**Our Life Teen and EDGE youth group is meeting in-person again.** We will meet for an hour beginning at 11:30 AM following our 10 AM Sunday Mass in the Lennon Board Room. If you are unable to join us, there are many resources available for you on the Life Teen website — [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com). There are numerous blogs and videos for you to connect with. The Life Teen national office continues to release many new programs. **Please contact Father John for more information. And please join us each Sunday for our Mass at 10 AM — in person or live-streamed, and then come to our Life Teen/EDGE gathering after Mass.** And above all, let us continue to join each other in prayer. **Father John is available for you. Please contact him [cell: 216-570-9276].**

**LIVING THE MYSTERY OF THE ASCENSION:**

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus opens the minds of his disciples so they can understand the scriptures and can be witnesses to his death and resurrection — proclaiming repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name to all nations. After that, Jesus led his disciples to Bethany where he blessed them and was carried up into heaven [Luke 24:46-53].

As Christians today, we believe that Christ can help us understand the scriptures so we can give testimony to the liberating power of his death and resurrection. The Bible is the normative witness to God's saving activity in the world. The biblical story of salvation culminates in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the absolute savior, and the definitive prophet.

Since the Second Vatican Council in the 1960's, Catholics have gained a greater appreciation of the scriptures. We hear a good portion of the Bible proclaimed at weekend liturgies over a three year cycle. Many Catholics are involved in small faith sharing groups based on the liturgical readings. More Catholics now read the Bible privately in search of spiritual nourishment and wisdom. For example, a grandmother who was discouraged from reading the bible in her youth because of the dangers of private interpretation now spends about a half hour a day doing the tradition spiritual exercise known as "lectio divina." She begins with a prayer asking God for a receptive heart, then slowly reads a passage from one of the Gospels, pausing to reflect when she senses a thought or image relevant for her life. After she has exhausted that point, she returns to a slow reading of the Gospel text, prepared to pause again when something strikes her. At the end of her encounter with Christ in the scriptures, she says a prayer of gratitude for any insight and inspiration she has received.

Luke's Gospel [24:46-53] reminds us of our obligation to give witness to the repentance and forgiveness unleashed by the death and resurrection of Christ. An electrician, for instance, who grew up in a white family with deep prejudices against black Americans carried racist attitudes into his adult life. He was part of a movement to keep blacks out of his neighborhood; he repeated racial stereotypes in his conversations; and he avoided contact with black coworkers. One year, at the Good Friday service in his parish, it suddenly and forcefully struck him that Christ died not just for him, but for all people including African Americans. In a flash of insight, he knew he had to do a complete turnaround — overcoming his prejudice and making up for his overt discrimination. He began this process by engaging each of his three adult children in serious one-to-one conversations — confessing his own sins of racism; expressing his fears that he had passed on to his children a terrible prejudice; explaining his new more open attitude to people of color; and exhorting them to adopt a genuinely Christ-like attitude toward people who are different. He was not sure how effective these conversations were, but he was glad that he made an initial effort realizing that he had much more to do.

How can you develop a spirituality more solidly grounded in the scriptures and better prepared to give witness to the power of Christ's death and resurrection?

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



are failing. When the inability of society to care for a child who is unwanted justifies the right to take that child in its mother's womb something is incredibly wrong. It is only faith that can tell us, without doubt, who we are. Any decisions made without that secure and foundational reference point are subject to serious error. There is no doubt that our lives can become unsettled and empty. When we rely too much on the things of this world to please us, we can easily lose our excitement, enthusiasm, wonder, and joy. No worldly thing — no matter how great — can satisfy the longing of a human heart. Only God does that.

Imagine how different life would be if everyone approached each moment as a creative opportunity to see what God will do. When encountered with faith, even darkness has great potential to become light. The neighbor who gets under our skin, the demanding coworker we see every day, the person at the supermarket who is rude to us, the elderly person we met on our daily walk who seemed so disheveled, the perfect sunrise that greeted us in the morning, and the wonderful aroma and taste of our first cup of coffee can all be used by God to awaken us, humble us, and bring us to a heightened sense of His presence.

If people really understood the power of faith, they would have a better sense of who they are and where they are going. It would be harder to take something from someone that doesn't belong to us, strike out in vengeful violence when we are hurt, allow greed to override the basic sanctity of human life, justify behaviors that are blatantly sinful and wrong, give in to the whims of desire and passion, and live life as if we are the only ones that matter. The world needs the Good News of the Ascension of Jesus Christ. Do not be reluctant to preach and accept the truth! Christ is our destiny and our hope.

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

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

<b>Monday:</b>	Acts 19:1-8, John 16:29-33
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Zephaniah 3:14-18, Romans 12:9-16, Luke 1:39-56
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Acts 20:28-38, John 17:11-19
<b>Thursday:</b>	Acts 22:30-23:11, John 17:20-26
<b>Friday:</b>	Acts 25: 13-21, John 21:15-19
<b>Saturday:</b>	Acts 28:16-31, John 21:20-25

**Feast of Pentecost:** Acts 2:1-11, Romans 8:8-17 or 1 Corinthians 12:3-13, John 20:19-23

## 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.



## PRAYER:

8 Prayer doesn't issue from a sense of resignation about our condition but rather from a sense of hope.

—Father Gary Caster

enabling us. With and through that Spirit, we are empowered to do good instead of evil. Being born into “slavery to sin”, we are now “enslaved to Christ”, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light. Jesus, mounting his throne “reigns, clothed in majesty” [Psalm 93] — our only Lord. And we? As the angels remind us: “Get on with it! You have seen enough, heard enough, now be enough for the Body of Christ to take flesh in you individually and corporally as The Church.”

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

## THE IN-BETWEEN TIME:

It happens to all of us now and again. We know what is coming, and yet we do not fully understand it — the anticipation of a wedding, the birth of a first child, a graduation and the new life that commences, or the beginning of a new job. In each situation, we know what is going to happen on a certain date or in a period of time, and yet we do not — nothing can prepare us for the experience that we have been waiting for.

This must be something of what the disciples felt after Jesus' ascension before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. They knew something was to come. Jesus had told them to remain together in Jerusalem to await “the promise of the Father” about which he had spoken to them [see John 14 and 15]. Yet, even after the times they encountered the risen Christ — with the reassurance of his promise that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them — they did not know what to expect.

Throughout the liturgical year, we hear the story of the disciples as they come to belief in Jesus.

We hear the accounts of people being healed, mercy and forgiveness being given, and encounters with Christ as he taught, shared meals, and showed the love of God through his actions. We know what is to come, and yet we are called to hear the stories anew. In hearing the Gospel narratives again, we are invited to take salvation to heart and to pattern our lives accordingly.

Like the disciples who waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit, we know what life in Christ is to be — there are sure to be challenges if we truly embrace life as a disciple; there will be moments of disappointment, grief, and fear as there are for all of humanity; we acknowledge, look for, and celebrate the Resurrection and the hope of new life. Yet, we do not know exactly what this means for us until it happens — in the real moments and circumstances of our lives. We understand that the Resurrection means that Christ is victorious over death in all of its forms — physical death of a loved one, diagnosis of a serious illness, the death of a relationship, etc. — yet it is often not until we face death that we really grasp the implications of faith and hope in the Resurrection. We know in our minds and hearts the importance of faith, yet still grasp the Resurrection in deeper and more powerful ways in the aftermath of crisis — such as the events of gun violence that surround us, as well as the war in the Ukraine. We may say we are followers of Jesus Christ, but do not fully grapple with the call of discipleship until we encounter a homeless person on the street or feel the tug in our heart to respond to the needs of the sick, imprisoned, or lonely through personal action. It is only in such real moments that faith comes to life.

As we near the celebration of Pentecost, let us take time to allow this in-between time to sink in. We are still in the Easter season. Like the disciples who witnessed Christ's ascension and waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit, it would be good for us to reflect on the meaning of the Resurrection and the true and lasting impact of our relationship with Christ in our lives. How are we experiencing resurrection in this Easter season? How will we share the power of the Resurrection with those who need to know God's love?

—taken from the writings of Leisa Anslinger which appear on the internet

## HOW TRUE:

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

—Helen Keller



**THE WORK OF JESUS CONTINUES:**

The feast of the Ascension of Our Lord is truly a Mystery. Scriptures tell us that Jesus left his disciples to go back to the heavenly Father and promised to return at the end time. He concluded his earthly ministry and with this began the mission of the church. In Luke's gospel, the disciples were saying goodbye to Jesus — it was an intimate moment of farewell between friends. As he prepared to depart from the earth he offered them his parting gifts — the gift of understanding so that they were able to comprehend the meaning of the Scriptures. He did promise that they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and gave them his final loving blessing and told them that he would not abandon them but remain with them till the end of times [Luke 24:46-53]. The reaction of the disciples shows a striking transformation. Luke tells us that they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, praising and worshipping God. They were now certainly different from the frightened little band that had gone into hiding, run away from all authorities in Jerusalem particularly after the crucifixion. Now they were transformed into new persons, strengthened with faith and with the hope of the future. The Lord instructed them to be his witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the world but they were also told to await the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Heavenly messengers were beside the apostles as evidence of God's continued assistance. They assured the apostles that the Lord will come back to them as they had seen him go up to heaven accompanied by the clouds [Acts 1:1-11].

This Feast of the Ascension commemorates the elevation of Christ into Heaven by his own power in the presence of his disciples on the fortieth day after His glorious Resurrection. The Ascension of Jesus tells us that the Lord has completed His earthly work of our redemption. Through his numerous apparitions to hundreds of people between the Day of his Resurrection and the Day of His Ascension, Jesus proved two things: First, he proved that he was the promised Messiah that had come to redeem them. Secondly, he proved that through he who overcame death, those who persevere in their living faith shall also overcome death and inherit the Kingdom of God. St. Augustine believes that the observance of the Feast of the Ascension of Jesus is of apostolic origin, and after the 5<sup>th</sup> century, St. Augustine insisted on its universal observance. The Feast of the Ascension calls us to think in a new way — to visualize Jesus as a universal person. We — like the apostles — are totally assured that the Lord was with us and will help us in our work.

The message that Jesus gave was very clear — we are to go into the entire world and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. In other words, those who would not believe and refuse to come to Jesus would cut themselves off from his presence. However, to those who believe, Jesus promised to bless them with spiritual signs. In the Name of Jesus, they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover. It is absolutely necessary that one be born of new life through water and Spirit in order to enter the Kingdom of God. Having said this, Jesus returned to his Father. After being taken up into Heaven, the disciples went out and proclaimed the Good News everywhere. Today, we visualize the fruit of their work because Jesus worked with them and confirmed the messages by the signs that accompanied the Gospel. Even after he was taken up into heaven and they were filled with awe and uncertainty regarding his departure. The Angels came to them and assured them that the Lord will come back to them.

In the Book of Acts of the Apostles, Luke tells his friend Theophilus that in his earlier book — namely the Gospel — he wrote an orderly account about what Jesus had done and taught from the beginning of his ministry until the day when Jesus was taken up to Heaven after giving instructions to the apostles whom he had chosen. Now he gives an account of his ministry of preaching teaching and fellowship where he allowed them to talk and touch. Then Jesus commanded the disciples not to leave



Jerusalem until such time as they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of the promise of the Father. He even corrects their doubts about the meaning of the kingdom. He tells them: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” He tells them that the Ascension is the culmination of his mission on earth. Then came the cloud that took him away and he disappeared from their sight. They were given the message that Jesus shall return in the same way that He was taken up into Heaven.

—taken from the writings of Father Eugene Lobo, SJ, which appear on the internet.

**A CRISIS OF IDENTITY:**

It's all out of control. Inflation, the economy, violence, oppression, greed, morality, and tensions are all escalating as people scurry about for a sense of stability and well-being. Power seems to win the game and self-aggrandizement appears to be the order of the day. Love gets watered down to tolerance and accepting whomever and whatever is presented. The axis around which meaning and truth are found is twisted. Human beings appear to be engaged in an identity crisis of vast proportion, not certain whether standard, acceptable, and appropriate protocols exist any longer. We are lost. When one nation feels entitled to the goods of another and feels justified using any means possible to obtain them, we are in trouble.

While this is happening most explicitly in Ukraine, there are other parts of the world where greed, exploitation, and violence are regular occurrences. Even in the United States, violent carjacking and general theft are becoming common place, and a blatant disregard for human life seems more evident — as is exemplified in the recent school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. We often act as if our journey of life is simply a random occurrence — that we are here on this planet for no known reason and accountable to no one. Norms and protocols, appearing to cater to personal preferences, become a matter of what protects each other's rights and space. Benchmarks and standards for growing, maturing, perfecting, and refining human thought and behavior no longer exist.

The world needs the Good News of the Ascension of Jesus Christ. Pope Francis tells us: “The Ascension does not point to Jesus' absence, but tells us that he is alive in our midst in a new way. He is now in the Lordship of God, present in every space and time, close to each one of us.” If God is present in every space and time, then he is actively involved in what is happening in our lives. He works through both the positive and negative experiences we encounter, bringing us to a renewed and more focused place. The Ascension allows us to see this truth about ourselves and it enlightens our hearts. Christ, who was most perfectly, vividly, and brilliantly transfigured before the very eyes of the disciples will be our destiny.

Faith brings resolution to humanity's identity crisis. Faith corrects our misunderstandings of love. Faith seeks non-violent solutions to humanity's many conflicts. Faith removes our self-focus and deepens our vision. Faith provides the benchmarks we need to properly grow and mature. Faith provides the centering axis we need to order our lives. And only faith can give us real hope. Perhaps the cause of humanity's identity crisis is nothing other than an absence of faith. How can we believe that God takes a real interest in our lives if we do not believe in God in the first place?

The answers to all that plagues us are not easily found. However, before we can even think of repairing and constructing, we need to have solid plans and build a secure foundation. The Ascension reminds us of who God is, who we are and who we are meant to be. All we must do is believe in what God promises. In this way, we acquire our anchor for proper self-knowledge and a benchmark for judging actions.

When people are so angry, hurting, displaced, confused, and broken it is hard to convince them that there is a better way. The rise in addiction and mental health issues are indicative of social structures that

