

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A prayer As We Begin School ~

**Loving God,
Our creator, our savior, and our companion,
bless this journey of a new school year
that we undertake at this time.**

**Refresh our souls
and renew our spirits
as we embrace
this beautiful journey
that you have called us to.**

**We welcome those
who are new to our community
and we ask
that you strengthen them
to share their wonderful gifts
that you have given them.**

**Lord,
make our hearts pure
as we prepare for our return
to academic life,
And the pursuit of truth.
May you guide us
to return with open hearts
and minds eager to learn.
We ask this in Your name,
Amen**

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.
phone: [440] 473-3560 [office] 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.

BLESSING OF OUR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS — AUGUST 27-28:

Our school year begins on August 22nd. Giving everyone a few days to “settle in”, we would like to gather our Students and Teachers as they begin the journey of 2022-2023, by sharing a blessing of God upon them. As a faith community, we want your school year to be filled with the joy and excitement of life, as well as the presence of God. **Join us at our Masses this weekend of August 27-28 for this special blessing of our students and teachers.**

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

Faith Education returns to being “in person” this year. With that in mind, it is very important that you register your child early so that we will know how many teachers we will be needing. Even if your child attended class in the past, because we are resurrecting our program, you will need to register. Our Faith Education classes for the year will begin on **Sunday, September 25th at 8:45 AM.** Please join us as we come together to begin our faith journey for this year by entering into prayer and worship together. **If you have any questions, please contact Patty in the Chapel Office [[440-473-3560].** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.

**ST. ADALBERT SCHOOL SUPPORT CONTINUES:**

Student enrollment at St. Adalbert School has doubled. The need for ongoing support is important — especially at this time. **Therefore we have decided to continue to support for school supplies, responding to their monthly needs — No. 2 Wooden Pencils, Glue or Glue Sticks, Kleenex, Paper Towels and there is a special need for Backpacks.** Any and all quantities of these supplies are welcome!

Here is how you can be a part of this outreach. Simply shop for items on the list. Kindly **return the items** whenever you come to Our Lady Chapel. **If you do not have time to shop, simply place an envelope in the collection basket and mark it “St. Adalbert’s” or drop it off in the chapel office.** Together, we work and plant our seeds of hope and goodness to this community. Thank you in advance for your generosity and helping the children of St. Adalberts! Contact Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560] if you have any questions.

**WOMEN’S DAY OF RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:**

Tuesday, October 11th from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. We will begin with Mass together in the Chapel, and then move to the Lennon Boardroom to continue our prayer and reflection together. Because of COVID, it has been several since we gathered together for this time of Spiritual Renewal. **Father John** will facilitate our evening of reflection. **There is no cost for the evening.** [If you can’t make it for Mass, come anyway when you can. It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal. So **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Sign up on the retreat sheet which is located on the easel which in the narthex of the Chapel, or call Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560].**

MEN’S DAY OF RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:

Thursday, November 3rd from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. We will begin with Mass together in the Chapel, and then move to the Lennon Boardroom to continue our prayer and reflection together. Because of COVID, it has been several since we gathered together for this time of Spiritual Renewal. **Father John** will facilitate our evening of reflection. **There is no cost for the evening.** [If you can’t make it for Mass, come anyway when you can. It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal. So **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Sign up on the retreat sheet which is located on the easel which in the narthex of the Chapel, or call Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560].**

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For William Rogan, father of Music Minister, Jill Rogal, who is undergoing treatment for kidney issues.
- For Curtis Jackson, incoming Freshman at St. Edward HS, who is critically injured as an innocent bystander in a shooting.

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Brother James Bagans, C.S.C.
- For Brother Thomas Frey, C.S.C.
- For Thomas Hughes [‘56], brother of Michael M. Hughes [‘55], uncle of Mike [‘82] and Kevin [‘88] Hughes
- For Robert McQuistin, father of former Gilmour Teacher, Emily McQuistin.
- For Sandi Alexander.
- For Liz Rybka.
- For Maryon Gordon
- For Mary Ann Nathal.
- For Sarkis Semarjian, grandfather of Austin [‘12] and Madison [‘15] Semarjian.
- For Mary Vasko

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- 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.

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.

**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].

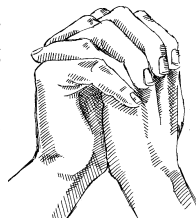


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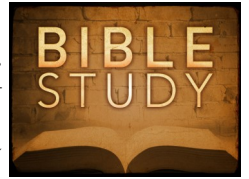
PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Michael Bares, brother of James ['80] Bares and Religion Instructor, Eileen Pryatel, uncle of Michael ['08, Meghan ['13], and Kevin ['15] Pryatel, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Susan Plavcan, sister-in-law of Linda McGraw, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Sharon Wilson, wife of Brother Ken's nephew, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Bob Hovel who is critically ill, resulting from a brain tumor.
- For David Francisco, who is recovering from triple bypass surgery.
- For Tom King, who is recovering from a stroke.
- For Marty Szakaly, brother of Father Tony Szakaly, C.S.C., who is seriously ill.
- For Luca Palazzo, who is critically ill with cancer.
- For Dale Rusnik, uncle of Jakob Bennish ['30], who is undergoing treatment for many medical issues.
- For Tricia Ashkettle, who is undergoing treatment for brain cancer.
- For Matthew Gebhart, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- 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 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 David Mattis, 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 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 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 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, AUGUST 24th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, August 24th 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: Mary's Assumption — a life that leads to heaven.

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

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, August 21: 21 st Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, August 22: Queenship of Mary	NO MASS
Tuesday, August 23:	NO MASS
Wednesday, August 24: St. Bartholomew	NO MASS
Thursday, August 25:	NO MASS
Friday, August 26:	NO MASS
Saturday, August 27: 22 nd Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, August 28: 22 nd Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

R.C.I.A [Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults]:

We are beginning to form our RCIA program for this year. If you have been thinking about investigating the Catholic faith, or if you know someone who has been thinking about it; if you have been away from the Catholic Church for a while, or are interested in learning more about the Catholic faith; if you know someone who is not fully initiated [Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation] in their Catholic faith — then consider joining or having them join our RCIA program. **Please contact Father John [440-473-3560] for more information.**



DISPEL LETHARGY:

You have become old in spirit and are already dying, and have no strength anymore. You have become enervated by the affairs of daily life, and fallen into lethargy just like old men and women, who, once they have given up all hope of regaining strength, expect nothing but to fall asleep. But if you repent, you will become quite new again.

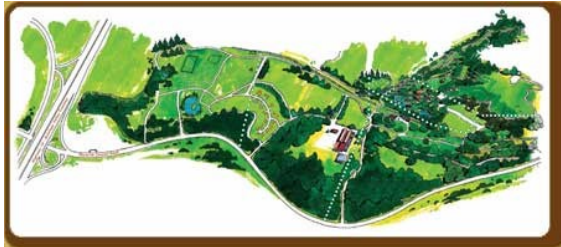
— Hermas

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Every fall at high schools across the country, a quite human celebration takes place when the first-year boys show up for their first day of football practice. To be more honest, the real celebration of the human condition is the second day of running and blocking in the high-heat of late August when one third of the first-day's hopefuls have decided that hitting the books harder might be less painful than getting hit themselves. They decide to exclude themselves from further pursuit of worldly glory on the athletic field.

All of us have natural fears about whether or not we are going to “make it” — will we be good enough? Unfortunately, we approach our spiritual life in much the same way. In our life of faith and hope, however, we do belong, we are included in Jesus' embrace of us all from the cross. The natural and the supernatural are in tension within us at all times. Grace and nature form the struggle of our spiritual lives. The fears and doubts of our natural world are consoled with the comfort which our faith in Jesus provides. Belief is the choice we make to receive God's choice not to abandon our sisters and brothers in Jesus.

I — a city boy — once asked a young man attending our school from the ranching area in western Nebraska, how large his family's ranch might be. He answered that it was “pretty big”. I asked if it were twelve square miles, and he said it probably was about that. “Wow” I said, “four miles one way and three the other — that's big!” “Oh no,” the young man responded, “it's twelve miles by twelve miles, square.” I learned quickly that it's all a matter of perspective.



The Scripture Readings for this 21st Week in Ordinary Time deal with somewhat the same question — “How large is your God's ranch?” We learn that “boundary issues” from God's perspective are much different than ours. Throughout his writings, Isaiah has always been reminding the people of Israel that they are “special in God's eyes” — they are God's flock, family, and spouse

But now the group is getting bigger — people from Spain to Africa and Turkey will someday be both included and brought to know their own “specialness”. All will come to know the glory or love of God that was first shown to Israel. They all shall come to Jerusalem to know the God of Israel as their God, and to live according to the newness of the Ancient One [Isaiah 66:18-21]. Even from these strangers, God will select religious leaders to keep reminding and remembering all the people that they are who they are by God's embrace. God's ranch is larger than miles. Territory is measured by response and the invitation has no boundaries. The boundaries are the fears, doubts, and selfishness which can limit the human response to these invitations.

The Pharisees and religious leaders of Jesus' time had definite “boundary issues”. Luke's Gospel records the healing of a woman on the Sabbath [see Luke 13:16]. There were strict boundaries concerning activities allowed and disallowed on this holy day of reflection and gratitude. Jesus responds to them with three parables — the “mustard seed”, the “fig tree” and the “yeast”.

But then boundary widens. Being boundaries are more about observing Jesus and his teachings, then they are about keeping laws [Luke 13:22-30]. Jesus is the “narrow gate” through whom life passes into this world and leads to the “Kingdom of God”.

Then the protest begins. They say: “But we ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.” Again — boundaries. There is nothing about their buying into, or becoming intimate with Jesus personally. They did not join his company or take in the teaching offered in their streets.

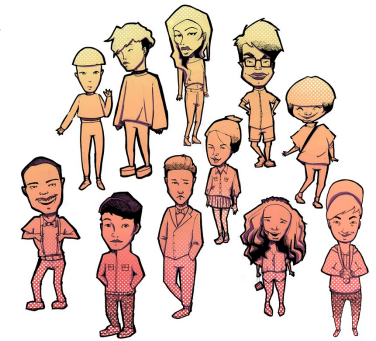
While those from beyond the geographic, national, and religious boundaries of Israel have not been the first to be invited, the “kingdom” is a broadening of the invitation to those who will now be first.

HOW BROAD IS OUR VISION?

Most of us don't like to hear the word “discipline” — especially when it's applied to us. We presume that it's geared to take away our freedom, and in the long run always comes with some sort of punishment. Yet a typical dictionary definition of the term says it is simply the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behavior. So when the author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes about the “discipline of the Lord,” he's simply talking about the unique rules and behavior patterns the risen Jesus expects us to obey [Hebrews 12:5-13].

Growing up Catholic, I methodically learned all the do's and don'ts that my catechism listed. But being a typical, concrete thinking child, I concentrated on the don'ts — especially since they were hooked up to the fiery punishments of purgatory and hell that scared the “bejeebers” out of me. Unlike the do's, the don'ts were hard to forget. Though the Hebrews' author reminds us that “whom the Lord loves, he disciplines,” not only didn't I feel much love coming out of the pages of my catechism, I secretly envied my Protestant friends who didn't seem to be restrained or burdened by any fear of committing mortal sins.

But if you look at the Word of God in its entirety, it is clear that the discipline to the sacred authors refer doesn't restrict our behavior — it expands it. Active shortly after Israel's 6th century BCE Babylonian captivity, Isaiah is concerned not only with encouraging the recently freed Jews to return to the Promised Land — he wants them to come back to their ancestral home with a new mentality toward Gentiles [Isaiah 66:18-21]. No longer are they to regard them simply as “non-Jews” — people incapable of having a meaningful relationship with God. Rather, God is now including these foreigners in his plan of salvation. Unbelievably, some will even be included in the special category of priests and Levites — individuals who were granted their special ministry and privileges by birth. No one went to the seminary to become a priest or Levite — they were born that way. Yet now the Lord is saying that some Gentiles are by nature just as important as some Jews. I am certain that a number of holy, pious Jews would have petitioned the Holy Office — had one existed back then — to have Isaiah officially declared a heretic. Such openness certainly wasn't the divine discipline that they had learned and followed as children. The prophet was now demanding that they expand their behavior to now be open to God's working with all people — not just the Chosen People.



Because of our emphasis on the don'ts of our faith, it is easy to overlook the fact that the historical Jesus demanded similar discipline from his followers. Luke's Gospel leaves us little wiggle room — “There will be wailing and grinding of teeth,” Jesus warns, “when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out” [Luke 13:22-30]. The “saved” will include people we presumed were nowhere near being listed in that category. Neither belonging to the “true church,” saying the right prayers, or knowing all the rules and regulations will save us. Our only hope is to imitate the mentality of Jesus. “People will come from the east and the west,” Luke's Jesus insists, “and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.” His salvation rule of thumb can be easily summarized: “Some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

Ironically the “narrow gate” for entering God's kingdom among us revolves around our developing a very broad mind — something many of us conveniently forgot when we were studying Jesus' do's.

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

FINDING OURSELVES:

When we love Jesus, we come to know who we are. God's love becomes a part of who we are. Only then do we begin to realize the full potential that God has in mind for us.

—Allen Hunt

that the insider would eventually break down and open to them. What's up?

This incident becomes more comprehensible when we recall that Luke wrote the Gospel not as a documentary, but to help a practicing Christian community deepen their living of their faith. In that context, we realize that the story focuses on teaching, eating and drinking — the key elements of the celebration of the Eucharist.

The theme of the Eucharist subtly permeates Luke's whole Gospel. From the hungry being fed in Mary's Magnificat [see Luke 1] through the Beatitudes [see Luke 6], and the teaching surrounding the Lord's Prayer [see Luke 11], Luke emphasizes God's role in feeding the hungry.

The banquets Jesus describes in the Gospel are images of the reign of God, and when the risen Lord appears to the disciples, he eats with them and they recognize him in the breaking of the bread [see Luke 24]. All of this suggests that this story offers a reflection on Eucharist.

Now, let's ask what's happening when the rejected people claim: "We ate and drank with you and you taught us," and the master replies: "I do not know where you are from." Does this not sound like a warning that it will never be enough to say: "We sat through the homilies, blessed ourselves and received Communion every single Sunday"?

Isaiah the prophet reiterates something similar; we hear God saying: "I know" your works and thoughts. God didn't say: "I saw your church attendance card" [Isaiah 66:18-21]. God then goes on — like Jesus in Luke's Gospel — promising that people of all nations will participate in the joy of divine glory. In this final chapter of Isaiah, God calls all the nations — not just a chosen people — adding that not even the once-hereditary priesthood can be restricted to a certain class.

Luke's Gospel began with a question about numbers — a question implying exclusion — "are only a few to be saved"? Jesus replied by talking about how to get into the master's mansion. He moved from a question of competing for limited spaces to understanding how to be ready to enter the place to which we are invited. Jesus explains that the saved will be the people known by the master. Salvation becomes the equivalent of being known by Christ. It is the experience of the people who have walked his way.

Being known by Christ requires more than the gestures and rituals of worship — it implies listening so deeply that Christ's word lives in us. Jesus intimates that he really knows only those who have allowed him into their lives so completely that they reflect and actually represent him in their own context. This is Luke's version of: "I know mine and mine know me" [see John 10].

Understood from this perspective, we see how Jesus' reply to the question: "Will many be saved?" flips the focus back on the questioner. In essence, Jesus is asking: "Are you seeking my way of life or prestigious status?"

Those who seek rank will find it — and find it shallow. Those who follow Jesus down his road and through his gate will find that they are the least made first — the lowly who will shine with God's own glory.

One of the core Gospel conundrums is that one cannot save oneself. Whenever we strive to be perfect or focus on sin and forgiveness, we remain the center of our attention. The passage through Jesus' narrow gate takes us beyond self-concern into the realm of knowing we are loved and are therefore free to love any and everyone else.

When we understand this, we will understand what it means to proclaim: "Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are the savior of the world". It's not how many will be saved, but how many will let it happen to them?

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



Those who were first will be last and left out completely. Here Jesus is speaking directly to the Jewish leaders who are reminded that their ancient prophets, and Father Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will all be at the heavenly table with these "late" comers. Now that really is a stinger. The Jewish leaders and their followers were dedicated to their traditions and beliefs. Jesus is turning many of their traditions over and asking to let him be God's invitation again to walk more personally with the personal God of their traditions and beliefs. This invitation is being extended beyond and in new forms, but the ancient call to trusting the inviting God remains central. Jesus is not replacing the old, but intensifying the revelation of that ancient divine love.

How big is God? How large of an embrace does God have for the human clan? Twelve square miles of ranch might seem mighty large to most of us. Twelve by twelve could seem impossibly huge. We are lately quite taken up with definitions which word literally means "putting down limits or boundaries" — political parties, ethnic families, financial levels, and even religious groups define, limit, wall in and wall out "those others".

Labels create distance and distance provides the luxury of suspicion and self-ratification. The more we affirm our being identified through Jesus, the more we are available to those from the north/south and east/west. Only our walls of fear confine the growth of God's kingdom.

The question for us is not about whether or not we will "make it", but what we will make of Christ's having made "it" for us. Holiness just might be expressed in our observing the "laws" of Jesus. Good fences make good boundaries; but they make neighbors distant, easily misjudged and eventually, enemies.

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

MERCY DOES NOT MEAN COMPLACENCY:

In Luke's Gospel someone asks Jesus: "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" [Luke 13:22-30]. Avoiding a direct answer to the question, Jesus replies: "'Strive to enter through the narrow gate.'" Jesus goes on to suggest to his Jewish audience that some self-righteous people may find themselves excluded from the kingdom while Gentiles from all over the world will participate in the heavenly banquet.

Many Catholics today hear this Gospel with a generally optimistic attitude on salvation. The Second Vatican Council taught that God's grace of salvation is available for all people — even atheists — provided they follow their conscience. Fewer Catholics today worry about being damned to hell, and more believe in a loving merciful God. Given this situation, the Gospel injunction to enter by the narrow gate functions as a warning against complacency — taking the gift of salvation for granted, taking the easy way out, neglecting prayer, and avoiding discipline. Trusting in God's mercy does not give us the right to test God. Salvation optimism does not negate taking up the cross or make the Christian life easy. On the contrary, it should move us to be more generous, dedicated, disciplined, prayerful followers of Christ. Freed from excessive guilt and confident in God's mercy, some Christians have made great progress in the spiritual life and become more effective disciples.

A woman who suffered from scrupulosity and routinely mentioned questionable sins in her monthly confession, gradually came to appreciate the saving power of God's grace which freed her from excessive guilt feelings. She now celebrates the Sacrament of Reconciliation once a year confessing just one of her sins and accepting a penance that will help her overcome it. A nurse who had great difficulty controlling his emotions when caring for dying patients came to see death as a passageway to a more fulfilling life with God. He now does a better job of listening to his terminal patients and attending to their physical and spiritual needs.

How can you trust in God's plan to make you a better disciple of Christ?

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



TODAY IS GOD'S GIFT:

Pope Francis caused a bit of a stir when in a homily he suggested that everyone — even atheists — could be saved. This excited newspaper reporters all over the world to declare that according to the Pope everyone will be saved. Actually, the news reporters got it wrong. Cooler heads realized that the Pope was simply stating what is found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is “God’s desire” that all men and women of good faith be saved. To that end His Son, Jesus Christ, suffered and died to redeem us, to bring us back to God our Father. Everyone has been redeemed by Christ’s death and resurrection.

While the reality is that Jesus died to save all, that does not mean that all will be saved. There is a huge distinction between being redeemed and being saved. In His Son, Jesus Christ, God has redeemed all of the children of Adam and Eve. He has breached the chasm between us, and released us from the power of death. The word “redemption,” after all, means “buying back.” In Jesus Christ, God our Father has opened for us the way back. By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has paid the price and bought us back.

Salvation, however, requires our response to God’s offer. Salvation is, therefore, not automatic. Salvation is possible only when we respond to God’s offer. After all, a gift is not truly a gift unless and until it has been received. So, to be saved, we need to honestly look at our decisions in response to God’s redeeming love for us. Do our decisions accept God’s gift to us?

In my journey through life, I’ve had more trouble with myself than with any other person I’ve ever met. My biggest regret is my missed opportunities — my lost chances. When I look back over the landscape of where I’ve been and what I’ve done, I see it littered with lost opportunities. So many times I’ve been “a day late and a dollar short.” In all of the years I’ve spent in school studying, the most difficult subject to study and master has been myself.

Luke’s gospel contains one of the least remembered of the parables of Jesus. And those that do remember it are likely not sure of what it means — “Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him: ‘Lord, will only a few people be saved?’ He answered: ‘Strive to enter through the narrow gate.’ For many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying: ‘Lord, open the door for us.’ He will say to you in reply: ‘I do not know where you are from.’ And you will say: ‘We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.’ Then he will say to you: ‘I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!’” [Luke 13:22-30].

Is it a lesson in good manners, telling us to be on time? That would be a good thing, by the way, for many folks to take to heart. Habitual tardiness is very inconsiderate — even arrogant. It is a means of control. I can control you by making you wait for me. Moreover, failure to show up on time sends a message saying: “My time is more important than your time.” What I have to do is more important than what you are doing.” Whose time is more important — yours or God’s?

But Jesus’ parable isn’t about good manners — it’s about the world we live in, a world full of closing doors. Where is yesterday, and what did you not do in it? The door is closed forever. It’s gone. If you ignored your spouse or neglected to hug your children, you’ll never, ever, be able to go back and do what you failed to do. The time God gave you slipped away and will never return. With each click on the clock measuring the passing of time, there is also the click of the lock on the door that’s forever closed. Whenever you watch the sun set, a moment comes when there is a silent “click” and that day’s door now closed to you forever. The sun will never rise again on the day that has passed. That day will never dawn again.

God litters the landscape of our lives with opportunities to love Him. We need to remember to love

John 4:16]. To say all of this is not to say that hell isn’t real, or that it isn’t a real possibility for every person. Hell is real — but it isn’t a positive punishment created by God to deal out justice or vengeance or to prove to the hard-hearted and unrepentant that they made a mistake. Hell is the absence of life, of love, of forgiveness, of community, and God doesn’t send anyone there. We can end up there, outside of love and community — but that’s a choice we make if we, culpably, reject these as they are offered to us during our lifetime. Hell, as John Shea once said, is never a surprise waiting for a happy person; it’s the full-flowering of a life that rejects love, forgiveness, and community.

Sartre once famously stated that hell is the other person. The reverse is true. Hell is what we experience when we choose ourselves over community of life with others. Human life is meant to be shared life, shared existence, and participation inside of a community of life that includes the Trinity itself. God is love, and those who abide in love, abide in God, and God abides in them. In this context, love should not be understood primarily as romantic love — it is not a question of “falling in love”. Rather, God is shared existence, and those who share life with others, already live inside of God’s life.

But the reverse is also true. When we don’t share our lives, we end up outside of life. That, in essence, is hell. What is hell? The images the bible chooses for hell are arbitrary and vary greatly. The popular mind tends to picture hell as fire — eternal fire. But that is only one image — and not necessarily the dominant one, in scripture. Among other things, scripture speaks of hell as “experiencing God’s wrath”, as “being outside” the wedding and the dance, is “mourning and weeping and grinding our teeth”, as being consigned to the “Gehenna” — a garbage dump outside of Jerusalem — as being eaten by worms, as fire, as missing out on the banquet, as being outside the kingdom, as living inside a bitter and warped heart, and as missing out on life. In the end, all these images point to the same thing — Hell is the pain and bitterness, the fire, we experience when we culpably put ourselves outside of the community of life. And it is always self-inflicted — it is never imposed by God. God doesn’t deal death and God sends nobody to hell.

When Jesus speaks of God, he never speaks of God as dealing both life and death, but only as dealing life. Death has its origins elsewhere — as does lying, rationalization, bitterness, hardness of heart, and hell.

To say that God does not create hell or send anyone there does not downplay the existence of evil and sin or the danger of eternal punishment — it only pinpoints their origins and makes clear who it is who makes the judgment and who it is who does the sentencing. God does neither — he neither creates hell nor sends anyone to it. We do both.

As Jesus tells us in John’s Gospel: “God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, the light has come into the world, and the people loved darkness rather than light” [John 3:17-19] — I judge no one.

He doesn’t need to.

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

SALVATION IS A GIFT:

When someone asks Jesus a question, it’s a setup as clear as the line: “A man walked into a bar.” We should get ready for a story that turns expectations inside out. Luke’s Gospel for this 21st Week in Ordinary Time spotlights a fellow whose inquiry subtly suggests that few people — other than himself, of course — will be saved. Jesus circumvents the discussion of numbers by switching the focus to the difficulty of gaining entrance to the master’s mansion.

Jesus’ story warns that the passageway into the dwelling of the saved is narrow, and that the entrance could well be locked when expectant applicants arrive. When they protest — “But we ate and drank with you!” — Jesus has the master reply: “I do not know where you are from” [Luke 13:22-30].

What we need to remember is that this response comes from the host at the ever-open table! It also comes not long after Jesus encouraged people to keep knocking on a locked door [see Luke 11], trusting



circumstances that had to be overcome. Many who seem to be first in their manifestation of piety and church-going may be far back in the line when it comes to genuine charity — and charity is the only question in the final test. Love of neighbor.

And we know, don't we, what the questions will be to see if we qualify to go through that narrow door — to get our passport to heaven, as it were. God is not going to ask us about our sex life or any of those things that seem to preoccupy us in this culture. God isn't even going to ask us how often we missed Mass on Sunday. Instead the questions we will hear will go something like this: Did you feed the hungry? Did you give drink to the thirsty? Did you clothe the naked? Did you take in the ones you saw sleeping on the street? Did you visit the imprisoned? Those are the questions we will be asked. And we know that, don't we? The problem is we tend to get things mixed up. And that's why we hear those words of warning: "Some who are last will be first and some who are first will be last." Again, not a threat — just a warning.

But it's a warning that should not upset us or make us sad or worried. Jesus wants us to live a life that is full and happy, investing all we have in this human life of ours and that of others, living soberly and simply, generously and carefully, but above all living! That's what Jesus did on his way to Jerusalem, walking that narrow road — the road less traveled — to that narrow gate of the cross and to the life and the glory to follow. And he invites us to come along.

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

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — AUGUST 20th:

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.

GOD JUDGES NO ONE:

There's a question about God's goodness as old as religion itself — how can an all-good God send someone to hell for all eternity? How can God be all-merciful and all-loving if there is eternal punishment? It's a false question — God doesn't send anyone to hell and God doesn't deal out eternal punishment. God offers us life and the choice is ours as to whether we accept that or not. God, Jesus tells us, doesn't judge anyone — we judge ourselves. God doesn't create hell, and God doesn't send anyone to hell. But that doesn't mean that hell doesn't exist, and that it isn't a possibility for us.

Here, in essence, is how Jesus explains this. God sends his life into the world, and we can choose that life or reject it. We judge ourselves in making that choice. If we choose life, we are ultimately choosing heaven. If we reject life, we end up living outside of life, and that ultimately is hell. But we make that choice ¹⁴ God doesn't send us anywhere. Moreover, hell is not a positive punishment created by God to make us suffer. Hell is the absence of something — namely, living inside of the life that's offered to us.

Scripture tells us that "God is love, and those who abide in love, abide in God, and God abides in them" [1

Him as we find Him in the hearts and souls of those others whom He sends into our days. He pours out opportunities to join with Him in making our world a better place, to bring His redeeming love to the world around us. Sympathy, compassion, forgiveness, caring, quality time, and attention for others — God gives them all to us in an inexhaustible supply. We can never give away too much of them. And thankfully God's love is forever replenishing them in the wells of our souls.

We have opportunities to read, to study, and to develop our minds. We have opportunities to invest not only in the stock market but to make lasting investments in the hearts and souls of others. We have opportunities to speak to others about our faith, about God, and about how important it is for us to pay attention to God.

And then there's prayer. We are all called to it, but few of us make the cut.

God's will is that we all be saved. He wants each one of us to spend eternity with Him. But how can we spend eternity with Him in heaven if we never spent any time with Him here on earth? The threshold of Heaven, after all, is entered into here on earth; it is not in some sort of dream world we shall find when we're no longer capable of finding anything at all.

God has showered you and me with limitless gifts. The outcomes of our lives are not His responsibility — they are ours. Everyone is called to be the best at knowing and loving; only a few actually reach that goal. Everyone is called to share life with God; few make the choice. And we must remember that the choice is ours! God offers — we respond, and nothing happens unless and until we respond.

All around us doors are slamming shut, and we hardly notice; our eyes and our hearts being so filled as they are with the glitter and clutter of this world. But we also live in a world of open doors. Every sunset is followed by a sunrise. The sun will rise tomorrow morning, and God will gift you with another day of opportunities. But while we are hopeful for tomorrow, we must remember that one day the sun will rise on our last day here on earth. When that day arrives, we will never have another day of opportunities to love and learn in our lives.

Jesus' teaching that many are called, but few are chosen sounds harsh. After all, wasn't Jesus always optimistic, kind and forgiving? Well, yes, He was. But He was also a realist. And it's the reality we need to see — not just wishful thinking about all of the things we're going to do but never seem to get around to doing.

The road to hell is truly paved with good intentions, as the saying goes. The door to heaven is wide, but the path to it is narrow. Many are called, but few make the necessary choices. That is so true, and it remains true even now when I'm conscious of the fact that I've had the most trouble in life with myself — far more trouble than I've ever had with anyone else.

God offers — we respond. He has given us the ability and the opportunity to respond. The responsibility is ours — not God's. In Jesus Christ God our Father has chosen to redeem us. Salvation, however, is our choice, in our freely chosen decisions, a point the newspaper reporters failed to note.

—taken from the writings of Father Charles Irvin, which appear on the internet

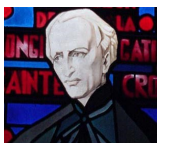
NOVENA TO BLESSED BASILE MOREAU:

Blessed Basile Moreau was the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, to which Fr. John and the Brothers at Gilmour belong. We have two booklets with Novenas to Blessed Basile Moreau. One is used for a personal intention or healing; the other is used when praying for the intention or healing of someone other than yourself. The Novenas were composed by Father Thomas Looney, C.S.C. Many have received blessings and healings through the intercession of Blessed Basile Moreau, and now we want to extend this invitation to you and your family. Please see Father John and he will be glad to give you the booklets.

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS:

Faith is a beam radiating from the face of God.

—John Eludes



THE LOCKED DOOR:

Luke's Gospel for this 21st Week in Ordinary Time [Luke 13:22-30] is challenging, to say the least! What does it mean when Luke tells us that we will come and knock upon the door of eternal life and find that it is locked? What does it mean that we will come seeking to enter in and be told that we are rejected? I thought that God was always willing to welcome us in. I thought that there would always be an open door when we came and knocked. Recall how Jesus said to us: "Ask and you shall receive. Knock and it shall be opened to you" [Luke 11:9-10]. So, what does this passage mean that tells us that when we try to enter, we will be refused? When we seek come in, the door will be locked?

To answer that question, let us start with what we know is true. God's will is to save us — to save every person in this church, to save every person in the world. God is always willing and open to invite us in to eternal life. But salvation is a two-way street. It requires our participation. God's intention is not the only factor. God will never change in God's desire to save us. But two things can change — our circumstances and our very selves. When these things change we can find that the door in fact is locked.

How can we explain this? There are many stories that have resulted from the tragic events of 9/11. But one of the most poignant for me was a story that I experienced on 9/12. As you know during that time, many people came to church and spent time in prayer. I encountered a woman leaving church. I said to her: "I am glad you came today to pray. We all need prayers."

"Some more than others," she said. "Do you want to know who I was praying for today?"

"Of course," I said.

"I was praying for all the spouses of the people that died in those twin towers who left for work yesterday morning angry at their husband or wife. They always thought that there would be time to make peace. They always thought that there would be another opportunity to be reconciled. Yet there was not. They will have to live with that for the rest of their lives."

Circumstances in our life change. What is possible today is not always possible tomorrow. The people with whom we need to be reconciled will not always be with us. The people we want to thank or tell them that we love them could be taken in an instant. When that happens, the door is locked and we can no longer get in.

But it is not just the circumstances in our life that can change. We ourselves change depending upon our decisions. Every time we say "no" to an opportunity for life or growth it is easier to say no again. Every time we decide not to act, we begin to build a habit that lessens our freedom. This can happen in a marriage or any deep relationship. The decision not to be honest moves us closer to living a lie. The decision not to be generous and forgiving begins to create a pattern of selfishness and inflexibility. Soon we can be living in a lifeless marriage, in a dead relationship.

A similar thing can happen in dealing with addictions. Every time we pass up an opportunity to stop drinking, to stop using drugs, we feed the habit of the abuse that reduces our ability to live. Every time we say no to a good opportunity, we reduce the chances of recognizing the next opportunity that comes along. God will never cease to provide opportunities. The grace of God will never dry up. But we can dry up. We can create a thick crust of insensitivity and habit that refuses to let the grace of God sink in. When that happens, the door is locked and we are unable to enter.

Then, then, is the warning of Luke's Gospel. God will never change in God's desire to save us. But our circumstances can change and we can change. God will never lock the door to shut us out. But the circumstances of our life can shut us out, and we can lose the desire to enter by the choices we refuse to make. The message of the Gospel, then, is "carpe diem" — it is a Latin phrase which means "seize the day." The day is now. If there is an open door in your life, walk through it. If you need to forgive someone, do it. If you need to thank someone or tell someone that you love them, don't wait until tomorrow. If there is an opportunity for change or growth, take it. God will never change, but our lives can change. So "carpe diem". Seize the day. Today is the day of salvation.

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

be a Christian and instead realize that our Christianity brings healing to a sick world — "Make straight paths for your feet that the lame might be healed."

Then we can be a part of the joy that Isaiah is talking about [Isaiah 66:18-21]. Then we can be part of the glory of the people who are honored in the heavenly Jerusalem. No one can make a claim on God. No one is entitled to union with God. People who presume God will extend mercy to them while they refuse to extend His Love to others are committing a sin that is devastating to their spiritual lives. But people who embrace discipleship — people who accept the cost of following Christ — receive the all-consuming joy of union with Him. Recall what the author of Hebrews says in another part of his letter: "With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us, we too should throw off everything that hinders us, especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started. Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection. For the sake of the joy which was still in the future, He endured the cross, disregarded the shameful of it, and then took His place at the right hand of the throne of God" [see Hebrews 12:1-3].

The entitled see themselves as the center of the world. They presume that God agrees — or at least will close an eye — to their selfish existence. The Christian realizes that Jesus Christ is the Center of the Universe. We don't presume we will have a heavenly reward. We don't claim that we are entitled to eternal glory. We just fix our eyes on Jesus, live His Life, and follow Him wherever He leads us.

—taken from the writings for Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino, which appear on the internet.

WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR?

Jesus says: "Try to come in through the narrow door" [Luke 13:22-30]. Well, once we get to that narrow door, what will be waiting for us on the other side? In other words, what is heaven like? That's a question we would all like to have answered, wouldn't we? In Luke's Gospel, Jesus actually gives some indication of what heaven will be like. He speaks as usual in homely pictures. There will be feasting; we will meet with our ancestors; and there will be some surprises.

There will be feasting. That's not a new idea with Jesus. Isaiah the prophet had said the same thing. He had said that there would be abundance of food and drink and all the world would come to God's holy mountain to live in peace and happiness where there would be no more war, not even preparation for war [see Isaiah 25]. It was a beautiful picture and Jesus picks it up to describe heaven in other places as a wedding feast or a great banquet. Everyone who comes through that narrow door will enjoy all that a feast conjures up — good company, relaxation, satisfaction, the mood of celebration. All in all, a wonderful time to be had by all.

Then we will be with our ancestors. The people Jesus was talking to had a strong sense of ancestry, and so he offers them the very appealing picture of meeting up with their great ancestors in the faith — Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets. It offers us the hope of meeting again our own departed family and friends as well as our forebears who passed on to us the gifts of life and faith down through the centuries. I don't know about you, but I look forward to meeting many of these people. I find it exciting to think I'll be able to talk with Plato and Aristotle, St. Augustine and Shakespeare — and of course, Jesus and his mother Mary, and Saint Joseph. I have questions for all of them, and it will probably take all eternity just to listen to them all and enjoy what they have to say.

But then there is that third picture. Jesus tells us there will be some surprises there. We may find ourselves sitting down at that heavenly banquet next to people we never expected to see, and on the other hand there may be some who do not make it through that narrow door. What Jesus says is not a threat — it's a warning. He tells us not to be complacent, and not too sure of ourselves — and particularly not to judge others. God alone can read the heart and the deepest motives of the mind. God alone can perfectly judge the response we have made to the graces offered and the difficult



ENTITLEMENT, PRESUMPTION, AND THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP:

A good place to begin is a little discussion of the concept of entitlement. There are certain things that we are entitled to have. The Declaration of Independence asserts that all people are entitled to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Certainly, all children are entitled to the basic care they need to grow from infants to young adults. In our work, many of us earn benefits such as vacation time, social security, and a pension — we are entitled to these. Sadly, many people act entitled — even though they have done nothing to earn special privileges. Some people are just plain rude as they make excessive demands on others. Some very well-off people treat all others as their servants. At the other end of the spectrum, some people feel that the world owes them a living even though they refuse to work — they think they are entitled. Many a parent has had to have a serious discussion with his or her Teen as to whether or not the Teen is entitled to have a car just because he or she has turned 16 or 17.

I have met priests who feel that they can make unlimited demands on others just because they are priests — they feel entitled. Many marriages have never become permanent unions of life and love because one or both of the people felt entitled to take and not responsible to give. I am sure you all have had to deal with people who carry on the air that the world owes them a living, owes them respect, and so forth.

When a person whose life revolves around his or her own sense of entitlement considers his or her relationship with God — or lack thereof — entitlement becomes the sin of presumption. This is quite common. There are many people who refuse to serve God, refuse to live Godly lives, refuse to worship, and yet, at death, presume that they and those like them are entitled to full union with God. When one of them dies, their relatives and friends say: “He or she is in heaven now.” Jesus speaks about the sin of presumption in Luke’s Gospel [13:22-30]. Some people are not willing to make any sacrifices for the Kingdom of God. They have plenty of opportunity throughout their lives, but they ignore the call to follow Christ, the narrow way; instead they choose the wide path — the pagan way, the way of the “everybody is doing it” crowd. When they knock on the Master of the House’s door, it is too late. The door has been shut. Their lives on earth are over. They demand entrance into heaven claiming that the Lord lived among them and taught in their community. They feel entitled to enter into His Eternal Presence. But they have presumed His Mercy would be there for them without their ever lifting a finger to serve Him. Instead they hear the Master saying: “Depart from me you evildoers.”

When we act entitled — when we make presumptions on the mercy of God — it is because we have not fully recognized what it means to be a Christian. We have not embraced the cost of discipleship. To be a Christian means that we are willing to take up our crosses, deny ourselves, and follow the Lord. To be a Christian means that we are willing to endure whatever the pagan world throws at us rather than walk away from the Lord. Examples of this would be: “You’re the only one at work, in the neighborhood, at school, who isn’t doing this,” they claim — lying by the way. “Perhaps, it would be better if you don’t go to our party. We really don’t want someone who isn’t going to be part of the fun,” they claim — deciding that sin is fun. Standing for the truth, standing for the Lord’s way, is difficult — it is the narrow gate. This is the way to the Lord.

Sacrificing ourselves for others is also difficult. Making time for someone who is hurting, someone who is infirm, someone who is lonely, means denying ourselves the small breaks we have in our busy lives. But these acts of charity are life giving if our lives are centered on the Lord. I have never met anyone who has regretted sacrificing himself or herself for others. Instead, those who choose the narrow gate — the way of giving instead of taking — will always respond: “I got so much more out of that than I gave.” There are tremendous gifts showered upon us every time we embrace discipleship — no matter what its cost. Listen to what the author of the Letter to the Hebrews tells us: “Lift up your drooping hands and shore up your weak knees” [Hebrews 12:5-13]. We need to stop complaining about what it costs to

**THIS IS ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH:**

I heard a story about a man in Liverpool. He was a huge fan of the local soccer team. In fact, his life revolved around his team’s fortunes. Someone asked him if he considered soccer a matter of life or death. “No,” he said indignantly, “soccer is much more important than that!”

Some people in Cleveland probably feel the same about the Browns. They, of course, know that they are exaggerating. But today in Luke’s Gospel, we do encounter something more important than life or death — namely, where we will spend eternity — the question of eternal life or eternal death.

A man asks Jesus: “Lord, will only a few people be saved” [Luke 13:22-30]? Will only a few people get to heaven, or will almost everyone make it? Part of Jesus’ response favors an optimistic answer — Jesus speaks about people coming “from east and west, north and south to recline at the table in the kingdom of God.” People can easily hear that and conclude that it is fairly easy to get into heaven. It seems like a person would have to foul up “big time” in order to wind up in hell. That is a comforting view.

However, Jesus says something else: “Strive to enter by the narrow gate.” He speaks also speaks about people who thought they had it made who are being locked out. Jesus wants you and me to consider the possibility that we might not be saved. Cardinal Hans Urs von Balthasar — one of the gentlest of all theologians — put it this way: “It is indispensable that every individual Christian be confronted, in the greatest seriousness, with the possibility of their becoming lost.”

The possibility of being eternally lost is even more important than life itself. We can see it in the life of St. Francis de Sales. When he was a young man, he went through a time of terrible anguish. He had the strong impression of being excluded from the saved — of being destined for eternal damnation. One afternoon in January, Francis entered a church. He knelt in front of an image of Our Lady and made an act of total abandonment to God. He threw himself on the mercy of God, and insisted that he would love God — no matter where he might wind up after death. His fear left him, and when he stood up, he later wrote, his anguish fell from him “like scales from a leper.” He felt re-born.

Francis de Sales entered the seminary, and as a priest — and later as a bishop — he brought a significant part of Europe back into the Catholic Faith. When people met him and listened to him speak, he communicated to them the seriousness of this life — that each person has to make a choice — a choice more important than life or death.

Jesus invites us to make that choice today. He warns that the gate is narrow, that some who seem to be in first place now, will wind up last. And the opposite is also true. In the words of our author to the Letter to the Hebrews: “Strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees. Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart” [Hebrews 12:5-13]. What is at stake is something more important than life or death.

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

CHAPEL ENVELOPES:

There are many ways that you can support our Holy Cross Mission and support Our Lady Chapel. You can place your offering at the door of the chapel as you enter; you can use our on-line donation link; or you can mail in your offerings to the Chapel itself — whatever best serves your needs. If you need a supply of envelopes, please pick them up off the table in the Narthex of the Chapel when you come to Mass. Or you can call the office or stop in to request them. **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, August 13]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 415.00
Offerings-----[Sunday, August 14]----- \$ 470.00
Offerings-----[Monday, August 15]-----[Assumption]----- \$ 70.00

A CALL TO SHINE IN HOLINESS — NOT GREATNESS:

Although born in a Catholic household, I grew up with a limited understanding of my faith and began with what felt like a one-sided and half-baked relationship with God. So, all throughout my childhood and teenage years, I practiced my faith inconsistently and poorly. Admittedly, my approach to prayer was transactional — I seldom turned to Him and only did so when I absolutely needed to. For a long time, I only saw God as my Creator — not as my Father because I feared Him. This initial impression refrained me from seeking God the Father for who He truly was and is. As a result, my prayer life was dull and repetitive — it consisted of reciting prayers I memorized, asking God to grant some requests, apologizing for my sins, and thanking Him for answered prayers once in a blue moon. In hindsight, I never really showed up to get to know Him, shared how my day went, nor spent time sitting with Him in silence — waiting to hear the sound of His voice. Instead, I was preoccupied with meeting societal expectations and surviving the hustle-and-bustle lifestyle my rigorous international school set me up for. Overwhelmed by this highly-pressurized environment, I was in this constant pursuit of approval and affirmation, which fed my heart with insatiability and insecurity.

God turned the page for me dramatically in 2015. He decided that it was time to start a new chapter, and free me from the toxic bubble I comfortably resided in and wilted in spiritually. That year, I took the leap of faith and surrendered my education and future to God. Calling me to pursue this challenge of taking the year off, God made my life path more pronounced and known to me through my father's vision. My father recalled that a heavenly body appeared right before him with angels at each side of the figure. It was St. Martin de Porrés — the patron saint of social justice and racial harmony. As he stared intently into my father's eyes, St. Martin seemed to proclaim that he is to be my patron saint. Relieved and thrilled to know that I have a purpose larger than myself, I responded to my father's divine revelation by opting for a gap year and extending my passion for art to a nearby community center for children. This opportunity made me realize that there really is more to life than one's credentials — more specifically one's education and career. What a liberating epiphany this was for me then! Even if I pushed my education back by a year, what I gained was far greater and more lasting — an intellect, will and passion that stem from God's truth, goodness and beauty. Eventually, I was admitted to the most fitting program, which embodied my heart of service in 2016 — Education Studies at NYU Steinhardt!

During my second and third year of university, I departed from my faith because I was struggling to juggle prayer time and attending Mass with school work and a volatile long-distance relationship. I was so focused on excelling in my studies and maintaining my relationship with my former boyfriend that God was no longer my top priority. This caught up to me, and gradually everything I was hoping to salvage and control plummeted, impacting my former relationship the most. Because God was not at the center, I lost my center. Since things did not go my way — a gaping hole was left in my heart, oozing with disappointment and resentment. Out of anger, I shut God out and developed this warped sense of fairness and justice. In an attempt to rise above all this alone, I resorted to fitness and worked out every single day in order to feel better about myself. I hoped that breaking a sweat and releasing endorphins would cleanse my system, and heal my shattered heart.

Although instantaneous in uplifting my mood every so often, my spirit longed for something more. About a year into my junior year, I grew in spiritual curiosity once again. The quest to seek and find God in my life resumed. So, I reached out to some of my most devout friends and mentors and asked them questions about faith, forgiveness, and healing. These questions led to more questions and even new, unexpected friendships. One day, early in 2019, God spoke to me loud and clear when I decided to contact the Head Chaplain of NYU's Catholic Center. As I recounted my father's dream to the chaplain,



he blurted out that he was, in fact, called into the priesthood under the influence of St. Martin.

This was no coincidence — this was providence! The resurgence of St. Martin in my life was such a profound turning point that I could not help but break down afterwards. God's outpouring love was made so visible that I could not "unsee" it. This was God's generosity at play — Him giving me another chance, calling me to return to His Kingdom — My Prodigal Son Moment. Ever since, I have learned to stop questioning the miraculous and the supernatural. Saint Martin's intercession led me to a faith-based community at NYU, which became not just a space to study and freely practice my faith in, but my second family.

2020 — the year that reinvigorated my faith — renewed me with God's grace and truth. With COVID-19 shutting down universities, I experienced a rough last semester in the confines of my sister's one-person studio. Three months of self-isolation and social distancing prodded me to revisit my purpose in life. In the midst of an eternity of uncertainty, I came across *The Chosen* TV series. And this timely onscreen revival of the Bible moved me to tears. Jonathan Roumie — who played Christ — portrayed the Lord in an authoritative, yet tender, way that my spiritual curiosity intensified and transformed into spiritual thirst. I now understand that this was an invitation to grow in holiness and a call to shine alongside Him. Disciplining me so that I can mature in spirit and truth, God permitted that I experience conflict and pain so that I may learn to love in times of difficulty and difference — not just when it is easy and convenient. After all, I cannot evangelize what I despise.

Still acquiring the knowledge and wisdom to evangelize, my mind and heart continue to grow in docility, allowing God's light to descend and sanctify me. Now that I have completed my studies, I can finally devote the rest of my life to God, seeking and serving Him in my own little way. As a Catholic woman and creative, I hope to inspire others to be vulnerable and to always strive. Moving forward, my goal is to cultivate authentic friendships, divine intimacy, as well as clarity and conviction for spiritual multiplication in digital spaces where millennials linger. —taken from the writings of Kate Cabigao, a young adult

LIFE TEEN and EDGE:

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

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



LIFE TEEN



EDGE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	2 Thessalonians 1:1-12, Matthew 23:13-22
Tuesday:	2 Thessalonians 2:1-17, Matthew 23:23-26
Wednesday:	Revelation 21:9-14, John 1:45-51
Thursday:	1 Corinthians 1:1-9, Matthew 24:42-51
Friday:	1 Corinthians 1:17-25, Matthew 25:1-13
Saturday:	1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Matthew 24:14-30

22nd Week in Ordinary Time: Sirach 3:17-29, Hebrews 12:18-24, Luke 14:1-14