

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ A Prayer from a Faithful Heart ~**

Lord Jesus,  
use me  
for whatever purpose,  
and in whatever way,  
You may require.

Here is my poor heart —  
an empty vessel —  
fill it with your grace.  
Here is my sinful  
and troubled soul;  
Awaken it,  
and refresh it,  
with your love.  
Take my heart  
for your abode,  
My mouth  
to spread abroad  
The glory of your name;  
My love  
and all my powers,  
for the advancement  
of your believing people.

Never allow the steadfastness  
and confidence  
of my faith  
to waver,  
so that at all times  
I may be enabled  
from the heart to say:  
Jesus needs me,  
and I am his.  
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.*

**PET BLESSING and COFFEE & DONUTS**

**Our Pet Blessing and our gathering for Coffee & Donuts was postponed to this Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.** So please join us after Mass, to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi by bringing your pet, or a photo of your pet, to be blessed. We will meet outside in shrine area [right outside the Chapel]. **Then stay for some Coffee & Donuts and some time together!** Doggie donuts will also be available!

**BLANKET SUNDAY IS THIS WEEKEND:**

The weekend of October 8-9 marks the annual Blanket Sunday Collection to aid the needy. The collection is sponsored by the Diocesan St. Vincent de Paul Society. This year, as in the past few, the collection will be a **cash only** collection. We will gratefully accept your cash donations and do the shopping for you, making your money go even further with bulk purchases of blankets and other items needed by low income families. So give someone a blanket for the winter — and give yourself a warm feeling! **Use the special Blanket Sunday Envelope [on the table] or mark your envelope Blanket Sunday Collection** and we will take it from there. You may also donate on line at

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

**Faith Education meets this Sunday, October 9<sup>nd</sup> at 8:45 AM.** As has been our custom in the past, our Faith Education Classes are followed by our 10 AM Mass which is held in the chapel. **If you have any questions, please contact Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560].** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.

**WOMEN'S DAY OF RETREAT — THIS TUESDAY:**

**Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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].**

**LIVE LIFE:**

I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding. —John O'Donahue

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For Charles Graham, father of Linda Sipos.
- For Kellen Leach ['10], brother of Michaela Leach ['14]
- For Sister Donna Galetovich, S.N.D.
- For Edward Battaglia, father of Alison Battaglia ['86], who died a few days ago
- For Sister John Anthony Linton, C.S.C.
- For Edmund Turk, father of Elizabeth Turk Dittmar ['92]
- For William Coleman
- For Laurie Strouse
- For Carol White, mother of former Middle School Director, Mrs. Brockway, and grandmother of Susan ['86] and Michael ['89] Brockway.
- For Dorothy McGuire.

**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.

**BEING GRATEFUL:**

Let's ask the Lord to help us be the one who returns to give thanks. Luke's Gospel [17:11-19] has the key to taking the step toward gratitude. It's not easy. Only one in ten returned to thank Jesus. Gratitude takes effort, but it brings wonderful results. When I think of gratitude, I think of G.K. Chesterton. He was grateful for things that most people take for granted. Once he said: "If my children wake up on Christmas morning and have someone to thank for putting candy in their stocking, have I no one to thank for putting two feet in mine?"



Let us all ask the Lord to help us be the one who returns to give thanks — "Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands: break into song; sing praise" [Psalm 98:4]

—taken from the writings of Father Phil Bloom, 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.

**MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME:**

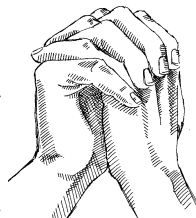
Let us make up for lost time. Let us give to God the time that remains to us. —St. Alphonsus Liguori

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

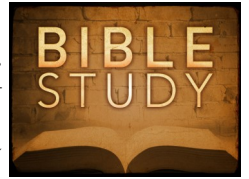
**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Judy Collins, aunt of Chief Academic Officer, Elizabeth Edmondson, great-aunt of Mollie [‘21] and Abbie [‘23] Edmondson, who is undergoing treatment for brain cancer.
- For Melanie Lowrey, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Phil Patrick, former Gilmour employee, and currently an employee of Archbishop Hoban HS, who is recovering from amputation surgery.
- For Madeleine Popp, mother of Gilmour CFO, Kathy Popp, who is ill.
- For Sabrina Kumar, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Marina McCarter, grandmother of Aaron [‘25] and Mason [‘28] McCarter, who is ill
- For Joe Weber [‘52], who is seriously ill.
- 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 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 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 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 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, and great-aunt of Mackenzie DeCrane [‘36], 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.



**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup>:**

**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.** Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word.



**Our topic: Evil and God’s redemptive love.**

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, October 9: 28 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, October 10:	NO MASS
Tuesday, October 11: Pope St. John XXIII	NO MASS
Wednesday, October 12:	NO MASS
Thursday, October 13	NO MASS
Friday, October 14:	NO MASS
Saturday, October 15: 29 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, October 16: 29 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

**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.

**WISDOM:**

We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders.

—Desmond Tutu



**A REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:**

The gift of humility frees us to tell ourselves and others our true condition. Humility is honesty and such truthfulness will eventually bring about a healing somewhere in our lives. Another gift that is important is faith — faith enables us to realize that what has been hurtful in our pasts does not have to accompany us into our futures. Physical healing may take time — and often those injuries or debilitations remain no matter how intensely we pray. The interior hurts — especially our angers at our not being physically healed — can, with faith, be tempered, softened, and even pass. When we allow faith to heal such angers and frustrations, the result is the freedom to be grateful. Being grateful is only the beginning, Jesus came to free us all from and free us for the new, the adventure of praise and trust.

The Scripture Readings for this 28<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time begin with a beautiful story. Naaman is a commander of a foreign king to whom the Lord granted a victory. Naaman has leprosy, and his wife's servant girl — who was taken from Israel earlier — tells her mistress that if Naaman would go to the "man of God" in Israel, Naaman would be healed. Naaman gets permission from his king and goes in search of Elisha [2Kings 5:1-20].

Naaman is simply told by Elisha to bathe in the river Jordan. Naaman refuses — thinking that the rivers in his own home land would be better than the Jordan in this foreign land of Israel. He begins returning home, but his servants beg him to just "do it". He reconsiders and bathes seven times and is cured.

Naaman is humbled and gratefully to Elisha. He wants to give something to Elisha in response, but Elisha refuses. So Naaman begs for two carloads of dirt from the holy land of Israel to take back to his own land — thereby enabling him to be in union with the God of Israel and the God of his healing. It is a great story.

Luke's Gospel relates a more familiar story which has an important twist [Luke 17:11-19]. Ten lepers shout for healing, and when they receive this gift, only one returns shouting his praise. The twist is more complicated than the fact that the healed person is a Samaritan — a foreigner. All of this needs to be understood in terms of Jesus' continued journey to Jerusalem — the apostles will learn that they themselves, are outcasts, will be rejected, and exiled from their Jewish pasts.

As I read through Luke's Gospel for this 28<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, my initial reaction was one that focused on Jesus and his work to heal those who needed healing, and especially those who seem to have the faith to ask for it. So, my initial take-away was my usual: "if you need help, pray to God and ask for it — and then be thankful," type of conclusion. But as I sat with this reading for a bit, my thoughts kept coming back to the nine who were healed but didn't go back to give thanks.

Again, my initial reaction to the non-action of the nine was pretty superficial — it centered on frustration and maybe even a little anger as to why they seemed to be so ungrateful for the healing they received. But there seems to be another message that I should be paying attention to in this reading.

If I put myself in their shoes — what would I have done if I were one of the nine? Would I have gone back to Jesus? Would I have followed his orders to show myself to the priests — and then what? Would I have just gone on my way and done neither? Would I have experienced some type of group-pressure to not go back to Jesus and to stay within the safety net of the group for some other reason? To be honest, I'm not sure what I would have done. But it has made me think about this in my own life.

One particular question comes to mind as I think about how I act in situations where I want something is, "what are my true intentions?" And in the context of this gospel reading, I wonder what the intentions were of the nine who asked to be healed but didn't go back to show their gratitude? Because they were physically ill, they probably wanted relief from their physical pain. And, because of the kind of illness they had — that being one that is socially unacceptable — they were probably also

**HAVE WE BECOME TOO ACCUSTOMED TO BLESSINGS?**

The Old Testament Scripture Passage for this 28<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time is one of Scripture's most significant passages [2 Kings 5:1-18,20]. It not only shows us how Jewish faith changed through the centuries, it also challenges us to live up to the unchanging ideals of that faith. Three points.

First, this particular sacred author — along with all other biblical authors — insists that God's actions are never limited to just one group of individuals — even if they're God's Chosen People. Naaman is a Gentile — a Syrian army officer — a frequent enemy of the Jews. He only comes to Elisha seeking a cure of his leprosy because his Jewish slave girl told him about the healing powers of this 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE prophet and encouraged him to make the politically delicate trip. Nine hundred years later, Jesus would get into trouble with some in his Nazareth synagogue audience when he reminded them that God ignored many Jewish lepers to take care of this non-Jew [see Luke 4:27].

Second, though it flies in the face of our Catholic tradition of clergy receiving stipends and stole fees, the II Kings author is adamant about Elisha's refusal to accept any sort of gift from Naaman. "As the Lord lives whom I serve," the prophet insists, "I will not take it." The reason is simple and irrefutable: if we're rewarded for channeling God's actions, it would appear they're our actions and not God's. I don't remember that law ever being changed in Scripture.

Third, there's a theology in the Naaman story that we've gone beyond — the belief that God is a territorial God. He is obligated only to take care of people who reside in Canaan. Take one step across the border and you're in the domain of another god or goddess. That's why Naaman asks to take "two mule-loads of earth" back with him to Damascus. We presume he's going to spread that dirt over his property, creating an extra-territorial piece of Canaan, obligating God to take care of anyone who lives and worships on that soil. He says as much: "I will no longer offer holocaust or sacrifice to any other god except to the Lord." The sixth century BCE Babylonian Exile would put an end to that restrictive theology. Jews forced to live hundreds of miles from the Promised Land eventually began to experience God's presence and power in a country that technically "belonged" to other gods. No longer was God limited to just one piece of geography.

Luke's Jesus mirrors some of the Naaman/Elisha story [Luke 17:11-19]. Though the leprosy Samaritan isn't a Gentile, he's regarded as being outside "acceptable Judaism." His heresy excludes him under pain of death from even going into the sacred confines of the Jerusalem temple. Obviously the God whom Jesus channels and has become can work beyond the restrictions with which people limit him. Not only that, but the heretic alone returns to thank Jesus for the cure. The other nine orthodox recipients of God's favor seem to have forgotten their manners.

Perhaps that's one of the reasons the unknown author of II Timothy zeroes in on our obligation to die with Jesus [2 Timothy 2:8-14]. He's convinced that only those who have died with him will live with him. It doesn't make any difference who we are or where we are, the one essential, never changing aspect of our faith is a willingness to die with Jesus by giving ourselves to others. No future theology will ever contradict that. No matter who we are or where we are, we're expected to always pull that off. What an insight!

Yet, I suspect you, like me, rarely thank the historical Jesus for sharing that insight with us. We just take it for granted and walk away from the person who died for us.

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

**EFFORT:**

Effort is one of the things that gives meaning to life. Effort means you care about something, that something is important to you and you are willing to work for it.

—Carol Dweck

Psalms give us an apt language to help us raise mind and heart to God.

What's so unfortunate is that, most often, because we misunderstand prayer, we stay away from it just when we most need it. We only try to pray when we feel good, centered, reverent, and worthy of praying. But instead we can try to pray precisely when we most need it — that is, when we are feeling bad, irreverent, sinful, emotionally and sexually preoccupied, and unworthy of praying.

All of these feelings can be our entry into prayer. No matter the headache or the heartache, we only need to lift it up to God.

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

## THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE:

An African-American hymn sings: “Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Lord! I just want to thank you, Lord!” This hymn ought to be a favorite of everyone because the words reflect the attitude of gratitude at the heart of Catholic Christian life — “Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God. It is right and just” The Dominican mystic, Meister Eckhart, put it this way: “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.”



But gratitude seems to have been on the decline in our culture over recent years. The *Today Show* did an experiment, wherein one of their staff stood at the entrance of Rockefeller Plaza and held the door for people as they entered or exited the building. Fewer than thirty percent of people said: “Thank you.” Some people did look into the eyes of the person who held the door and smiled, but the majority of people simply walked through without any response. That experience should lead us to ask: Is it because people take courteous acts for granted? Is it because people feel entitled to simple acts of courtesy like this? Is it because people are too preoccupied with hurt or worry? What is the reason?

Jesus heals ten lepers [Luke 17:11-19]. Only one — a Samaritan, a foreigner — returns to thank him. Jesus said: “Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?” Some Scripture scholars give the other nine the benefit of the doubt by noting that Jesus told them to show themselves to the priests, so that they could be readmitted to the synagogue and the life of the community. A Samaritan could not have gone to a Jewish priest. That can be a fair assessment. However, Jesus healed them, not the priest. They could have returned to thank Jesus first, and then gone to the priest as required by Jewish law. The foreigner exhibits the attitude of gratitude to which we are called.

Naaman — also a foreigner — is healed by plunging seven times into a river in the land of the Jews [2 Kings 5:1-20]. He returns to the prophet, Elisha, offering a gift to show his gratitude. But Elisha did not heal Naaman — God did. Elisha does not accept the gift. Naaman then expresses gratitude with a greater gift — offering sacrifice to the Lord, the God of Israel. An attitude of gratitude changed Naaman completely.

St. Paul tells us to “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead” [2 Timothy 2:8-14]. Why? To remember what Jesus has done for us so that we might express our gratitude for the gift of God's saving love by being faithful to him and his teaching. I ask myself: How grateful am I? Do I expect God's love and live as if I'm entitled to it? Do I take God's love for granted and forget to thank God each day for the gift of life? Am I so preoccupied with hurt, anxiety, or fear on some days — especially when evil seems stronger than good — that I give up on God? Saying or singing: “Thank you, Lord,” snaps me out of it and reminds me that each day, each breath, and our very lives, are a gift from God. Saying “thank you” takes so little effort, but produces words and deeds that can make a big difference.

This past week on the news, there was a story about Alex, a six-year-old boy who wrote President Obama. Alex saw images of another boy, alone in an ambulance in Syria. He wrote: “Can you please go get him and bring him to my home? We'll be waiting for you guys with flags, flowers, and balloons. We will give him a family and he will be our brother”. St. Francis de Sales taught: “Whatsoever happens, never let go; hold steadfastly to God, in peace, trusting His Everlasting Love for you.” If we hold steadfastly to God — faithful to the One who has showered us with saving love in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ — we will be like Naaman, and offer ourselves to God. We will be grateful — like the healed Samaritan leper — for God's healing touch at all times. And Alex's example can motivate us to live the words we pray: “Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God. It is right and just.” Thank you, Lord.

—taken from the writings of Father Paul Colloton, O.S.F.S., which appear on the internet.

looking for relief from their social pains as well. But were their intentions only to find personal relief? In other words, did they ask to be healed with only their personal interests in mind so they could move on to other personal interests?

Being healed of leprosy would most certainly be a life changing experience that would allow for a more “normal” life rather than being an outcast of society. But, being healed would also make room for a greater depth dimension to life as well. It would allow the person being healed to be social again with others and contribute to the community in ways they were not able to while having the illness — something that is outside of and larger than themselves. Being healed not only would give them relief from their personal pain, but also allow them to be part of the whole again, which is important and necessary for every member of the community, not just those being healed.

From this perspective, it makes me think of what my intentions are when I am longing for something. Am I only thinking about my own superficial and personal needs, or does this longing have greater depth? If I get what I want, can I use that gift to transcend to something larger than myself and that which recognizes my place within the whole for the good of not only me, but the whole as well?

If I look to specific examples in my life, this further makes me think more specifically about my intentions for my longing to attend mass and to receive the Eucharist. Is my intention to somehow earn points towards my own personal salvation project — honestly, I think sometimes the answer is “yes”. Or, is there a deeper aspect to my longing, one that transcends beyond my personal and seemingly superficial needs? Does my participation in Mass and the Eucharist somehow allow me to more fully connected to the whole of my church community, my neighbors — even those outside my faith tradition — and society at large? I think it does and I think I know this in the depths of my heart. But most of the time I feel like I go to Mass because it's my “obligation.” Recognizing that the Eucharist has a depth dimension that allows me to recognize that I am part of the whole of all that is perhaps is the true longings I feel for Mass and the intension of this longings that I often miss through my mostly unconscious mind.



So the question arises: which person am I? What are my intentions in my relationship with my spouse and kids? What are my intentions in the work I do? What are my intentions in my relationship with God? Are they superficial or do they carry a greater dimension of depth that I should be more conscious of?

The one Samaritan who returned to Jesus to give thanks seems to be conscious of this transcendent moment. By his “thank you” action he is not only showing his gratitude for being healed, but is also showing how he can see the bigger than himself picture of life. And for that Jesus responds with: “your faith has saved you.”

Living thanks is more important than giving thanks. The Samaritan returns — he represents the universal embrace which Jesus has come to share. The other nine are healed and represent the apostles who will be scattered as Jerusalem approaches. They too will be gathered again and form the beginning of the “Kingdom” about which we will hear in the following weeks. Being members of Jesus' kingdom will involve being considered as lepers and Jesus will be the one who heals. Those who come to the awareness that they are lepers will find healing in Jesus. They will be grateful living the healing touch extended through them to others.

Naaman and the leper from Samaria are non-belongers — they both leave their state of alienation and experience being healed through coming to the “Holy Land” of God. Naaman gives thanks by taking some of the Holy Ground back with him. The cured-leper returns to Jesus as “Holy Land” and gives thanks for now belonging.



Perhaps the major difference has to do with “humility”. Jesus asks about the other “nine”. They were not ungrateful, but more likely not humble enough to admit that once they were outside — different, unwelcomed. They would have to live with their pasts into their futures. The “Kingdom” is for those who stand in their earthliness which has been blessed by the “Holy Land” who is Jesus. The Pharisees stand always at a distance greater than that of the lepers when they sought cleansing. It is not so much about who gave thanks and who did not. Jesus is dedicated to calling all of humanity away from the leprosy of self-righteous pharisaic posturing. Jesus is the Land upon which, and within which we do not posture, but take positions of living our healed conditions.

The “nine” represent most Christians — they enjoy being freed from leprosy, but lose contact with the reality of their having been outsiders, alienated, defined by something negative. They might be grateful, but they are not sure grateful for what.

The “one” returnee represents each of us when coming to our senses; we get in touch with what it means to be redeemed by Jesus. We get in touch with our soul’s sicknesses. We touch into how disordered, depressed, angry, and/or violent we once were and immersing ourselves seven or more times in the river of the redeeming Jesus, we both enjoy the freedom from and the freedom for the living out of his touch.

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

### THANKSGIVING CHANGES US:

We are all quite conscious of the fact that only one of the cured lepers returned to give thanks to Jesus [Luke 17:11-19]. And we are conscious, too, that the one returning was a Samaritan — one of those people despised by the pious and orthodox Jews of Jesus’s time. But have we given any thought at all to what happened to the other nine?

Well, what did happen to them? Did their families receive them back into their homes, or was there a lingering fear that they were still diseased and so they faced a frosty and unwelcome return home? Did their children recognize them? Did those who were cured experience greater devotion to God? Were they more consciously religious in how they lived their lives? Did any of them become followers of Christ and join the early Christians of their day?

We don’t know the answers to these questions. But we can have answers to a question I want to put to you now. My question is: What are the effects of ingratitude? What happens to us when we are ungrateful?

There are people who are simply ingrates — people who take, take, take... and never give. They would be startled to be told that we — all of us — need to give thanks. Giving thanks is far more important than we think — something much deeper than merely being polite. When we look closely at the lives of ungrateful people — people who take for granted everything that has been given them, people who give little or nothing to others — we see a progressive journey in stages into the hell of isolation, loneliness, and eventual bitterness.

In the first stage, we find people who simply turn off others. The “turn off” has a double effect. On the one hand, being self-centered, they pay scant attention to others. They are insensitive to the wants, needs, and feelings of others. They can be harsh and unaware that they treat others rudely. On the other hand, they find that others around them shun them in return. They are simply not pleasant to be around. As the old truism goes: “You get what you give.” In this case if you give the cold shoulder to others, you’ll get the same treatment in return.

The next thing to go is their sense of wonder. Ungrateful people expect everything to be perfect. They make their own lives and the lives of those around them miserable with their demands and their complaining. Ever notice that the word miser and the word miserable are interconnected? Miserly people, ungrateful and grasping people, are miserable people.

Descending deeper into hell we learn that people who have no gratitude in their souls never enjoy what they already have. Nothing gives them joy or happiness. Life, for them, is painted in shades of

### PRAYING WHEN WE DON’T FEEL LIKE IT:

Most of us find it difficult to pray. We want to pray, make resolutions to pray, but never quite get around to actually praying. Why? It’s not so much that we are insincere, ill-motivated, or lazy; it’s just that invariably we are too tired, too distracted, too restless, too emotionally preoccupied, too angry, too busy, or feel ourselves too distant from God to feel that we can actually pray. We have too many headaches, and too many heartaches. And so, we come home after a long day and simply can’t work up the energy to pray, and instead call a friend, watch television, rest, putter round the house, or do anything to soothe our tiredness and wind down from the pressures of life, except pray.

But how can we pray when both our bodies and our hearts are chronically stressed and on over-load? By understanding what prayer really is. Prayer, as one of its oldest definitions puts it, is “lifting mind and heart to God.” That sounds simple, but it is hard to do. Why?

Because we have the wrong notion of what it means. We unconsciously nurse the idea that we can only pray when we are not distracted, not bored, not angry, not emotionally and sexually preoccupied, and not caught up in our many heartaches and headaches so that we can give proper attention to God in a reverent and loving way. God then is like a parent who only wants to see us on our best behavior, and we only go into his presence when we have nothing to hide, are joy-filled, and can give God praise and honor. Because we don’t understand what prayer is, we treat God as an authority figure or a visiting dignitary — namely, as someone to whom we don’t tell the real truth. We don’t tell the authority what is really going on in our lives but what should, ideally, be going on in them. We tell God what we think he wants to hear.

Because of this we find it difficult to pray with any regularity. What happens is: we go to pray — privately or in church — and we enter into that feeling tired, bored, preoccupied, perhaps even angry at someone. We come to prayer carrying heartaches and headaches of all kinds and we try to bracket what we are actually feeling and instead crank up praise, reverence, and gratitude to God. Of course, it doesn’t work! Our hearts and heads grow distracted because they are preoccupied with something else, our real issues, and we get the sense that what we are doing — trying to pray — is not something we can do right now and we leave it for some other time.

But the problem is not that our prayer is unreal or that the moment isn’t right. The problem is that we are not “lifting mind and heart to God.” We are trying to lift thoughts and feelings which are not our own to God. We aren’t praying out of our own hearts and own heads.

If we take seriously that prayer is “lifting mind and heart to God”, then every feeling and every thought we have is a valid and apt entry into prayer — no matter how irreverent, unholy, selfish, sexual, or angry that thought or feeling might seem. Simply put, if you go to pray and you are feeling bored, pray boredom; if you are feeling angry, pray anger; if you are sexually preoccupied, pray that preoccupation; if you are feeling murderous, pray murder; and if you are feeling full of fervor and want to praise and thank God, pray fervor. Every thought or feeling is a valid entry into prayer. What’s important is that we pray what’s inside of us and not what we think God would like to find inside of us.

That’s why the Psalms are so apt for prayer and why the Church has chosen them as the basis for so much of its liturgical prayer. They run the whole gamut of feeling — from praising God with our every breath to wishing to bash our enemies’ heads against a stone. From praise to murder — with everything in between! That is indeed the range of our thoughts and feelings. The Psalms are a keyboard upon which we can play every song of our lives — and our songs aren’t always all happy or pious. The

mercy. They didn't specify what mercy meant. Was that their normal cry to any passersby? Were they asking for food, or alms, or did they think he could heal them? Did they know who Jesus was? Without touching or even coming near them, Jesus sent them to show themselves to the priest. Mysteriously — without any additional action on Jesus' part — without any other words or action, "as they were going, they were cleansed."

Considering it carefully, it seems that their cure came not from a touch or a word, but from obedience — which is a kind of faith. Their journey toward fulfilling the law brought them healing. Only one of them discerned something more. The other nine seem to be ordinary religious people, doing what they were told to do. Certainly, they were happy, but we know nothing more about them — not even if they were Jews or Samaritans.

Then there was the one. This Samaritan realized that he was offered more than a cure. He had not only received the mercy he had requested, but he discerned that something more was in the offering. Instead of going to the priest, he returned like someone crazed with delight, shouting God's praises. And what did Jesus do? Instead of dancing with him, Jesus asked: "What about the rest?" Was he honestly wondering what had happened to them? He said: "Ten were cleansed, were they not?" Was that a statement or a question?

Was Jesus lamenting that the deeper message — the mustard seed, reign-of-God grace — had reached only one of the group? Did he see one out of 10 as the poor grade his ministry was earning at that point? Did he find it hard to rejoice over the one who understood what he offered while the rest would just go on living a normal life?

Finally, Jesus bent over the healed believer at his feet and said: "Rise up. Your faith has saved you."

As Luke tells this story, three distinct things happened to the various lepers. First, as they went to the priest, they all were cleansed — that is, the signs their disease disappeared. Secondly, one realized that he had been "healed" — another way of saying he had been "made whole." Finally, Jesus tells the one: "your faith has saved you" — a word which has more religious than physical connotations. The man who was saved fell at Jesus' feet, singing loud praises, demonstrating that he recognized God acting through Jesus. This man had already received more than a simple cure. Like Naaman the Syrian, whose healing in the waters of the Jordan led him to worship the God of Israel [see 2 Kings 5:1-18,20], this one had undergone a metanoia — a revelation had changed his life. In the words of Pope Francis, he had encountered the joy of the Gospel which, "fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness." He had learned that "with Christ joy is constantly born anew" [see *Evangelii Gaudium*, #1].

That this story encourages us to give thanks to God is a very good thing, but that moral sells the story short. Ten people with leprosy asked to be cleansed. Nine received their health and presumably returned rejoicing to the life from which they had been cut off. The 10<sup>th</sup> man somehow realized that there was more available than he had imagined. He was more than restored — his interaction with Jesus brought him into God's healing presence, the joy of the Gospel.

This incident, told as a story, becomes a parable about prayer. We can ask for what we need and rejoice when we receive it. We can live as ordinary religious people, grateful for what we have. Or, taking Naaman and this believer as our patrons, we can make the subtext of every prayer a plea that we may recognize and be ready to receive the joy God wants to give us. As St. Paul assures us, we are constantly being offered more than we could ask or imagine [2 Timothy 2:8-14]. That's the breadth of the mercy of God.

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



dull gray. They live colorless lives. They are boring, drab, and dreary. There's no color in their character. You can see it in their vacant eyes.

In the next stage of our journey into the abyss of hell, we find those who are never satisfied with anything they have and are never satisfied with anything others around them do. No one is good enough for them because they are no good for anyone else. Peace and contentment are driven from their hearts and souls. They're always agitated, whining, and complaining. They become very disagreeable, argumentative, self-opinionated, self-important, self-righteous, and thoroughly self-centered. Jealousy and competitiveness set in. They're always comparing themselves with others particularly in terms of what they feel they are lacking. They ignore what they have, overlooking the good things that are theirs.

Then they become consumed with getting more. They simply must, they feel, have more and more things. The problem is the more they consume, the less they are satisfied. Consequently, they enter into a frantic rat-race to get acquire more and more money and more and more things. Their garages are littered with junk, full of their unused gadgets and other distractions.

The leprosy of envy is next — a leprosy that eats away at their souls. Jealously, envy, and anger at others consumes their hearts and souls like uncontrolled cancer.

God is forgotten. Did the other nine simply forget about the cures Christ gave them? We don't know. None of us know all that was in or not in their hearts. But ungrateful people eventually end up forgetting about prayer, about worshipping at Mass, about the Sacraments, about their spiritual lives. Finally they forget about God. Forgetfulness, neglect of others, and ingratitude are all interrelated... they're all members of the same family. Blaming God comes next. The ungrateful blame God for not having all the things they want, for not being successful, for not being happy, and for anything and everything that's wrong in their lives.

Finally, ungrateful people eventually fill their empty souls with self-pity. They become self-pitying whiners. They end up living in their own hell of loneliness and isolated bitterness.

The lesson we can learn from all of this is to realize that gratitude — giving thanks, and being thankful people — changes us not God. We don't give thanks in order to change God's mind. The beatitude of thankfulness changes us — it changes our hearts, our outlook on life, and our relationships with others. It's a truth that sets us free. Gratitude is the BE-attitude. It changes how we live. With it we find happiness.

The healing presence of Jesus Christ remains constant. God loves us with an unconditional love. God will never turn His back on us. He is always and forever present to us; He is always for us, giving us His presence, His power, and His love. Even when we feel alienated and estranged from Him, even when we feel He is distant and that we have lost the relationship we once had with Him, He remains present to us in His Holy Spirit.

For it is always our own thinking, our own feelings, and our own attitudes that keep us alien and distant from God. The separation is of our own making. But the quickest, the easiest, and the most effective way back to a close relationship with God is found in giving thanks. It is when we are filled with gratitude that we heal and restore the attitude that opens the floodgates of healing, that removes the cancerous leprosy that consumes us, and that restore us to wholeness, to healing, to health, and to holiness.

"Were not ten made whole?" Jesus asked, "Where are the other nine?" To the one who gave thanks He said: "Go on your way, your faith has saved you." These words of Christ Jesus are spoken not just to a Samaritan of 2,000 years ago. They are spoken to you and to me. That is why we are here to celebrate Eucharist — our prayer of thanksgiving — so we can go on our ways, walking in the glorious freedom of the sons and daughters of God.

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



**THANKFULNESS IN GROWING OLD:**

There are many advantages to having a younger pastor. He would have more energy. He would be more in touch with the cultural issues of teens and young adults. He would probably be willing to take more risks. There would be many advantages. But as it is, most of us have older pastors. That is not all bad. I can think of at least one advantage of having a pastor pushing sixty — he would be able to understand some of the issues that face people in the later stages of life, and he would be able to interpret to those issues in light of the gospel. This is what I would like to do today. So I apologize up front to all the teenagers and young adults, if the issues we discuss today are not your issues. Although I do believe that if you listen, you might find something of value. And I certainly believe that these issues will become more relevant, as you live another twenty, or thirty, or sixty years.

There are challenges to every period of life, but the challenges and the issues that face us in our sixties and seventies and eighties are particularly weighty. It seems that life is back-loaded with troubles. As we approach sixty, we begin to worry about our health. We used to face regular medical check-ups with ease. But now, as those dates approach, there is an increase in anxiety. We know that sooner or later the tests will not be good, and there will be issues which must be addressed.

As we get older, we must learn to say goodbye. We lose the people we love in death. It might start with an associate — someone our own age or younger — but we know that in time it will touch a spouse or a friend on whom our life depends. As we approach these later decades of life, time changes. We begin to realize that our time is limited. When we purchase a new car, we ask ourselves: “How many more times will I do this?” As we leave on vacation, we wonder: “Will I be able to travel in the future?” Even at holiday time, we begin to look forward. How many more Christmases will I celebrate? As we hit our sixties, the horizons of our life begin to shrink, and we can see on those horizons troubles which we know we will soon have to face.

Now clearly there are troubles at every stage of life. But troubles are different in your twenties and thirties. In those years, you face a crisis, push through it, and move on. You move through that difficult job, that economic downturn, that broken ankle. You get back to life as normal. In those years, normal life is a life with infinite horizons. There are no clouds in the sky. As you hit your sixties, the horizons begin to shrink. You realize that even as you deal with one particular trouble, there is another one waiting in the wings. You will soon cope with a death of a parent, the return of your cancer, the diminishing energy and enthusiasm which old age brings. You realize that this is the way that life is going to be from now on. You will not go back to those days when the horizon was infinite and there were no troubles to be seen. You must find a new kind of normal. Now, of course, there will always be new and exciting experiences. But as we age, our options shrink, and we realize that the cards we already hold are the hand we will need to play.

So how do we cope with these shrinking horizons? How do we live this new kind of normal? Only with thankfulness! In Luke’s gospel, Jesus criticizes the nine lepers who do not return to give thanks [Luke 17:11-19]. He criticizes them not because he is personally offended or petty. He criticizes them because he knows that the only foundation to a joyful life is thankfulness. Unless we are thankful, we cannot be happy. Therefore, we must be thankful in every circumstance and every period of life.

We can be thankful in every period of life, but we must realize that thankfulness changes as we grow older. When we are young, thankfulness is pure and immediate. We push through a problem and return to normal life with an infinite horizon and a blue sky. In later life, the clouds come in and the horizons shrink. Yet, even then, we can be thankful as long as we realize that thankfulness is different. In our later years, thankfulness is not so much a response as it is a choice — a choice to be thankful for the good things we have today.



One of those former lepers — a Samaritan — returned to the Lord. He was out of the mainstream — not even Jewish. He wasn’t part of the chosen people. But he knew that God had chosen him. He knew that he received a grace from God. He knew that he didn’t do anything to deserve this gift, but was the recipient of God’s compassion. He wanted others to rejoice with Him. He wanted Jesus to know how grateful he was. He returned to thank the Lord.

Many times a child — particularly an older child, a Teen or a young adult — receives a great gift from his or her Mom or Dad, and then says: “What can I do to pay you back?” Inevitably, the parent responds: “I didn’t do this for you because I want repayment. I did this because I love you. All I want is that you be good to your brothers and sisters,” or perhaps, “All I want is that you be good to others like we were good to you.”

That is all God wants from us — He wants us to show our gratitude by being good to our brothers and sisters, by being good to others as He has been good to us. You see, thanking God is not a matter of words or recited prayers. To thank God we have to treat others as He treated us, with compassion, mercy and love.

“Were not all ten made clean? Where are the other nine?” Where do we go when we realize that we have experienced Divine Love? Do we stay where we are? Do we walk backwards to where we were out of anger for our past? Or do we spread the Grace that we have received to others by our care and compassion? Are we one of the nine? Or are we the one out of the ten, the one who returned glorifying God with His life?

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

**PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CHAPEL FAMILIES:**

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



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

**THE MIRACLE OF LIGHT:**

Reflect today on how the light returning in your life each day is a miracle to behold. It might be the physical light of the sun or the light of a friend’s smile. Perhaps it’s even that hard-to-detect light that we shine forth on others and the world around us

**BE READY FOR JOY:**

We know this story only too well [Luke 17:11-19]. Jesus healed 10 lepers. One — a Samaritan — came back to thank him. It’s all about gratitude, right? Listen again, it’s not quite that simple. When the Samaritan returned, Jesus, like a shepherd worried about the nine on the road instead of the one in front of him, asks: “Where are the others?” The answer is that they were doing exactly what Jesus told them to do. They were going to show themselves to the priest.

It’s an odd story. Ten lepers, guarding the proper distance from healthy people, asked Jesus for



**AM I ONE OF THE NINE or THE ONE OUT OF TEN?**

Luke's Gospel presents the healing of the ten lepers [Luke 17:11-19]. Let's begin by picturing these ten men walking up to Jerusalem. They had gone to Jesus, but left, still lepers — with nothing more than Jesus' assurance that they were to present themselves to the priests as healed. Jesus didn't heal them immediately. What must that walk up to the Temple Hill in Jerusalem been like? Some of them must have been limping with deformed legs — most likely relying on "homemade" crutches. Some had lost fingers and even parts of their face. Many had horrible sores all over their bodies. They were hideous. All of them had bells. All were required to call out continually: "Unclean, unclean." The healthy would do everything possible to avoid them. That is why when they encounter Jesus, they stood off at a distance and called to Jesus to heal them.

But back to their journey to the priests. It was a very unlikely parade — walking, dragging probably, approaching the Temple. Did they all have faith, or were some of them going to the Temple because they thought they had nothing to lose? Their lives were horrible. What worse could happen to them? Did all believe — or were some of them just joining in with the others? We don't know. So they plodded on. When was it that they realized that they could walk easier? When was it that they saw that they were no longer deformed? When was it that their skin had healed? It had to be before they got to the Temple because by the time they reached the Temple priests, they were healed.

So why didn't all ten return to the Lord to give thanks to God? Why was it that nine never bothered? Perhaps some of them were angry — angry that they had gotten so sick in the first place. Maybe they were so angry that they couldn't see their healing as a gift — they could only see their sickness as a curse. Maybe they were upset that they had missed so much in life. They were people who saw the glass as half empty — not half full. Or, maybe some of them were completely self-absorbed. Perhaps some were like little children who were never taught to say "Thank you" as though they had a right to all good things in the world.

It is rather shocking to think that some people could be so angry, or so self-centered that they do not appreciate the gifts of the Lord. Sadly, that is exactly what happens. People who can only see the negatives in life — they cannot appreciate the gifts of God. People who think they are the center of the world cannot fathom why they should be grateful to anyone for what they think they have coming.

We should ask ourselves: Am I a positive person or a negative person? Do I usually see the good in life, or am I absorbed by the negative? When I recover from the flu, from COVID, or any sickness, do I thank God that I am feeling better, or am I upset that I felt so poorly before? When a former friend or an estranged relative wants to reconcile, am I willing to move on with the future, or do I stay mired in the past? When the pain of life has been removed, do I keep it alive in my mind by dwelling on the past?

We have been sick, and we have been healed. We have been estranged, and we have been reunited. We have been lost, and we have been found. Christians are optimists. If we are negative in certain areas of life, then we need to bring this very negativity to God. We need to ask Him for faith.

We have all had times of immaturity in our lives when we've convinced ourselves that we are the center of the universe. Now, it is perfectly acceptable for a baby to be self-absorbed. The baby's cries are the only way that we can be made aware of his or her needs. It is not acceptable for the rest of us to be self-absorbed. Does God owe us healing? Did God allow His Son to become one of us and then die for us because we had a right to salvation? Of course not. We are benefactors of a kind and compassionate God who really does love us, who really is "Our Father." We need to recognize His Gifts and thank Him.



I can choose to be thankful because today I have no pain — even though tomorrow might be different. I can choose to be thankful because today I can share a meal with the people I love, even though I will not have them forever. I can choose to be thankful because today I can share wisdom with a young person, even though I know I might not live to see that wisdom reach its fruition.

We cannot be joyful without being thankful. And we can be thankful even with clouds on the horizon. Our faith can help us here, because we believe that in every period of life God will continue to bless us, even as our horizons shrink. Being thankful in our later years is different than being thankful when we are young. But it is real thankfulness, and it can still bring real joy. In our faith we are confident that we can remain thankful people in our seventies, and eighties and nineties. We can remain thankful people to the end of our lives, because with God's help we can choose thankfulness. We can identify with the Samaritan in Luke's gospel. We can raise our voices and shout: "I give thanks to God because God has done great things for me!"

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

**TAKING LIFE FOR GRANTED:**

Luke tells us that Jesus, on a journey to Jerusalem, encountered ten lepers, who stood at a distance, crying out: "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!" [Luke 17:11-19]. Seeing them, Jesus says: "go show yourselves to the priests." On the way, they were cured. One of them — a Samaritan — returned, glorifying God and fell at the feet of Jesus, thanking him. Noting that ten were cured, Jesus asked: "Where are the other nine?" And to the Samaritan Jesus said: "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."

At the time of Jesus, leprosy was a horrible isolating disease. Lepers were forced to live outside the cities and villages, separated from family and friends. When someone approached them, they were to cry out: "Unclean." The cure effected by Jesus was indeed a miraculous life renewing event for them — allowing them to rejoin their community of family and friends. Surely, an expression of gratitude to Jesus was in order. One — a Samaritan — did return to give thanks; nine did not.

The story invites reflection on our own practice of the virtue of gratitude. It seems easy to take for granted many blessings: having the gift of faith; growing up in a loving family; living in a free country; having enough to eat; relating to others who receive our gift of love; enjoying security because of the sacrifices of police officers, firefighters, military personnel; and being able to attend the church of our choice.

Some of us may find our problem is selectively expressing our gratitude to some while neglecting others — for example, family members, work colleagues, service providers, clergy, nurses, and clerks.

We can imagine individuals who are trying to live the Gospel message more completely. A collegian who appreciated his parents support but seldom expressed it now, calls them once a week, sharing news and always adding a word of thanks. A grandmother, long in the habit of asking God for favors, now spends more time saying prayers of gratitude for blessings received. A husband, who for years took for granted the spiritual contributions of his wife to their marriage, has learned to appreciate them, and periodically goes out of his way to thank her for enriching their life together. A nurse who was in the habit of smoking since her teenage years decided to express her gratitude to God for the gift of good health by breaking the habit.

What concrete steps could you take to develop a more consistent practice of the virtue of gratitude?

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

**FAITH:**

In life's toughest moments, our faith will make all the difference. God alone will see us through.

—Allen Hunt

**LIVING WITH A GRATEFUL HEART:**

The rabbi asked the prophet: “Where shall I find the Messiah?” The prophet responded: “At the city gates among the lepers.” The rabbi queried: “What is he doing there?” The prophet answered: “He changes their bandages.” Jesus was on His final trip to Jerusalem — He was an outlaw. There was an all-points bulletin out for Him. He was avoiding the main roads and moving only at night. He was eating cold food; He was afraid to light a fire. Bounty hunters were everywhere. He had to be spent. He came to an unnamed village — scholars feel it was probably El Gannim. The town still exists. The ruins of an ancient church built to commemorate this miracle are there. Jesus dared to stay in the village openly because it is believed the inhabitants were friendlies. Probably He had already worked miracles there. He would be able to sleep indoors between sheets in a clean bed and enjoy a home-cooked meal.

**The lepers in this story [Luke 17:11-19] used Jesus’ name. This supports the theory that He was well known in the area.** Leprosy — or Hansen’s disease — was then commonplace. It is not a pretty disease. It can destroy one’s features. What AIDS is to our culture, leprosy was to theirs. Leprosy resisted all cures until 1960.

These lepers must have had a tremendous faith in Jesus. They were asking for the cure of a disease they themselves considered incurable. We need such faith.

They met Jesus on the town outskirts. By law, lepers were not allowed into the town proper. They were forced to wear shredded clothing and go without head cover despite the fierce sun. The object of all this was to make it easier for healthy people to give them wide berth. They had become non-persons; they were the walking dead. It was amazing that they approached the Teacher.



They would never have attempted that with another rabbi. Most rabbis of that period ran and hid when confronted by lepers. One confessed he threw rocks at them to clear his path. His actions were legal. **What did these people see in the Messiah? He must have been a person most easy to walk up to. They sensed that he “had trained His heart to give sympathy and His hands to give help.”** When the lepers came up to Him, the crowd about Him began looking for holes in the ground to crawl into. But, as the lepers suspected, Jesus held His ground. One can see why a Rembrandt is needed to paint such a picture.

Jesus introduced other healing miracles with certain preliminaries — see Mark 7: 31-37, where Jesus used spit and his finger. Here He did no such thing. These people He felt had suffered long enough. He cleaned them of their foul disease on the spot. **Someone once said that “God is an active verb.” Again we receive a rich insight into what makes the Christ tick.** His precipitate action speaks pages about Him. Would that we might borrow His technique in our actions with others in pain.

Jesus **did more than cure these former lepers — he talked with them.** This was the first conversation they had with a non-leper in years. And in most probability He touched them and even stroked them. Recall that line from the old negro spiritual: “What a friend we have in Jesus!” It no doubt sums up the attitude of the former lepers. But only one leper, as we know, had the class to return after the miracle to thank Him — “He fell on his face at Jesus’ and kept on thanking Him.”

Jesus was exhilarated by this man, and crushed by the ingratitude of the others. Meister Eckhart wrote wisely: “The most important prayer in the world is just two words long: ‘Thank you.’” Yet, we live in a society in which those words are coming to be used less frequently — not only to God, but to one another. May we copy the style of the grateful leper who returned! **We should all reflect on the line that teaches: “God has two homes — one in heaven and the other in a thankful heart.” The sage says that we shall be Christians when we weep not because we have lost something but because we have been given so much.**

—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooley which appear on the internet

**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].**

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

<b>Monday:</b>	Galatians 4:22-5:1, Luke 11:29-32
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Galatians 5:1-6, Luke 11:37-41
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Galatians 5:18-25, Luke 11:42-46
<b>Thursday:</b>	Ephesians 1:1-10, Luke 11:47-54
<b>Friday:</b>	Ephesians 1:11-14, Luke 12:1-7
<b>Saturday:</b>	Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 12:8-12

**29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** Exodus 17:8-13, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2, Luke 18:1-8

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — OCTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>:**

Our Savior Lutheran Church, across the street from Gilmour, has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on **the third Saturday of each month.** They welcome volunteers. If you want to volunteer, they have instituted some **new procedures** because of the Coronavirus. **Thus they help pre-pack nonperishables in bags on Thursday evening beginning at 5 PM.** They continue this prepacking on Friday if needed. Check with Elina Gurney on this. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help putting items from the foodbank into the prepacked bags.** Only volunteers will be allowed in the Church building, so you will be protected against the virus. Clients will remain outside in their cars. **The food pantry is then open from 9:30 AM—1:30 PM on Saturday.**



Our Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

**Please let Elina Gurney know if you would like to help. You can do this through the chapel office [440-473-3560] or by emailing Elina Gurney at [gurney.oh@gmail.com](mailto:gurney.oh@gmail.com).** In this critical time, this is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

**LIFE CHANGES:**

Great love can change small things into great ones, and it is only love which lends value to our actions. 11