

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ A Prayer for God's Grace ~**

**We call upon you  
in a special way.  
It is through your power  
that we were created.  
Every breath we take,  
every morning we wake,  
and every moment of every hour,  
we live under your power.**

**Touch us, again, with that same power.  
Recreate in us new life.  
Fill us with the healing power  
of your Holy Spirit.  
Cast out anything  
that stands as an obstacle  
to our becoming the person  
you want us to be.**

**Keep us strong —  
physically,  
emotionally,  
intellectually,  
and spiritually —  
so that we may serve you,  
and the human family,  
for the rest of our lives.  
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](mailto: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.*

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

**Faith Education meets this Sunday and next, October 30<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</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.

**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].**

**OLC “ADOPT A FAMILY” PROGRAM:**

For many years, Our Lady Chapel community has worked with St. Adalbert Parish in adopting families to help them celebrate the Christmas Season. In recent years, we have had many requests from our families to begin this project earlier in order to take advantage of pre-Christmas sales, etc. We are collecting the names of families from St. Adalbert at the present time. **The need is greater than ever.** St. Adalbert identifies families — most often single parent, below poverty level families; we are given the grade levels of the children & other family information, so that you can purchase gifts appropriate to each member.



As we did last year, we will be procuring gift cards from various places, and the families will be purchasing the gifts for their families. This worked very well for everyone. Those from our chapel family who participated in this project last year spoke very highly of the benefit of this project to their own families. Even our Life Teen and EDGE Groups have adopted families and gone shopping together on a Sunday afternoon. This is a project that the entire family can get involved in. Families can be matched according to family size, ages, etc. It was truly inspiring. **Please call Patty at the Chapel Office [440-473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org] if you and your family would like to participate in this program, or if you have any questions.** The program is scheduled to begin around November 10<sup>th</sup>.

**MAKE YOUR FAMILY'S ADVENT WREATH:**

We are going back to **in-person making of our Advent Wreaths.** We are going to be making family Advent Wreaths on **Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 AM** in the Commons. **Cost of the Wreath is \$25** — this includes trimmings, candles, and everything else you will need. You can pay by cash or check at the event. Fr. John will bless our Advent Wreaths at the conclusion of the activity. **Please sign up by Sunday, Nov. 13.** If cost is an issue, please contact Fr. John. **Sign up sheet is located on the easel in the Narthex of the Chapel, or you can call the chapel office [440-473-3560]. Virtual Sign-up is also available on the Chapel Website. Please sign up early because we have to purchase the materials.**

**A CHALLENGE:**

A problem is a chance for you to do your best.

—Duke Ellington

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Marie Forsythe, who is hospitalized.
- For Ursula Wyras, mother of Janet Heryak, and grandmother of Lillian ['09], Rosa ['12] and Edwin ['17] Heryak, who is experiencing complications following knee replacement surgery.
- For Pat Malak, who is seriously ill.

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For For Thomas Hughes ['56], brother of Michael M. Hughes ['55], uncle of Mike ['82] and Kevin ['88] Hughes
- For James Toomey, grandfather of Former Athletic Associate, Kennedy Clyde, and brother-in-law to Lower School Associate Director, Kathy Gang Rini.
- For James Russo, father of Jamie Pearce ['86], and grandfather of Grace ['08], Anne ['10], and Alexandra ['11] Venzor, uncle of Sal Russo ['82] and Johanna Russo-Jasko ['87], and cousin of Angelo ['73], Anthony ['76] LaPlaca, and second-cousin of DeAnna LaPlaca ['02].
- For Rosanne Rossi, mother of Brother Benjamin Rossi, C.S.C.
- For Linda Felder, mother Traci ['86] and Todd ['89] Felder, and grandmother of Max Ritt ['25]
- For Sister Madonna Dickus, O.S.U.
- For Sister Sharon Anne Yanak, C.S.A.
- For Larry Vasel
- For Jennifer Decker
- For Terrence Cook
- For Father Thomas Schubeck S.J.

**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.

**WITNESSING TO GOSPEL VALUE:**

Mainstream Christianity has steadily lost force and credibility in the contemporary world. Much of this decline is attributed to the fact that for so long now the means have not matched the ends — we preach one gospel and live another. And while in a way this has always been true, the clash is accentuated in the security-obsessed consciousness of our own times. We preach the Good Samaritan and lock our church doors. We preach the lilies of the field and allocate large amounts of our monthly paychecks to pension and insurance plans. —Cynthia Bourgeault

**MYSTERY:**

As your desire is, so is your will. As your will is, so is your deed. As your deed is, so is your destiny.

—The Upanishads

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

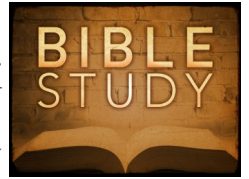
**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Carol Triplett, sister of Linda McGraw, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- 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 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], 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], grandmother of Aurelia [‘28], and Olivia [‘30] Chiacchiari, 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, NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>:**

**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</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: The life of Faith as reflected in Vatican II [part 1].**

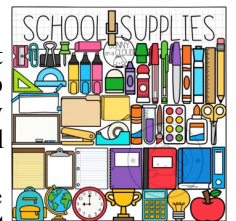
We also need your help — we need future topics. **So, if you have a topic that you would like us to discuss, please let Father John know.** Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. **We will meet every other week — topic to be decided at the 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 23: 30 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, October 24:	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, October 25:	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, October 26:	Check with Office for time
Thursday, October 27:	Check with Office for time
Friday, October 28: Sts. Simon and Jude	Check with Office for time
Saturday, October 29: 31 <sup>st</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, October 30: 31 <sup>st</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. Currently they have a great need for Backpacks, socks and underwear — grades K-8.** 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.

**ANOTHER CHALLENGE:**

Whatever you are doing, step it up a notch.

—Father Huber



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

We all have had experiences of talking to someone whom we thought was listening to us — but alas, their minds were occupied with something which they considered to be more important. The big question for us is whether God listens to our prayers. Why don’t we get what we ask for — especially when we pray for somebody else’s needs? There is a person who is convinced that if she has a health problem and calls me to ask for my prayers, that God listens to my pleading for her more than if she, herself, prays. This places a tremendous pressure on my reputation — but so far, she is quite healthy, and meanwhile I’ve got a bad cold! What are we doing when we do something called “prayer?”

The books within the Hebrew Scriptures known as “Wisdom Literature” often personify aspects of the mysterious God. For example, in the Book of Sirach [35:10-14,16-18], God is pictured as having ears, and he does not play favorites. God does, however, tend to listen attentively to the poor, the orphaned, the widow, and all who are lowly and oppressed. These prayers have quite a direct line up to heaven and into God’s ears.

One other group whose petitions are heard are those who willingly serve God. But God seems to be quite like us — we are good to those who are good to us, who attend to our needs. Once again, we see that prayer is centered around getting what we want, while giving the impression that everything God gives us is a gift. This reading is poetically simple and charming, but does form God into our image and likeness a bit too much?

Luke’s Gospel does help to clarify things [Luke 18:9-14]. Here again, it is important to notice to whom the parable is offered. The Pharisees, of course, are the usual suspects; but the parable is also address to all others who are convinced of their own righteousness, and who spend time affirming themselves by judging and reducing others with false, but self-flattering comparisons.

The first person in the parable happens to be a Pharisee. He gets up close and personal with God and prays to “himself”! This is the very word Jesus uses to express how self-centered and self-righteous is this person who is pretending to pray. He spends quite a bit of time being grateful that he is not like the rest of humanity who are greedy, dishonest and adulterous, and he is thankful that he is not like this tax collector standing in the back of the temple. He then recites and recalls how he does the rituals of fasting and tithing. He has all the tickets in his hands — he is all dressed up in a pretense of piety.

One of Luke’s little literary devices is “reversal” or contrasting examples. Things are upside down and the usual becomes unusual. Jesus’ ways are contrary to our human patterns. God looks past the heroic and successful, those who think that they are the beautiful people, to pour his love on the underdogs, the unsuccessful, the disposable people. And so, we have a tax collector who stands at a safe distance from God and is dressed only in his suit of sinfulness — but he knows it! He prays, not to himself, but to God and with words reflecting his naked truth.

Earlier in Luke’s Gospel, Peter — the first to be called — came close to Jesus and asked Jesus to depart, because he, Peter, was a sinful man [see Luke 5:8]. Jesus didn’t deny that truth, but didn’t deny either his call to Peter to follow him in his sinful suit. Here, in this parable, the theme stays firm. Jesus does send the tax collector out of the temple while the Pharisee seems to stay there preening himself.

Jesus is catching the attention of both the self-righteous and the self-condemning. Jesus is blessing the truth — but obviously not the sin. He is challenging the former concepts of legalistically-based holiness. Jesus is consoling those who know their truth of fallenness and faithfulness at the same time. It can be assumed that both men will be back in their same positions — one patting himself on the back, the other kicking himself a little bit lower. Being forgiven and sent forth does not mean perfection. It does

**HONESTY:**

Last weekend, our Scripture Readings zeroed in on the relationship expected of all people of faith with God. A life based on faith demands that we relate with God, and not try to control him. The Scripture Readings for this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time outline the first step in building and maintaining such a relationship — honesty.

No two people could be further apart on a 1<sup>st</sup> century CE Palestinian religious scale than a Pharisee and a tax collector. The former was akin to a “super-Jew” — spending his life studying, teaching and keeping the 613 Laws of Moses. Everything he did revolved around those Sinai regulations. Scanning his temple competition, he could logically say: “I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous — or even like this tax collector.”

The latter, on the other hand, really didn’t give much thought to those Mosaic precepts. As a collector of taxes, he centered his life on a different value system. He would have daily done things forbidden to main stream Jews. The money he so faithfully amassed went not to his fellow Jews, but to his country’s enemies — the Romans. A traitor to his people, he helped keep their oppressors in power. And he usually acquired those taxes by “immoral” means — extortion, blackmail and strong-arm tactics. He not only was hated by everyone, but because of his profession, he constantly was at odds with the very regulations the Pharisee esteemed. Though tax collectors weren’t forbidden under pain of death, like Samaritans, to enter the temple precincts, his presence in that sacred space would have surprised other worshipers — “what’s someone like that doing in a place like this? There goes the neighborhood!”

Yet Jesus praises this religious scoundrel at the same time he brushes aside the religious perfectionist. Out of the two, the tax collector alone leaves “justified” — doing what the Lord wants him to do, simply being honest about himself. His only prayer is: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Unlike the Pharisee he doesn’t compare himself with anyone else — he just zeros in on his own moral condition.

If all valid relationships revolve around giving ourselves to others, they can only work when we begin the process by being honest about who it is who’s actually doing the giving. Yet we “fake it” so often during our encounters with others, that we also fall into that same trap when we’re really trying to build relationships with significant others. Luke’s Jesus reminds us that faking it with God in a no-no. God simply expects us to tell him who we really are. That’s a given.

Sirach, encourages us not to worry — God treats everyone with total impartiality [Sirach 35:10-14,16-18]. God is a God of justice — a God of relationships. He gives everyone an even break. If our relationship isn’t working; it can only be because we’re holding back from giving our true selves to God — often because of something embarrassing in that true self.

The author of the second letter to Timothy has no problem conveying his insights into Paul’s personality — even when they suggest some of the Apostle’s weaknesses [2 Timothy 4:6—8,16-18]. Though he’s writing about a larger than life figure, he doesn’t hesitate to get down to the nitty gritty. Paul certainly wasn’t the kind of individual who appealed to everyone — “At my first defense no one appeared on my behalf, but everyone deserted me.” Some of us would also pause before stepping forward to defend such a radical person of faith. Paul wasn’t perfect.

Perhaps that’s why he — like us — constantly falls back on his relationship with the risen Jesus — the one person who presumes that we’re not perfect, and is grateful whenever we admit it.

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

**IT’S YOUR LIFE:**

The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot.

—Michael Altshuler

**THE LANGUAGE OF PRAYER:**

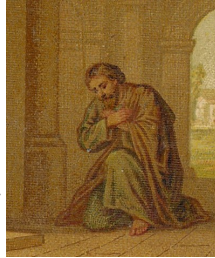
When Bing Crosby recorded *Galway Bay*, he softened the original lyrics to avoid sounding too political. Rather than indict the English, Crosby sang about potato-farming women who spoke “a language that the strangers do not know.”

Perhaps without realizing it, Crosby’s change permitted the song to resonate with any people whose history includes strangers who, as the song says, “tried to teach us their way,” and “scorned us just for being what we are.” In the end, the singers proudly proclaim that their vain oppressors “might as well go chasing after moonbeams/Or light a penny candle from a star.”

Every culture and faith tradition has its own inside language. The Scripture Readings for this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time seem to suggest that God hears some languages better than others. Ben Sirach — the Jewish sage who wrote about 175 years before the time of Christ — wrote with political caution similar to Crosby’s. Without mentioning the wealthy, he tells us: “The Lord is not deaf to the cry of the oppressed nor to the widow” [Sirach 35:10-14,16-18].

Whether or not Jesus was thinking of Sirach, it served as great lead-in to his parable about the Pharisee and the tax collector [Luke 18:9-14]. The Pharisees were the super religious of their day. Their name indicated that they set themselves apart from ordinary folks as well as from the temple elite. Although their reputation has been disparaged over the ages, that’s mostly a factor of “the higher you climb, the harder you fall.”

Perhaps we can understand the Pharisees’ downfall in a more contemporary light with the help of C.S. Lewis and his classic, *The Screwtape Letters*. Lewis, explaining how easy it is for religious people to lose their way, has a master demon explain: “The safest road to Hell is the gradual one — the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones.” With this, Lewis explains how the Pharisee of this parable — and anyone else — can gradually slip from wonder before God into thinking that their own perfectionism makes them images of the divine, allowing them to scorn God’s beloved poor just for being what they are.



The great scandal of Jesus’ parable is that he recognizes holiness in the humility of the tax collector. Although Jesus never taught about the incarnation or Trinity, he claimed to act in the name of the God who not only created the universe, but who identifies with the lowliest and suffers their pain. Jesus’ Father is the God who, while knowing “no favorites,” continually listens to the cry of the poor.

The startling implication of this parable may be that the language of the proud reaches God as an unintelligible foreign tongue. The Pharisee spoke his claims to be virtuous into an echo chamber; they were addressed to and comprehended by no one but himself. Jesus’ parable underlines a theme from Psalm 1 which proclaims that the wicked are ultimately no more significant than chaff; their deeds and their memory will blow away in a breeze — in the language of the Irish immigrants’ song, their luster is less than what a penny candle can fetch from a star.

What are we to learn from this about the language of prayer? Listen to the tax collector: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” This man did not ask for the kind of “mercy” requested by the lepers who saw Jesus pass their way [Luke 18:38]. The phrase translated here as “be merciful” is more properly interpreted as: “be gracious” or “look upon me with kindness.” This man’s prayer admits that, before God, we are all beggars longing for God’s smile.

Perhaps there’s a deep truth about language — and therefore about prayer — in Crosby’s song. Only those who have begun to understand God’s own humility, only those who understand that love is the one invincible power on earth, can begin to speak God’s language.

When we pray: “God, be gracious to me,” we are doing nothing more or less than asking God to be God. What greater praise could there be? The only thing left for us to do is to join Mary in saying: “Let your love take flesh in me, according to your will” [Luke 1:38].

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

seem that the Christ-right person will return begging for and again receiving healing and mission. It does take the grace of humility for us to be missioned by the sacrament of Reconciliation knowing full well that we will be coming back for more and new healing graces for our recovering from the old fractures. Jesus is never ashamed of us, bored with us, fed-up with us. Jesus doesn’t change — God’s love is everlasting, ever anciently new and always transforming “seeming” into “being”!

Karl Rahner once noted that being a true Christian does not lie in reaching success; to the contrary it is a life of betrayal of our ideals and human hopes, of anything that we can measure. It is always, for our spiritual life as well as for what we endeavor in Christ’s name, a matter of leaving everything in God’s hands to perfect: God created us humans as radically imperfect beings, and he alone will bring that perfection to us. He writes straight with our crooked lines, but he loves our scribbles and scratches because it is us, his beloved children, who are offering them as our gift to him...

The Kingdom is not only a destination, it is a journey — a pilgrimage — and the true pilgrims are not those who ride in comfort but those who help the other pilgrims along the way.

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

**THE JOURNEY NEVER ENDS:**

On this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, St. Paul reminds us that “I have finished the race” [2 Timothy 4:6-8,16-18]. In his homily on World Youth Day a few years back, Pope Francis called us to have “Boots laced” — rather than being a comfortable couch potato, Pope Francis challenges us to become protagonists of history, boots laced ready to go where the Lord calls. Jesus makes clear that we are in a high stakes game — on one side are peace and power, on the other impotence and rage. It’s a matter of daily choices — doing small things with great love. We live in world marked by violence, discord, and misery. Are we going to shrink away, or are we going to lace up our boots? Lord, increase our faith! Help us to receive power from persistent prayer and gratitude. We are little people — like the Hobbits — but we’ve got a great mission.



And what is that mission? Paul tells us it is to complete the race — to compete well, and to fight the good fight. The goal of life is not retirement. No parent can retire from motherhood or fatherhood — whether spiritual or physical. No Christian can retire from baptism vows. In the Bible we see that the Christian life involves a race — a battle. The biggest battle takes place here in the human heart.

Once a young seminarian encountered a venerable gray-haired priest. The priest was carrying a book about achieving purity. Surprised the seminarian asked: “When do those temptations end?” The elderly priest thought, then said: “About five minutes after they put in the grave!” From dawn to dusk we are engaged in a battle. Because we fall, we need mercy — daily mercy to pick up and continue: To not crawl into a hole or flee. No, when you find yourself down, put yourself under divine mercy, ask for the power, and the courage to fight the good fight.

Luke’s Gospel shows how to win the good fight — it doesn’t come from thinking how good and strong I am. On the contrary we get power by saying: “Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

You can’t do better than the prayer for mercy. We owe everything to God. So take up the good fight — ask Jesus for daily mercy. And to say with the Psalmist: “I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth” [Psalm 34].

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

**ENCOUNTERING MYSTERY:**

In prayer we often come face-to-face with our own mysterious reality. It might leave us feeling breathless or empty. But in prayer, may we be comforted that we are bringing to God more than just our words — we are bringing to God our hearts. God is vast and compassionate enough to hold this mystery tenderly.

—Parker Palmer



**GOD LOVES YOU FOR YOU:**

The story in Luke's Gospel for this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time is famous — one with which we are all familiar. It tells the well-known story of the sinner who sat in the back of the Temple beating his breast while seeking mercy, and the Pharisee who sat up in front reminding God what a laudable and holy person he is [Luke 18:9-14]. The “holier than thou” argument is often used as an excuse by those who don't go to church in order to criticize those of us who do — calling us hypocrites. But the story goes much deeper than the comparisons people make between themselves and others. The parable deals with our perception of who we are in the eyes of God.

This parable reaches to the core of our relationship with God. We need to understand that the basis of that relationship is the fact that God chooses us. He establishes the relationship. We haven't won this relationship with our prayers, or our actions. God has chosen us. This has not been easy for many to accept. Taking on our humanity and becoming one of us in His Incarnate Son, God's effort has been directed toward all of us. The extent of His love for us is proven through His sacrificial love for all of us displayed the Cross. The struggle also includes the Lord's continual effort through His Son to win each of us into His love. So often, however, you and I have run from Him.

Perhaps we fear that His love for us is too demanding. Maybe we're afraid that getting close to God means we have to give up all of the fun things in life. Maybe we're afraid He will ask us to give up things that we feel we simply just can't give up. Or... maybe it's a control issue. Do I control my life, or should God govern my life? Our motives are many and complex, God's motive is simple and uncomplicated.

In our relationship with God each one of us has been gifted with God's love — a love flowing to us through our family of faith, the Church. Yet at the same time His love is — because we are individuals — unique to each one of us. I stand before God's eyes all by myself. Each one of you has his or her own unique and individual relationship with God. By that I mean that someone is not better or worse than another person in the eyes of God. God sees you as you — not in comparison with someone else. Take, for example, your own relationship with your own children. Each of your kids is not better or worse than each other. To be sure, they are different, yet all of your children — each and every one — receive all of your love.

And so it is with God. We are all God's children. Yet God sees us and loves us individually. He doesn't judge us as better or worse than another person. Our actions and behaviors may be good or bad, but we are all God's children, and He loves us all as His children.

One of the ways that we tend to avoid accepting responsibility for our actions is to contrast ourselves with those whose actions appear to be worse than ours. The Pharisee thought: “Look at that guy; he is a sinner and a tax collector. At least I'm better than him.” Is that any different than the thought: “Look at that guy, he's a drug addict. At least I'm better than him.”

Thank God for your own goodness, but at the same time realize that God sees into the hearts and souls of each of His children. He looks into our hearts and He sees all those hidden forces that have pushed us in one direction or another. He sees the times that He has directly intervened in our lives offering us His presence. And He sees the times that we have accepted His presence and the times that we have told him: “Not now... Not in this matter... Maybe later. You are asking too much.” He judges us as individuals. He is not concerned with who is better than whom. He is only concerned with how well we each individually respond to His love, what we as individuals has done with the gifts He has



seen as it relates to our presence in Church. First, there is the aspect of other people seeing us here and our seeing who else is here. Most of us have church friends — people we may not see during the week, but who we look forward to seeing before or after Mass. We may not even know their names, but we always sit near them and are happy to see them. We love watching their children grow.

At the same time, we would be wrong if the main reason why we come to Church would be to see our friends. If Church were nothing more than a social gathering, then it would not be all that different than neighborhood gatherings. Still, it is good to see each other. Better, it is good to pray with each other.

Seeing others could have negative aspects, though. If we come to Church because we want others to see us, then we are using God to advance our stature in the community. I remember a man who was running for an office and who never set foot in Church, except when there would be a large gathering of people from the city who might be swayed to vote for him. This is the definition of hypocrisy — a word deriving from the Greek word for acting.

A second negative aspect that can result from seeing others is our making a judgment on others. We might see someone and in the recesses of our minds think: “What is he or she doing here? Probably he or she is trying to make up for being so mean, for being unfaithful, for being dishonest. Well, the nerve of him or her for coming to Church.” We all know that it is very wrong for us to judge others. It is doubly wrong to judge others for coming to Church.

Most of the time when we judge others, we are simply transferring the negative feeling we have about ourselves onto others. Transference is an ugly thing. We have to fight off negative thoughts about others in the same way that we fight off any bad thought. I find the best way to do that is to say to myself: “Lord Jesus, have mercy on me a sinner.” Then the occasion of sin become an occasion for prayer. We beat the devil at his own game.

But there is a second aspect of “see and being seen”. This is the aspect of seeing God and being seen by God. The only person that we should come to Church to see and be seen by is God. Maybe there are times — perhaps many times — that we come before Him feeling like that man in the back of the Temple area, with a deep recognition of our sins. We want to fall on our knees like Peter did say: “Leave me Lord, for I am a sinful man” [Luke 5:8].

Perhaps, we have not fallen into sin recently, but we have come to a deeper realization of the extent of past sins. We used someone, afterwards went to confession, but now many years later and a bit wiser, we are plagued by the thought of how our actions may have hurt that other person. “What direction did he or she go in life due to my actions?” we ask. More: “Does God forgive me even though I did not realize how evil my actions were?” we worry. And so we say: “Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.” God forgives everything when we confess a sin — even those dreadful aspects of the sin that we did not even realize when we went to confession many years ago. It is all forgiven. We need to forgive ourselves. At the same time, we need to be realistic and come before the Lord with a keen awareness of our sinfulness.

This is the reason why our Masses begin with a penitential rite. We begin Mass with a reminder of our sinfulness. And then we continue Mass entering into a deeper relationship with God, the Holy One. And Jesus says: “I see you. I know how you are trying to serve God. I know your strength, and I know your weakness. I see you. I see your love. And I love you. And know that I am with you always.”

It is a good thing to see and be seen. It is a good thing to see God. It is a good thing to be seen by the One who loves us.

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

**MAKING SENSE OF LIFE:**

Even in the chaos of everyday life, moments of gratitude remind us to hold on to the good things.



their mission. Christ's Church will continue to "go forth" towards new geographical, social and existential horizons, towards "borderline" places and human situations, in order to bear witness to Christ and his love to men and women of every people, culture and social status. In this sense, the mission will always be a "a mission to all people" as the Second Vatican Council taught. The Church must constantly keep pressing forward, beyond her own confines, in order to testify to all the love of Christ. Here I would like to remember and express my gratitude for all those many missionaries who gave their lives in order to "press on" in incarnating Christ's love towards all the brothers and sisters whom they met.

**3. "You will receive power" from the Holy Spirit — Let us always be strengthened and guided by the Spirit.** When the risen Christ commissioned the disciples to be his witnesses, he also promised them the grace needed for this great responsibility — "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses" [Acts 1:8]. According to the account in Acts, it was precisely following the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples that the first act of witnessing to the crucified and risen Christ took place. That kerygmatic proclamation — Saint Peter's "missionary" address to the inhabitants of Jerusalem — inaugurated an era in which the disciples of Jesus evangelized the world. Whereas they had previously been weak, fearful and closed in on themselves, the Holy Spirit gave them the strength, courage and wisdom to bear witness to Christ before all [Acts 2:14-26].

Just as "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord', except by the Holy Spirit" [see 1 Corinthians 12:3], so no Christian is able to bear full and genuine witness to Christ the Lord without the Spirit's inspiration and assistance. All Christ's missionary disciples are called to recognize the essential importance of the Spirit's work, to dwell in his presence daily and to receive his unfailing strength and guidance. Indeed, it is precisely when we feel tired, unmotivated or confused that we should remember to have recourse to the Holy Spirit in prayer. Let me emphasize once again that prayer plays a fundamental role in the missionary life, for it allows us to be refreshed and strengthened by the Spirit as the inexhaustible divine source of renewed energy and joy in sharing Christ's life with others. Receiving the joy of the Spirit is a grace. Moreover, it is the only force that enables us to preach the Gospel and to confess our faith in the Lord. The Spirit, then, is the true protagonist of mission. It is he who gives us the right word, at the right time, and in the right way.

Dear brothers and sisters, I continue to dream of a completely missionary Church, and a new era of missionary activity among Christian communities. I repeat Moses' great desire for the people of God on their journey — "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets!" [Numbers 11:29]. Indeed, would that all of us in the Church were what we already are by virtue of baptism: prophets, witnesses, missionaries of the Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to the ends of the earth! Mary, Queen of the Missions, pray for us!

—Francis



### TO SEE AND BE SEEN:

An elderly priest used to come down to Florida to get out of the cold and help in the local parishes. Many people knew him. When he came down from the north they would say: "It's great to see you, Father," to which he would respond: "And it's great to be seen."

It's great to see you, and it's great to be seen. Jesus told the story today of two men in the Temple who were concerned about seeing and being seen. One stayed in the back of the Temple area. He didn't care whether any others saw he was there. He just felt a huge wave of guilt that he should be there seen by God. The second man had no guilt being before God, and he took a front place in the Temple area, making sure that not only God, but many others could witness his piety. Both men came to the Temple to see God. The arrogant man was convinced that it was wonderful that God and others could see him.

Today I want to build on the thought "to see and be seen." There are two facets to seeing and being

given us.

Catholicism is often accused of putting people on guilt trips. That is not true. Catholicism puts people on reality trips. Catholicism dares to speak about unpopular topics like sin. Catholicism dares to invite people to consider their own participation in sin and seek God's forgiveness. Is this really a guilt trip? Or is it a reality trip? I firmly believe that Catholicism fosters a realistic approach to living. It recognizes that our salvation is a process we are engaged in. We are not saved yet, we are being saved. Catholicism recognizes that we are human beings and that we can, because we are wounded, give in to temptations to sin. It tells us that the Lord was one of us and that He experienced temptations and that He understands our need for mercy. He gave us the Sacrament of mercy — the Sacrament of Forgiveness — because He wants His mercy, not our guilt, directing our lives.

Catholicism is not concerned with guilt; it is concerned with mercy. So many times, I have had people tell me how much they need the loving mercy of God. They are realists. We all need the mercy of God. As we come to a deeper understanding of all that God has done for us, we also come to a deeper understanding of how much we need His mercy and forgiveness. The greatest saints are people who see themselves as great sinners because they have a profound realization of the extent of God's love for them and the many times they have not returned His love.

The Orthodox and Eastern Churches favorite prayers that are like mantras — simple and repetitive. They help us to pray constantly — many, many times throughout each and every day. One such prayer is called The Pilgrim's Prayer. It is simple and yet profound: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner." It was the prayer of the man in the back of the Temple who realized he was totally dependent on God's love, a love that he had often rejected. The pilgrim's prayer is a prayer that we all need to say within our hearts throughout our day.

A Pharisee and a tax collector come into the Temple. Both are there to pray. Only one is a humble enough to recognize his need for the healing hand of God. He is the one who truly prays because he realizes how much he really needs God. He is the one who leaves the Temple with God's arms around him. The Pharisee leaves having nothing but his own self-satisfaction. The tax collector leaves with a great treasure — the love of God in his heart.

—taken from the writings of Father Charles Irvin, 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, October 15]----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 2,319.17**

**Offerings-----[Sunday, October 16]----- \$ 147.00**

### 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].





**ACTION AND REFLECTION:**

Every parable has more than one meaning. We can find a new meaning to any parable by looking at it from a different angle or posing a new question to it. Take, for example, Jesus' parable from the gospel of Luke — a Pharisee and a tax collector go up to the temple to pray. When they are finished, the tax collector is justified, but the Pharisee is not. This parable invites us to compare these two men and to decide why one is pleasing to God and the other is not. But in order to do that, we must first determine what is the difference between the two characters and how that difference might affect our lives.

The normal way in which we read this parable is to see one man as an example of pride and the other of humility. We then conclude that God prefers humility. This is certainly a valid understanding. But it is not the meaning. Today I would like to present another way of reading this parable. I would like to see these two men as examples of two essential qualities in our lives. The parable, then, would invite us to keep those two qualities correctly balanced.

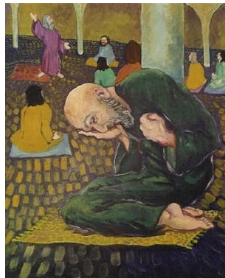
The two qualities are action and reflection. The Pharisee is a man of action. As he prays before God, he points to the things that he has done. Those things are very good. He avoids sin; he fasts twice a week; he gives away one-tenth of his income to the poor. The tax collector, on the other hand, is a man of reflection. As he prays before God, he does not point to his good works — although we presume he has some. Instead he reflects on who he is and how he stands before God. The tax collector calls himself a sinner, but we do not need to conclude from this that he felt that he was unworthy or unlovable. Recognizing his sin was an honest admission of who he was. It was accompanied by a belief that God loved and accepted him anyway. By knowing that he was a sinner, he recognized his need for God's mercy. He understood that his stance before God was one of both mercy and grace.

Now seen from this perspective, the parable tells us that it is important to act, but that our actions should flow from reflection. We should reflect upon who we are and who God is to us. Unless we reflect, whatever actions we perform, no matter how good they are, are not guaranteed to give us joy or to be pleasing in God's sight.

Now this lesson is a very important one for us. Our society seems to value action above everything else. Our culture is always asking us: "What have you accomplished? What have you done for me lately? Show me the money." As people living in the real world, we realize that we must act. We must commit ourselves to getting ahead, to reaching our goals, to turning a profit. All these actions are important. But unless our actions flow out of an awareness of who we are and what we value, our lives can become more and more superficial. We can discover that the successes we reach feel like empty victories.

The busier we are, the more important it is to reflect. The more that we have to do, the more important it is to ground ourselves in who we are and what we value. What happens when we take a moment and reflect on the deeper issues of life? We remember. We remember that we are a child of God. We remember that we are not perfect, but God loves us anyway, and others put up with our faults. We remember to be thankful for life, for relationships, for our health, for our future. We remember that life is fragile, and that no moment should be taken for granted. Once we reflect on all these truths, then we are prepared to go forth and do the things which we must do.

If we do not take time to reflect, we end up doing more and more and living less and less. We commit ourselves to being the best parents we can be. So, we give ourselves to buying things for our children, to teaching them what they believe, to driving them here and there. But unless we reflect, we are likely to miss the wonder of their growth and the sparkle in their eyes. We can join with our spouse in building a future together, in securing for ourselves financial stability or planning improvements to our home. But, without reflection, we can forget the attraction which first brought us together in marriage, and what we need to do to keep that love alive. Without reflection, we can do one good project after



their persuasive qualities and abilities or their managerial skills. Instead, theirs is the supreme honor of presenting Christ in words and deeds, proclaiming to everyone the Good News of his salvation, as the first apostles did, with joy and boldness.

In the final analysis, then, the true witness is the "martyr" — the one who gives his or her life for Christ, reciprocating the gift that he has made to us of himself. "The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received, the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him" [*Evangelii Gaudium*, #264].

Finally, when it comes to Christian witness, the observation of Saint Paul VI remains ever valid: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" [*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, #41]. For this reason, the testimony of an authentic Christian life is fundamental for the transmission of the faith. On the other hand, the task of proclaiming Christ's person and the message is equally necessary. Indeed, Paul VI went on to say: "Preaching, the verbal proclamation of a message, is indeed always indispensable. The word remains ever relevant, especially when it is the bearer of the power of God. This is why Saint Paul's axiom: "Faith comes from what is heard" [Romans 10:17], also retains its relevance — it is the word that is heard which leads to belief.

In evangelization, then, the example of a Christian life and the proclamation of Christ are inseparable. One is at the service of the other. They are the two lungs with which any community must breathe, if it is to be missionary. This kind of complete, consistent and joyful witness to Christ will surely be a force of attraction also for the growth of the Church in the third millennium. I exhort everyone to take up once again the courage, frankness and boldness of the first Christians, in order to bear witness to Christ in word and deed in every area of life.

## 2. "To the ends of the earth" — The perennial relevance of a mission of universal evangelization.

In telling the disciples to be his witnesses, the risen Lord also tells them where they are being sent — "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" [Acts 1:8]. Here we clearly see the universal character of the disciples' mission. We also see the "centrifugal" geographical expansion, as if in concentric circles, of the mission, beginning with Jerusalem, which Jewish tradition considered the center of the world, to Judea and Samaria and to "the ends of the earth". The disciples are sent not to proselytize, but to proclaim; the Christian does not proselytize. The Acts of the Apostles speak of this missionary expansion and provide a striking image of the Church "going forth" in fidelity to her call to bear witness to Christ the Lord and guided by divine providence in the concrete conditions of her life. Persecuted in Jerusalem and then spread throughout Judea and Samaria, the first Christians bore witness to Jesus everywhere [see Acts 8:1, 4].

Something similar still happens in our own day. Due to religious persecution and situations of war and violence, many Christians are forced to flee from their homelands to other countries. We are grateful to these brothers and sisters who do not remain locked in their own suffering, but bear witness to Christ and to the love of God in the countries that accept them. Hence, Pope St. Paul VI encouraged them to recognize the "responsibility incumbent on immigrants in the country that receives them" [*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, #21]. More and more, we are seeing how the presence of faithful of various nationalities enriches the face of parishes and makes them more universal, more Catholic. Consequently, the pastoral care of migrants should be valued as an important missionary activity that can also help the local faithful to rediscover the joy of the Christian faith they have received.

The words "to the ends of the earth" should challenge the disciples of Jesus in every age and impel them to press beyond familiar places in bearing witness to him. For all the benefits of modern travel, there are still geographical areas in which missionary witnesses of Christ have not arrived to bring the Good News of his love. Then too no human reality is foreign to the concern of the disciples of Jesus in



**World Mission Sunday**



**POPE FRANCIS LETTER FOR MISSION SUNDAY:**

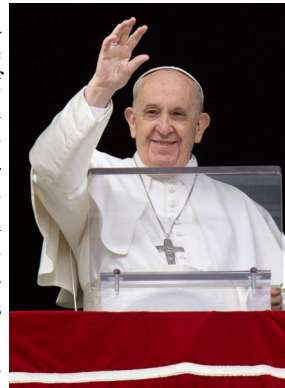
My Dear Brothers and Sisters: These words were spoken by the Risen Jesus to his disciples just before his Ascension into heaven, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth” [Acts 1:8]. They are also the theme of the 2022 World Mission Day which, as always, reminds us that the Church is missionary by nature.

Let us reflect on the three key phrases that synthesize the three foundations of the life and mission of every disciple — “You shall be my witnesses”, “to the ends of the earth” and “you shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit”.

1. **“You shall be my witnesses” — The call of every Christian to bear witness to Christ** This is the central point, the heart of Jesus’ teaching to the disciples, in view of their being sent forth into the world. The disciples are to be witnesses of Jesus, thanks to the grace of the Holy Spirit that they will receive. Wherever they go and in whatever place they find themselves. Christ was the first to be sent as a “missionary” of the Father [see John 20:21], and as such, he is the Father’s “faithful witness” [see Revelation 1:5]. In a similar way, every Christian is called to be a missionary and witness to Christ. And the Church — the community of Christ’s disciples — has no other mission than that of bringing the Gospel to the entire world by bearing witness to Christ. To evangelize is the very identity of the Church.

A deeper look at the words, “You shall be my witnesses”, can clarify a few ever timely aspects of the mission Christ entrusted to the disciples. The plural form of the verb emphasizes the communitarian and ecclesial nature of the disciples’ missionary vocation. Each baptized person is called to mission — both in the Church and by the mandate of the Church. Consequently, mission is carried out together — not individually — in communion with the ecclesial community, and not on one’s own initiative. Even in cases where an individual in some very particular situation carries out the evangelizing mission alone, he or she must always do so in communion with the Church which commissioned them. As Pope St. Paul VI taught in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* — a document dear to my heart — “Evangelization is for no one an individual and isolated act; it is one that is deeply ecclesial. When the most obscure preacher, catechist, or pastor in the most distant land preaches the Gospel, gathers his little community together or administers a sacrament, even alone, he is carrying out an ecclesial act, and his action is certainly attached to the evangelizing activity of the whole Church by institutional relationships, but also by profound invisible links in the order of grace. This presupposes that he acts not in virtue of a mission which he attributes to himself or by a personal inspiration, but in union with the mission of the Church and in her name” [#60]. Indeed, it was no coincidence that the Lord Jesus sent his disciples out on mission in pairs; the witness of Christians to Christ is primarily communitarian in nature. Hence, in carrying out the mission, the presence of a community, regardless of its size, is of fundamental importance.

In addition, the disciples are urged to live their personal lives in a missionary key — they are sent by Jesus to the world not only to carry out, but also and above all to live the mission entrusted to them — not only to bear witness, but also and above all to be witnesses of Christ. In the moving words of the Apostle Paul, “we are always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies” [2 Corinthians 4:10]. The essence of the mission is to bear witness to Christ — that is, to his life, passion, death and resurrection for the love of the Father and of humanity. Not by chance did the apostles look for Judas’ replacement among those who, like themselves, had been witnesses of the Lord’s resurrection [see Acts 1:21]. Christ risen from the dead is the One to whom we must testify and whose life we must share. Missionaries of Christ are not sent to communicate themselves, or to exhibit



another, we can help this person after that person, but we can forget what it is that makes all of this action important. We can lose sight of the fact that we are valuable, even before anything we do and in spite of any mistake we make.

Jesus’ parable calls us to act, to strive, to succeed. But first it calls us to reflect. It calls us to slow down, to take a moment, and to ground ourselves in God’s love for us and our love for others. In reflection we need to admit our faults, to appreciate our talents, and to never forget that God is with us always. Once we reflect on those fundamentals, then we are prepared, not only to succeed, but to succeed with excitement and joy. We are all called to be people of action, but first we must remember that we are children of God.

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

**HUMBLE OR ARROGANT?**

Luke often alerts us to the meaning and purpose of the parables. Today Jesus is addressing those who are convinced of their own righteousness and despise everyone else [Luke 18:9-14]. Two men — a Pharisee and a tax collector — go to the temple area to pray. The Pharisee spoke a prayer to himself thanking God that he is not greedy, dishonest, and adulterous like the tax collector and others — noting that he fasts twice a week and tithes his whole income. The tax collector stood at a distance, looked to heaven, beat his breast and prayed: “Oh God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Jesus then says the tax collector was justified, but not the Pharisee — “for those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

No doubt the Pharisee was an observant Jew — even going beyond the requirements of the law. His problem, however, was his self-righteous conviction that he had earned a position of moral superiority by virtue of his legalistic observance. This arrogant conviction blinded him to his total dependence on God and prompted him to look down upon other sinful people. On the other hand, the tax collector recognized his sinfulness and the power of God to forgive him. He understood that justification is a free gift of God and cannot be earned by good deeds.

We can imagine various responses to the Gospel. A married man recognizes the dangers in his growing emotional relationship with a female colleague, turns to God for forgiveness, goes to Confession, breaks off the relationship and commits himself to improving his marriage. A practicing Catholic who comes to see that she is overly judgmental of her younger sister who no longer goes to Mass, decides to put more effort into understanding her sister, and making the spiritual journey with her. A generous Christian who often brags about his charitable giving recognizes his arrogance and decides to make a lot more anonymous charitable donations.

What is the next step you could take to become more humble and less arrogant?

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

**THE JOY OF BELONGING:**

We have heard the story of the encounter between Jesus and Mary of Magdala — two people who love each other. Jesus says, “Mary.” She recognizes him and says, “‘Rabboni,’” which means Master” [see John 20:16]. This simple and deeply moving story brings me in touch with my fear as well as my desire to be known. Often I am tempted to think that I am loved only as I remain partially unknown. I fear that the love I receive is conditional and then say to myself: “If they really knew me, they would not love me.”

But when Jesus calls Mary by name he speaks to her entire being. She realizes that the One who knows her most deeply is not moving away from her, but is coming to her offering her his unconditional love. Mary feels at once fully known and fully loved. The division between what she feels safe to show and what she does not dare to reveal no longer exists. She is fully seen and she knows that the eyes that see her are the eyes of forgiveness, mercy, love, and unconditional acceptance. What a joy to be fully known and fully loved at the same time! It is the joy of belonging through Jesus to God and being fully safe and fully free.

—Henri Nouwen

**BE HUMBLE AND BEAR FRUIT:**

St. Dorotheus of Gaza said: “In some kinds of trees, no fruit is produced as long as the branches grow upwards; but if somebody takes a stone and binds it to a branch and pulls it down, then the branch will bear fruit. It is similar with a soul; when it humbles itself, it bears fruit, and the more fruit it bears, the humbler the soul becomes. The more the saints approach God, the more they see themselves as sinners.”

A few years ago, I was caught in disobedience here at the monastery. I argued the righteousness of my position, until I heard the sound of arrogance coming through my words. I was quite horrified because I had never spoken like that before. It was a humiliating experience to admit my fault in a chapter meeting and to ask for forgiveness publicly. But I learned a huge lesson that day — my own sense of righteousness can lead to my downfall. While I now regret the decision I made that day, I realize there’s a wisdom that comes from experience — something that cannot be gained through reading a book. Perfectionism is, perhaps, just another word for self-righteousness — the sense that I am entitled to live my life the way I see fit. There is a human prudence here, certainly. But from another perspective, self-determination can often put us at odds with God’s will in our lives — as I learned that day years ago.

Humility is difficult for us because it is an admission of submission to a higher authority. In other words, it is giving someone else — God — the permission to be in the driver’s seat of our lives. It is for this reason that the Rule of St. Benedict outlines 12 steps towards growing in humility. The fifth step deals with the revelation of thoughts to an elder. This isn’t the same as sacramental Confession, but the revelation of secret thoughts to an elder was a central practice among the early monks, less for the content of the elder’s response than for the self-knowledge it evoked in the monk. Speaking honestly about oneself to an elder was considered a means of testing objectively the reality of private imaginations. One can liken it to having conversations with a therapist or spiritual director or sharing in an accountability group. When we find the courage to share vulnerably in a healthy manner, we verbalize what were mere thoughts in our minds, and we can learn to see the accuracy and/or the distortions in our thought processes before we act.

While this kind of humble attitude is not easy to pursue, it does have an added benefit — it endears you to others. I saw a graphic on Facebook recently that said: “Those who talk about their strengths build walls; those who talk about their weaknesses build bridges.” Think about this in your own life. Who are the types of people that attract your attention? And who are those who turn away your attention?

Perhaps this is the lesson that Jesus wants to teach us in Luke’s Gospel — humility, or radical self-honesty, is a necessary component of our faith. It is precisely this depth of self-knowledge that can begin to open us up to a deeper knowledge of God beyond what can be read in books or blogs or heard in podcasts or at conferences. Can you imagine what life would be like if our deepest thoughts could be gently received? Can you imagine what life could be like if we knew that there would be no condemnation for sharing the darkness of our interior dimension? Can you imagine the relief of knowing that our distorted self-talk no longer had control of our lives?

Indeed, I am no different than the rest of humanity in that I am a sinner. But also indeed, it is for this reason that Jesus is the savior for humanity. Let’s learn to call upon our need for a savior by remembering that we all have needs for which Jesus is the only remedy.

—taken from the writings of Brother John-Marmion Villa, B.S.C., which appear on the internet

**GRATITUDE:**

Gratitude changes of lives. It changes the way we feel about ourselves, the way we feel about life, and the way we feel about others.

—Matthew Kelly

**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:**

**Monday:** Ephesians 4:32-5:8, Luke 13:10-17

**Tuesday:** Ephesians 5:21-33, Luke 13:18-21

**Wednesday:** Ephesians 6:1-9, Luke 13:22-30

**Thursday:** Ephesians 6:10-20, Luke 13:31-35

**Friday:** Ephesians 2:19-22, Luke 6:12-16

**Saturday:** Philippians 1:18-26, Luke 14:1,7-11

**31<sup>st</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** Wisdom 11:22-12:2, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-2:2, Luke 19:1-10

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — NOVEMBER 19<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.

**LONGING:**

Longing, felt fully, carries us to belonging.

—Tara Brach