

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Winter's Prayer ~

Lord:
In the midst of Winter,
when the days are cold
and winds can pierce
..... remind us of the warmth
of your love.

In the midst of Winter,
when days are short,
dawn comes late,
and dusk arrives early
..... remind us that in the darkness
your light still shines.

In the midst of Winter,
when the flowers of spring
still lie hidden in the earth,
when leaves are off the trees,
and the world can seem bleak
..... remind us that Easter
is but a short time away.

And when in our lives
we feel as if we are experiencing
a season of winter,
reach out to us
with the power of your resurrection
so that we may feel
the warmth of your love
and see your light
that alone can take away
the darkness of our soul.
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.

FAITH EDUCATION:

Faith Education meets next on Sunday, January 29nd and then again on Sunday, February 5th 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.

**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. They also requested 1-Subject Spiral Notebooks.** 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.

DARKNESS INTO LIGHT:

When Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been arrested, he left Nazareth and went to Capernaum. Herod Antipas was ruler of this territory; it was called “Galilee of the Gentiles” — regarded as a region of God-forsaken pagan ways [Isaiah 9:1-4]. It is here that Jesus goes to take up what is now the dangerous mission of John, to proclaim the coming of God’s kingdom. Jesus then proceeds to call Peter, Andrew, James and his brother John to follow him as disciples [Matthew 4:12-23]. Through Jesus, what has been spoken through the prophet Isaiah is at last fulfilled — “the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, and on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has risen.” Matthew graphically portrays the unredeemed human condition — John, victim of the injustice of arrest and subsequent execution; people sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. Hearers of Matthew’s gospel already know that Jesus and many who became his disciples soon would meet the same kind of injustice and violent death as John.



Graham Greene, in his novel *The Power and the Glory*, portrays the hopelessly fallen human condition in a similarly graphic way through the thoughts of the main character — “The knowledge of the world lay in her like the dark explicable spot in an x-ray photograph; he longed — with a breathless feeling in the breast — to save her, but he knew the surgeon’s decision — the ill was incurable.” The good news of Christian faith is that no experience of our human condition — however “incurable” it may seem, even death — is hopeless. The mission of Jesus is to proclaim that God loves us and wants to give himself to us if we but turn to accept him. Jesus — “God with us” — is the incarnation of this supreme love — light for people who sit in darkness, life in a land overshadowed by death. Matthew’s gospel also reminds us that Jesus calls each of us by name to follow him.. Our ultimate happiness depends upon our response. No human project or love, however great, may be preferred — “They left their boat and their father and followed him”.

Pray for the gift of faith to follow Jesus into the life of God’s love. This is the faith that overcomes the world of violence, darkness and death. And with the gift of sharing Christ’s faith comes a peace that surpasses understanding. —taken from the writings of Father Campion Gavalier, O.S.B., which appear on the internet.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For David Martin, who is recovering from triple Bypass Surgery
- For Bill McGinley, father of Chief Academic Officer, Elizabeth Edmondson, and grandfather of Mollie [‘21] and Abby [‘23] Edmondson, who is hospitalized with a serious infection
- For Chuck Shade, father of Loren Shade, grandfather of Michael, Madeline, and Charles Shade, who is in rehab following injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Rick DeBacco [‘99], brother of Michelle DeBacco Chiacchiarri [‘96], uncle of Aurelia [‘28], and Olivia [‘30] Chiacchiarri, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatitis.
- For Brother Walter Gluhm, C.S.C., who is under to care of hospice.
- For Angela Wahl, who is critically ill with cancer.

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Peter Mattera, cousin of Father Joe Sideras, C.S.C.
- For Mark Lechner [‘70]
- For Steve Adams, nephew of Brother Robert Lavelle, C.S.C.
- For Ellen Henley, mother of Henry Verbsky [‘85]
- For Mary Coyne, mother of Cathleen Coyne Lane [‘73], and Dennis [‘75] and Thomas [‘78] Coyne, grandmother of Heather [‘07], John [‘09], and mother-in-law of Joan Betchkal Coyne [‘84]
- For Dennis Bednar, grandfather of Chief [‘33] and Pepper [‘33] Deitelbaum

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For the Holy Cross Religious in Haiti, and for the people of that country, which is under siege because of political and civil strife.
- For the victims of the flooding in California.
- For a family going through a difficult time.
- For an end to violence and racial injustice in our society.
- For an end to sexual abuse and lack of respect for human persons.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.
- For a greater awareness of our call to create a more humane and just society.

CHAPEL ENVELOPES:

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**

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, January 14]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 980.00

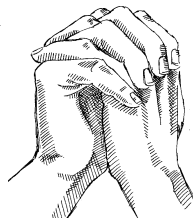
Offerings-----[Sunday, January 15]----- \$ 280.00

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Gary Russell , who is seriously ill with heart issues.
- For Kim Clark, who is undergoing treatment for an aggressive form of cancer.
- For James Routhier, husband of Grace O'Rourke Routhier ['08], who is recovering from brain surgery.
- For Beverly Jacklitch, mother of Kitchen Associate, Susan Jacklitch, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Paula Smith, mother of Tyler ['10] and Alec ['13] Smith, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jacqueline Schmidt, ['13], Lower School toddler instructor, who is recovering from foot surgery.
- For Findley Stay, husband of former Gilmour Instructor, Emily Stay, father of Allen Stay ['87], who is undergoing treatment for a serious blood disorder.
- For Andy Andino, Sr., father of Music Director, Andy Andino, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jill Shemory, mother of Adam ['08], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Ethel Nagy, mother of Lazlo Nagy, grandmother of Rich ['16] and Josh Nagy, who is seriously ill.
- For Carol Lowen, mother of Denise Shade, grandmother of Madeline, Michael, and Charles Shade, who is undergoing treatment for Breast Cancer.
- For Sue Elliott, who is critically ill with complications of Parkinson's Disease.
- For Cameron Monesmith, who is recovering from Brain surgery
- For Baylea O'Brian, friend of former Gilmour Teacher, Erin Thompson, who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkins Lymphoma
- For Walter Carey, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- For Pat Malak, who is seriously ill.
- 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 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 recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Susan Plavcan, sister-in-law of Linda McGraw, 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 Fletcher Linsz, brother of Logan Linsz ['26], who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkin Lymphoma.
- For Michael Nestor ['98], who is undergoing treatment for a rare form of 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 critically ill as a result of 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 recovering from heart transplant surgery.



NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1st:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, February 1st 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: Jesus as a Companion on the Journey

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, January 22: 3 rd Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, January 23: The Gift of Human Life	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, January 24: St. Francis DeSales	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, January 25: Conversion of St. Paul	Check with Office for time
Thursday, January 26: Sts. Timothy and Titus	Check with Office for time
Friday, January 27:	Check with Office for time
Saturday, January 28: 4 th Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, January 29: 4 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

2022 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS:

If you would like a copy of your 2022 Contributions to Our Lady Chapel, please call the chapel office [440-473-3560] and we will be glad to send it out to you. Since many have their own records and do not need to receive this statement, we have found that this is much more economical for us — as good stewards, we are trying to cut postage expenses from a mass mailing. Let us know if you need the statement sent to you and we will be glad to get it to you. Thanks for your understanding.



TRUTH AND LOVE:

I believe truth is revolutionary; it's part of the work of fierce love. Truth makes a personal, spiritual, ethical, and moral demand upon us. It wants to be said, known, and told. It hurts and it's inconvenient, but it's essential to our well-being.

—Jacqui Lewis

A REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:

What should it mean to follow Jesus? This question looms over the Scripture Readings for this 3rd Week in Ordinary Time. The most straightforward answer comes in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus calls, and Peter, Andrew, James, and John respond — not grudgingly, not eventually, but “immediately”! They leave their fishing, they leave their father, and they're on their way [Matthew 4:12-23]. Matthew's gospel has been called a “training manual for disciples,” and shortly the call of the disciples, Jesus will deliver the Sermon on the Mount — perhaps the greatest manifesto of discipleship in all of the gospels. But it is not first and foremost Christ's teachings, but rather Christ's personal call, that animates these first disciples to leave the shores of Galilee and embark on The Way.

We should not forget that whatever the immediacy of their response, the disciples do not leave their flaws, misunderstandings, or humanity behind — a theme made refreshingly clear in the recent series, *The Chosen*. Nor does the second generation of believers. To dispel any illusions, you may have about the assumed idealism of the early Christian community, read Paul's letters to the Corinthians. The scandals, in-fighting, and polarization in first-century Corinth could match anything we see in recent headlines in today's world. In this light, St. Paul's exhortation today speaks through the ages, for division and rivalry are never markers of the Spirit. Likewise, we Catholics should not “belong to Pope Benedict” or “belong to Pope Francis,” for we ultimately belong to Christ [1 Corinthians 1:10-17]. May our church communities strive to exemplify the unity in diversity that Paul labored so mightily to bring about in Corinth.

As healthy and appropriate as our human-relational processes are, God is “totally other” than our way of conduct. God is the Seeker, the One Who is asking, the One Who waits to be gracious to us. It is God who labors with our freedom and attracts us by the smallest and greatest gestures. It is God who seeks our heart, giving us an experience of love and forgiveness — and life.

The opening reading from Isaiah the Prophet ought to sound familiar to us — the reading was used as the opening reading at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve [Isaiah 9:1-4]. It is a promise of deliverance — an historical review leading to a prophetic and hopeful oracle. Distress and gloom have abounded, but gladness and light have replaced them. Two places are mentioned — Zebulun and Naphtali. They were not “shining lights” — until now. The historical truth symbolized by darkness gives way to the delights of a “great light” which leads to freedom from the oppressors and capturing foreigners. All the trappings of war, violence, suppression have “taken wing” and the heaviness of the rods of captivity give way to the experiences of harvest festivals.

Matthew's Gospel makes an introductory mention of these two geographical places as places Jesus visited after His leaving home. Since Matthew is writing for the Jewish converts, he will often remark upon how Jesus lived up to and lived out the “Messianic” prophecies. It is within the context of fulfilling these prophecies that Jesus “drafts” his first four followers.

We have no scriptural picture of Jesus leaving Mary and Joseph and heading into His salvific journey. He departed from the known into the believed. He moved beyond living according to the dictates of the Law to His living according to a specific relationship with the Father Who had baptized Him with His being the “Beloved”. Imagine how Mary, who was left behind, had to live her call to faith as Jesus heads down the road leading to everywhere.

The journey of Jesus leads him into the lives of others. First it was Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. “At once” they left what was familiar to them and followed Jesus. “At once!” Jesus went along the shore and James and John “immediately” left their boat and father to follow Jesus. “Immediately!”

Perhaps all four were bored with the dragging of nets and the familiar — the predictable is very

**THE QUALITIES OF THE CALL:**

Throughout my early life, I was taught that Matthew's Gospel narrates Jesus' call to his first four priests [Matthew 4:12-23]. Nothing could be further from the theology Matthew is trying to convey. When Matthew composed his gospel — in the mid to late 70's — the priesthood as we know it didn't exist. All gospel “calls” by Jesus are simply calls to be a Christian — another Christ. They certainly aren't directed to a specific group of people who exercise one particular ministry in the community. On the contrary, they're addressed to every one of the evangelists' original readers. If we claim to be Christians, they're directed to us. That's why it's essential to look carefully at each element of Jesus' call.

First, these initial disciples are called to follow a person, not an institution with particular sets of rules or regulations or even some philosophic concepts. And they have no idea where this person is leading them. They're just to “come after” him, wherever and whatever that entails. All they know is that people, not fish, will now be the most important element in their lives.

There's no delay — no looking back. They immediately leave their boats, nets, even their father, and “follow him.” Jesus' call marks a new beginning of their lives. Their response is the concrete “repentance” Jesus demands of all his followers — a total change of their value systems. Only those who achieve such a “metanoia” will eventually experience the “kingdom of heaven” — God working effectively — around and among them.

One-way Paul of Tarsus — writing almost 20 years before Matthew — experienced God in his daily life was by the oneness of the Christian community. This seems to be why he's so disturbed by what's happening in the Corinthian church [1 Corinthians 1:10-17]. Its members don't appear to be disturbed at all by the “divisions” among them. They've actually created factions based on who was baptized by whom. The claim “I belong to Christ” seems to be Paul's frustrated reminder that everyone was baptized into Christ, not into Paul or Cephas. And if they were baptized into Christ, they were baptized into his death — a death that they're expected to imitate by becoming one community, freed of all divisions. The Apostle suspects that he has failed at his primary calling — being a preacher of the gospel — since so many in Corinth have, by their separatist actions, “emptied” the cross of Christ of its meaning.

Though Isaiah seems to be referring to a pull-back of invading 8th century BCE Assyrian troops when he mentions a “great light” breaking into what's been a “land of gloom,” we can all identify with his light/darkness imagery [Isaiah 9:1-4]. We often find ourselves looking for any rays of light in this dark world we inhabit. Paul had found one of those light rays in the Corinthian Christian community he evangelized. Now he fears the gloom has returned.

Perhaps we've become so accustomed to the division between clergy and laity which the eventual development of the priesthood created in the church that we rarely reflect on what our Christian communities would be like without that stratification. Growing up as a Catholic boy, I presumed the only “call” worthwhile receiving was the call to be a priest. If I didn't get one of those, then, by default, I guess Christ was calling me to be a married layman.

Back in the 60's and 70's I'd ask students in my high school religion classes if they felt they were inferior members of the church because they weren't priests. Almost all of them answered: “Yes!” I hope that's changed somewhat today. If it hasn't, either we're not listening carefully to Matthew or Paul, or we've been hearing lousy homilies.

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

BE ACCOUNTABLE:

Neither age nor experience matters when it comes to being personally accountable for any and all outcomes.”

—Kory Livingstone

time.

With Matthew's Gospel, we begin our contemplation of Jesus' mission from the perspective of Matthew and his community. Matthew wrote for Jewish Christians who were coming to grips with the implications of the destruction of the Temple. They realized that sacrifice could no longer be the centerpiece of their worship or their sacrament of union with God. They had to discern how Jesus and his message fit with the way God had led them through history. As they were moving through a terrible, painful, yet potential-filled time of transition, Matthew tried to help them understand how Jesus embodied their past and God's plan for their future.

According to Matthew, after Jesus' time of discernment in the desert, he learned that John the Baptist had been arrested. With that, he left Nazareth to reside in Capernaum — a fishing village by the Sea of Galilee — a detail that Matthew recorded to connect Jesus to Isaiah's prophecies. Matthew described Jesus as a prophet on the move, the one foretold and whose life would be in danger from the beginning of his ministry. Matthew depicts Jesus as preaching an exceedingly simple message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" [Matthew 4:12-23]. Exceedingly simple and extremely comprehensive.

While underlining how Jesus fulfilled ancient scriptural promises, Matthew described his proclamation that the fullness of time had dawned — that God's hopes for the world were in the process of coming to completion. Believing in that message would necessarily usher people into a process of metanoia — repentance — a thorough, astonishing reorientation of belief, thinking and action.

As Matthew sets up the story, Jesus preached his simple, radical message as he walked along the seashore — the symbolic space where two vastly different realities touch and define one another. There, after preaching a general invitation to metanoia, Jesus turned to specific people, inviting them to bet their lives on the good news he was announcing.

As we hear this story, we can note two things of great importance. First, after his time of tempting in the desert, Jesus showed no intention of carrying out his mission alone. There are few leaders in history whose followers are remembered as well as the original followers of Jesus. Perhaps this is because, like God who created humanity in the divine image and capable of participating in divine life, Jesus had no plan to be a messiah over people, but rather a force for salvation with and among them. As we know from the Gospels, he shared not only his message and his power, but even promised his disciples that they would do greater things than he did [see John 14:12].

A second key element of this story is the response of the four disciples — the models for all who would follow in their stead. We are told that upon hearing the invitation, they took him up on it with all the abandon and enthusiasm of people who are falling in love.

We can be sure that some of their family and friends tried to talk sense into them, citing the fact that Jesus was a dreamer with no powerful backing and that his reputation and message were too close to John the Baptist for anyone's comfort or safety. Such arguments failed to sway them. Like everyone who moves beyond infatuation and commits to lifelong loving, Jesus' followers had much to learn as they fleshed out their vocation to be bearers of the good news. While metanoia may begin in a moment of crashing insight, it must be integrated into all the dimensions of one's life.

Today, we are invited to remember our moments of metanoia and reflect on how we have integrated them into the project of our lives. By no means is everyone called to leave behind their metaphorical nets and travel as apostolic disciples. Nevertheless, Emmanuel calls all who bear the name Christian to so believe that the reign of God is among us that we center our lives publicly around that astounding truth. Then, people who walk in darkness will see a great light.

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



unexciting. More likely the quickness of their responses is Matthew's way of presenting the dramatic nature of the call of God. Matthew has these four people respond "without hesitation" because the call of Jesus just seems right and good — and besides, they are promised better fishing somewhere else.

Jesus and the band of quick-discerners went around the area catching new kinds of fish. They did the good which the people needed done. They healed and spoke of the Good News which was then beginning to happen. The past is moving into the "Kingdom" of the active God. Illnesses and sicknesses were a sign of evil and sin. Jesus begins the work of salvation by beginning His battle with the Prince of Darkness. And what is amazing is that the "demons" know exactly Who Jesus is and what His kingdom is.

In preparing young people for marriage, I often ask both persons to give me some factual reasons why they are marrying this person sitting next to them. They usually fumble around for words and images, but if they really love each other, the answer always is relational — it is relational; it just is sound; it is right; and it is mysterious.

Jesus is the initiating relator Who invites us to move past "logic" and to enter into the world of "living." Logic in relationships is imprisoning — it binds us to our minds. Discernment is not a decision-making faculty, but a way of living beyond gravity. It does not demand information about what's coming next. It is a growing sense that the inviting, self-initiating, loving God is laboring to bring us out of the familiar into the freedom of faith. Discernment asks only: "Who's in charge?"

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

ENTER THE DANCE:

A good dancer who knows how to lead is art in motion. They have the ability to make even a bad dancer look good — or even a bad dancer feel like they are a good dancer! They can move their partner so subtly — through a gentle touch, a gaze — that the partner willingly follows, trusting their lead. Confident in the other, the partner follows the direction of the lead without even realizing it, just enjoying the process and beauty of the movement.

Perhaps this is why we love to watch the first dance at a wedding. The couple, each confident in the other's love, can only gaze at each other. Eyelash to eyelash with someone, there is a great deal of intimacy and vulnerability in that gaze. Yet that is the very meaning of the word reconciliation — to be eyelash to eyelash again. When we have an eyelash to eyelash moment with the Lord — perhaps in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Adoration, or in the Word — we are changed. We can't go back to who we were before; the Lord has entered in and we must respond.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Deus Caritas Est* that "being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." We can trace the encounter with the person of Jesus in the lives of the Saints, because their lives begin to take a "decisive direction." Is this what Peter, Andrew, James and John encountered [Matthew 4:12-23]?

Perhaps when we think about reconciliation and repentance, instead of focusing on what we are leaving behind, we can instead see the dance of the Master Who is ever so gently turning us toward Himself and a new horizon. He is bringing us eyelash to eyelash to see His Heart.

—taken from the writings of Sister Mary Claire of the Holy Family, S.O.L.T., which appears on the internet in *Blessed is She*

WE LOVE BECAUSE GOD LOVES US:

We do not love those who oppose us because they are lovable, or even likable. We love them because God loves them. And by our love, we seek their conversion and friendship, not their humiliation. This is our Christian duty in this moment — to be healers and peacemakers, to overcome evil and lies, not by more of the same, but with words of truth and works of love.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.



THE BATTLE IS ON:

In our times, what forms of darkness do we live in? The theme of light and darkness runs through the entirety of the Bible, starting with the Book of Genesis all the way to the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the Cross. What is God's word call us to see in His light — not only in the history of our salvation that is presented to us in the bible, but in our own particular and individual histories? What forms of darkness overshadow us in our own lives?

There are many — loneliness, rejection, betrayals of our love and our friendship, family feuds, the loss of the love we once knew, divorce, unfaithfulness — to name a just a few of them. The threat of terrorism darkens all of our days. The depressed economy looms over us with its loss of jobs and inability to find work. Then there is violence and death on our border with Mexico, along with the darkness that covers our nation's politics. In our individual lives, we must so many times deal with loss — loss of our loved ones, loss of our ideals, loss of our hopes and our dreams. Loss is always a time of darkness — so very many times in our lives we suffer losses. We are members of the human family, and too often we suffer the consequences that flow from decisions made by others. Human sins have their effects on us — sometimes directly, most of the time indirectly. Many times, we suffer forms of darkness flowing not only from our own decisions, but from the decisions of others. God's will is that we be responsible. It is not God's will that we act irresponsibly or sinfully or in ways that bring pain to ourselves and to others.

What is the importance of the light that comes from God — the light that shines in the darkness that surrounds us? When you look into the lives of great people, you will come to discover one common golden thread that weaves throughout them all — they did not allow adversity to flatten them, to drain them of their courage, to empty them of their faith and their hope. None of them were deadened by the dark spirit of defeatism — that evil spirit that is one of the devil's most effective weapons. The Light of God of which I speak is God's Holy spirit — the One who was present in God's creation when God overcame the darkness and uttered His creating command: "Let there be light" [Genesis 1:3]. Everything that exists originates in the energies found in God's light.



When one loses hope, one thrashes around in real darkness. When one loses courage and simply gives up, one's soul is deeply darkened. Our great heroes and heroines did not allow themselves to yield to defeatism. The stories of Washington, Lincoln, Joan of Arc, Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale, Pope John Paul II, Mahatma Gandhi, and the stories of our other greats all share on common theme — they never allowed the flame of faith and hope to be extinguished within them. In the face of total darkness there burned within them a fire that we Christians call the flame of the Holy Spirit — that Spirit that raised Jesus from His dark tomb into the light that was the dawn of God's New Creation.

The Prophet Isaiah has it right: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen: [Isaiah 9:1-4].

Am I distressed by the political warring going on in the halls of our Congress? Yes, I certainly am. But do I think the end of our Republic is at hand? No, I certainly do not. Am I distressed at the attacks launched worldwide by Islamic extremists? Yes, I am. But do I think they will bring about the collapse of Western civilization? No, I certainly do not. Can an alcoholic find recovery? Yes. Will our American economy return to full employment? Yes. Is there life after betrayal by a loved one? Is there life after divorce? Yes. Things may not work out exactly as we may have hoped and intended, but things will eventually work out.

On October 29, 1941, UK Prime Minister, Winston Churchill visited his old Alma Mater, Harrow School, to speak to its graduating students. Churchill stood before them and said: "Never give in, never

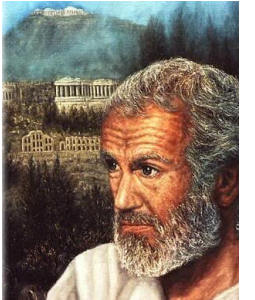
Liturgy of the Hours, regularly for the world. But I do it too, more personally, for another reason — the older I get, the less confident, in some ways, I am becoming. I don't always know whether I'm following Christ properly or even know exactly what it means to follow Christ, and so I stake my faith on an invitation that Jesus left us on the night before he died: To break bread and drink wine in his memory and to trust that this, if all else is uncertain, is what we should be doing while we wait for him to return.

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

HEALING DIVISIONS:

In his letter to the Church at Corinth, Paul takes on the serious problem of divisions in the Corinthian church [1 Corinthians 1:10-17]. About five years after he founded that community in 51 AD, Paul is told by associates of Chloe — a prominent female citizen — that rivalries had developed in the church. It seems Christians were identifying exclusively with one or the other leader — Cephas [Peter], Apollos, or Paul himself. Paul makes the case for unity with a series of rhetorical questions — "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" The Apostle to the Gentiles goes on to point out that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with "the wisdom of human eloquence," but with emphasis on the meaning of the cross of Christ. It seems that Paul is arguing that the way to bring various factions together is by concentrating on the essential Gospel message of salvation through the crucified and risen Christ.

Corinthian factionalism has plagued the church throughout its history. In 1054, the longstanding differences between Eastern and Western Christianity issued in mutual excommunications, leaving us with the continuing split between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century issued in the ongoing separation of Catholics and Protestants as well as hundreds of different Protestant denominations. Within the Catholic Church today we find disagreements between various groups; for example, between conservatives and progressives. Sometimes religious differences lead to polarization and demonization of opponents. In other situations, the differences foster dialogue that moves toward mutual respect and agreement on fundamental truths.



During his pontificate Pope Francis has consistently centered his teaching and ministry on Jesus Christ and his law of love — especially his care for the poor and marginalized. This has grounded his efforts to promote ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

At the grassroots, ordinary Christians follow the same Pauline strategy in coming together around fundamental convictions. A Catholic wife and Protestant husband, for instance, have maintained their marriage by going to Catholic Mass together on Saturday afternoon and to Protestant worship on Sunday morning. They share the common belief that Christ is truly present when two or three are gathered in his name. A conservative Catholic teacher befriended a progressive Catholic business man after they collaborated on establishing a food distribution program for the poor in their parish — a friendship rooted in their shared belief that Christ calls us to feed the hungry.

What can you do to overcome division in your church and community?

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

MOVING FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT:

The Scripture Readings for this 3rd Week in Ordinary Time, begins with Isaiah the Prophet telling us: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light!" [Isaiah 9:1-4]. I bet you thought the Christmas season was over. According to some, it ended on Jan. 9th; others opt for a 40-day Christmas season, lasting until Feb. 2nd — the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Matthew's Gospel, which ends with Christ's promise to be with us always [see Matthew 28], reminds us that all time is now Emmanuel

STRUGGLING WITH OUR OWN INADEQUACY:

Jesus said: “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men” [Matthew 4:12-23]. It is hard to measure up. In our lucid moments we admit this. Rarely is there a day when we could not echo these words by Anna Blaman: “I realized that it was simply impossible for a human being to be and remain good or pure. If, for instance, I wanted to be attentive in one direction, it could only be at the cost of neglecting another. If I gave my heart to one thing, it left another in the cold. No day and no hour go by without my being guilty of inadequacy. We never do enough, and what we do is never well enough done, except being inadequate, which we are good at because that is the way we are made. This is true of me and of everyone else.”

Every day and every hour brings with it its weight of moral guilt — as regards my work and my relations with others. I am constantly catching myself out in my human failings, and, in spite of their being implied in my human imperfection, I am conscious of a sort of check. And this means that my human shortcomings are also my human guilt. It sounds strange that we should be guilty where we can do nothing about it. But even where there is no set purpose, no deliberate intention, we have a conviction of our own shortcomings, and of consensual guilt, a guilt which shows itself all too clearly in the consequences of what we have done or left undone.

Henri Nouwen occasionally expressed similar feelings: “There is a nagging sense that there are unfinished tasks, unfulfilled promises, unrealized proposals. There is always something else that we should have remembered, done, or said. There are always people we did not speak to, write to, or visit. Thus, although we are very busy, we also have a lingering feeling of never really fulfilling our obligations. A gnawing sense of being unfulfilled underlies our filled lives.”

When we are in touch with ourselves, we can relate to these words, these expressions of inadequacy. At the end of the day, we cannot measure up and cannot fail to disappoint others and ourselves. Generally, the fault is not that we are insincere or that we do not put out the effort. The fault is that we are human. We have limited resources, get tired, experience feelings we cannot control, have only 24 hours in our day, have too many demands on us, have wounds and weaknesses that shackle us, and thus know exactly what St. Paul meant when he said: “Woe to me, wretch that I am, the good I want to do, I cannot do; and the evil I want to avoid, I end up doing” [see Romans 7]!

That may sound negative, neurotic, and stoic, and it can be those things, but, appropriated properly, it can generate hope and renewed energy in our lives. To be human is to be inadequate, by definition. Only God is adequate and the rest of us can safely say to ourselves: Fear not you are inadequate! But a God who made us this way surely gives us the slack, the forgiveness, and the grace we need to work with this. Personally, I take consolation from the gospel parable of the ten bridesmaids who, while waiting for the bridegroom, all fell asleep, wise and the foolish alike. Even the wise were too human and too weak to stay awake the whole time [see Matthew 25]. Nobody does it perfectly and, accepting this, our congenital inadequacy, can bring us to a healthy humility and perhaps even to a healthy humor about it.

But it should bring us to something more: prayer, especially the Eucharist. The Eucharist is, among other things, a vigil of waiting. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he told the disciples to keep celebrating it until he returned again. A biblical scholar, Gerhard Lofink, puts it this way: “The early apostolic communities cannot be understood outside of the matrix of intense expectation. They were communities imminently awaiting Christ’s return. They gathered in Eucharist, among other reasons, to foster and sustain this awareness — namely, that they were living in wait, waiting for Christ to return.”

I try to celebrate Eucharist every day. I do this because I am a priest and part of the covenant a priest makes with the church at his ordination is to pray the priestly prayer of Jesus, the Eucharist and the



give in, never; never; never; never — in nothing, great or small, large or petty — never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense.”

Albert Einstein did not speak until he was 4 years old, and did not read until he was 7. His parents thought he was “sub-normal”, and one of his teachers described him as “mentally slow, unsociable, and adrift forever in foolish dreams.” He was expelled from school and was refused admittance to the Zurich Polytechnic School. He did eventually learn to speak and read, and even did math!

Henry Ford failed and went broke five times before he succeeded.

Babe Ruth is famous for his past home run record, but for decades he also held the record for strikeouts. He hit 714 home runs and struck out 1,330 times in his career. He once declared: “Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.”

Jesus confronted the forces of darkness by turning Satan’s victory into everlasting defeat. The Bible personifies the forces of darkness in giving them a name — the Prince of Darkness, Satan, or Lucifer. As members of Christ, we must do the same confronting in our lives. St. Paul reminds us that we, in Christ, carry on that epic struggle against the forces of darkness arrayed against us.

It is the intention and goal of the Prince of Darkness to disable you from revealing God’s presence here on earth. He accomplishes that purpose by filling us with thoughts of inferiority and inability, by filling us with a sense of failure and futility. The Prince of Darkness likewise presents you with seductive opportunities, or with concerns that absolutely captivate your attention and keep you from considering the presence of God within your heart, mind, and soul. You can identify Satan’s presence when you encounter doubt, discouragement, disillusionment, depression, defeat, despair, and finally death — the death of God’s life in your soul. When we encounter those works of Satan, you and I need to expose them to God’s Light — the Light of the World that we receive from Christ. That is why coming to Mass and receiving Our Blessed Lord in Holy Communion isn’t something that is simply “nice” — it is essential. It is truly the Bread of Life that nourishes and sustains us — particularly when we feel weak.

And so today, I leave you with this vision of St. Paul, who in writing to the Roman Christians who were suffering in dark persecution, wrote: “What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” [Romans 8:31-39].

Do Not allow the work of the Prince of Darkness to separate you from the love of God that comes to you in Christ Jesus our Lord. Along with Jesus at your side, snatch victory out of defeat.

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

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

We are currently discerning a new group of Eucharistic Ministers who would undergo training within the next month. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be a Senior in High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are in need of ministers for both our Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. **Contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you feel called to this ministry.** We are always in need of Eucharistic Ministers.



THE 100th MONKEY:

Today's homily is about the kingdom of God and Japanese monkeys. The kingdom of God is, of course, the centerpiece of Matthew's gospel. It is also at the heart of our faith. Matthew tells us that as Jesus begins his ministry he begins to proclaim: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" [Matthew 4:12-23]. Jesus proclaims that the kingdom is drawing close, and we believe through his death and resurrection that the kingdom has begun. But what do we mean when we talk about the kingdom of God?

The answer is found in a very familiar place, in a prayer that most of us say daily — the Lord's Prayer. In it we pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The kingdom of God is when the will of God is established on earth, when the world becomes the way God wants it to be. That day will be good news for all of us. When God's will is established — when the kingdom is established — evil will be destroyed. When the kingdom comes, there will be no more poverty or war, no more hatred or injustice, no more corruption or violence. Instead, when God's will becomes real on earth, there will only be abundance and peace, love and kindness, harmony and justice. This, then, is the kingdom that Jesus proclaims and we believe is coming. Moreover, we believe that we have a role in establishing God's will on earth. So as Christians we believe that the kingdom is coming and we are called to build it.

So how are we doing? For all the good actions and works done by Christians and others throughout the world, are we closer to the kingdom today than we were in the time of Jesus? Are we closer to the kingdom today than we were last century or last year? When we ask this question, the results are mixed. We can point to many points of progress, many places where justice is growing and where peace is being established. Yet at the same time we can point to many signs that the kingdom is not yet here — war and violence, injustice, and corruption — they are still a part of our world. With so many factors in our world that are contrary to God's will, how do we maintain our belief that the kingdom is coming? How do we continue to take seriously our role in building it?

Here is where the Japanese monkeys come in. There is a report floating around the internet about a group of scientists who were conducting an experiment between 1952 and 1958 with the species of Japanese monkey, called *Macaca Fuscata*. The place for this experiment was the island of Koshima in Japan. On this island there were thousands of monkeys. The scientists chose to introduce something unusual into the environment so that they could see how the monkeys would react. They cut up pieces of sweet potato and threw them onto the beach. The monkeys loved the sweet potatoes, but they were frustrated by the fact that the sand from the beach adhered to the sweet potatoes. So they kept trying to figure out what to do about this.

An eighteen-month-old monkey who the scientists named Imo was the first to come to a solution. She figured out that if you took the sweet potato and brought it to a stream, you could wash off the sand. She was delighted at this discovery and shared it with her mother who began to share it with some of the other adults in their particular tribe. The scientists watched how the monkeys gradually showed one another how to add this improvement to their lives. However, the progress was slow. Even though there were thousands of monkeys on the island, over the period of six years only 99 learned to wash their sweet potatoes. Then one morning in October of 1958, the 100th monkey learned how to wash her sweet potato. For reasons that the scientists still cannot explain, all the monkeys on the island started washing their sweet potatoes by the evening of that same day. The scientists call this the Hundredth Monkey Phenomena. Their theory is that if something new is learned, there comes a critical point when one more person learns it and then there is a breakthrough. Suddenly the new knowledge spreads to the rest of the population.



happy to be able to be busy with other patients, and the lawyer waits for death to complete his responsibilities, and the social worker has no programs for the comatose, the family looks to the priest for hope and consolation. That's what I'm doing here."

A couple of years ago I was speaking to a seminarian who was helping out at the International Institute for the Clergy. I told him that he was entering the greatest life in the world. He responded: "Yeah, I guess priests really do have it easy. They have everything that they could desire. They routinely go on vacations that most people would long to go on once in their lives." I told him that he completely misunderstood me. I certainly hope that he was not becoming a priest for the sake of some temporal benefits. If he was, I'm afraid that he wouldn't last very long. God takes care of his priests, true, but he also expects more from them than anyone other than a priest could imagine. What I tried to express to the seminarian was that the priesthood was the greatest life in the world because it was thoroughly about Jesus. The priest acts in the person of Jesus — "Personna Christi" — by virtue of the call of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit. No action of a person's life can be greater than acting in the person of the Lord. At the same time, when I'm at priests' meetings I'll often think: "We are a strange looking lot." Priests have more idiosyncrasies, more foibles than the average male. Maybe that's because we don't have wives to keep us in line.

Sometimes I think that individuals are chosen to be priests who themselves can best demonstrate that God can work through anyone. And that is what makes being a priest so very exciting. The priest realizes that somehow or other God does his work despite the human being he uses. No one should feel discouraged from being a priest — or a brother or sister for that matter — because he or she does not feel worthy enough. Who is? And no one should be deprived of the opportunity to become a priest — or a brother or sister for that matter — because relatives want something else for them. To discourage a vocation is to discourage a person from entering into the greatest life in the world. There was a day, not all that long ago, when the people felt obliged to provide priests and sisters from their family for the future of the Church. "Who is going to be the priest in our family?" they would ask. I don't believe that we need to go back to the methodology of the past, but we do need to embrace the Christian, Catholic attitudes that motivated the people to seek among themselves those who would be open to the call of the Lord and encourage them to follow him. This week, pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. May more and more of our young men and women receive the call. May they listen to the call. May they follow, and, may they allow the Spirit to work through them.

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

LIVING THE GOOD NEWS:

Believing in the good news means having an encounter with Jesus Christ. The apostles didn't leave their families, homes, and jobs because they believed in an ideal. Rather it was coming face-to-face with Jesus that moved them. Meeting Jesus changed everything for them.

We cannot have the same face-to-face encounter with Jesus that the apostles enjoyed. But that doesn't mean that our encounters with Jesus are any less real. We are still able to meet the Risen Lord when we read the Bible, receive the Sacraments, and serve our sisters and brothers who are his living body. We are not on fire for our faith because we like to follow rules; rather it is because we have met and fallen in love with Jesus Christ. This personal relationship with him that we have through faith and the ministry of the Church drives everything that we are about.

Believing in the good news also means that we must follow him. Our life of faith can be understood as a journey with Jesus leading the way. It means that, like the apostles, we have to give up our own plans and put our trust in God and His plan for us. It is not easy because very often the road is steep and the pathway rocky. We will not always see where it is headed, and we will stumble frequently along the way. We will see our friends walking a different way that seems easier, and we will be tempted to join them. But God will give us the strength and the courage to follow Him. And we will be blessed with joy because we are with Jesus.

—taken from the writings of Douglas Sousa, which appear on the internet

THE CALL:

Peter and Andrew, James and John heard the call of the Lord, dropped everything and followed Jesus [Matthew 4:12-23]. They were not the sort of people anyone would suspect of being religious. They were common, everyday people — fishermen. They were not the sort of people anyone would suspect could convince others to change their lives. They were common, everyday people — fishermen. They were not the sort of people that anyone would suspect could take the position of leadership in the conversion of the world. They were common, everyday people — fishermen. But they were called. They responded. And God worked his wonders through them.

They and their companions were not an easy bunch to train in the Lord's way. They just couldn't seem to get the message straight. They wanted Jesus to call down fire and brimstone on the Samaritans [see Luke 9:54]. They fought with each other over who would have the greatest authority in the Kingdom of Heaven [see Mark 9:33-34]. They ran in fear when Jesus was arrested [see Mark 14:52]. There must have been times that Mary just rolled her eyes when she heard about the antics of these characters. They were difficult to teach in the ways of the Lord, but they did learn and as a result we are here, members of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Of course, the disciples had a secret teacher, a mystical teacher — they had the Holy Spirit. Filled with the Holy Spirit they were able to transform their lives and convey the joy of serving Christ to their companions.

The Scripture Readings for this 3rd Week in Ordinary Time have led me to a reflection on the vocation to the priesthood and religious life. I wish I could find a way to communicate to you — and particularly to our young people — my feelings about the priesthood. For me, the priesthood is the greatest life possible. I am certain that many of our married and our committed single people can also say: "For me, this is the greatest life possible."

Sometimes I'm called upon in emergency situations to bring the sacraments to a person I have never met. If I only did that once in my life, my life would have meaning and purpose — but this is an everyday event for a priest. I've been blessed to be able to do this for fifty years. The ancient writers of the psalms and wisdom literature spoke about their longing to sit at the gates of the city and meditate on Scripture. The priest is obliged to do this every day. We pray the Liturgy of the Hours — which is basically psalms and readings from scripture. We prepare homilies. Sometimes we need a break from preaching. Sometimes you need a break from our preaching.

But it is a wonderful life to be obligated to spend so much time with the Word of God. Then there is the Mass. The Mass! One of my main motivation to become a priest was to be able to celebrate Mass. It is beyond my imagining that God would allow human beings to act in His Person and recreate the offering of His Son at the Last Supper and on the Cross, but that is what happens every time the priest celebrates Mass.

I have to tell you an experience I had way back when I was a deacon — less than a year away from being ordained a priest. At the time I used to help out as a chaplain at Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. I took a class at Ohio State University for new priests, lawyers, doctors, nurses and social workers. The purpose of the class was to develop a professional inter-disciplinary approach for people in critical situations. When we got together the first night in our inter-professional groups, the social worker objected to my presence. "What does he have to offer? Just a lot of mumble jumble. He shouldn't be here?" Everyone looked at me for a response. Having spent the last two years working with on the oncology floor, it was easy for me to answer her question. I just stated what I had experienced: "When the doctor says: 'We'll do our best to keep the patient comfortable until the end comes,' and the nurse is

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Now this Japanese experiment might be nothing more than an urban legend, but it makes a point that is remarkably close to the teaching of the Jewish rabbis on God's kingdom. When questioned why God was taking so long to establish the kingdom, the rabbis concluded that God was waiting for a certain response from humanity before sending the Messiah. Moreover, the rabbis believed that God had a particular number of good works in mind. Therefore, the rabbis warned their followers never to underestimate the value of one good work — never pass by an opportunity for one mitzvah. One action of loving kindness might be the action to reach the number for which God was waiting — one mitzvah might allow the Messiah to come.

You and I continue to believe that it is God's intention to establish the kingdom. We would be served well to learn from both the Hundredth Monkey Phenomena and the teaching of the early Jewish rabbis. Never undervalue the importance of a single good work, a single act of loving kindness. Every one of your actions offered in faith is valuable and important. Never say to yourself that even a small work can be discounted. Shoveling the driveway for your neighbor next door, spending a few moments with a co-worker who is undergoing family problems, being patient with your parents or with your spouse might seem like small actions. But each one builds the kingdom. Do not hold back from seizing the opportunity to do them. For even a small action might be the action that allows the Messiah to return. Even a simple action of loving kindness on your part might be the addition that tips the scales and establishes the kingdom of God. —taken from the writings of Father George Smiga., which appear on the internet.

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — FEBRUARY 18th:

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. This is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

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 A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS — EMBRACING CHANGE:

It was the spring semester of my freshman year when everything seemed to fall apart. My first semester of college hadn't been too bad — I had made the hall basketball team, gotten pretty decent grades, and had made a few friends along the way. But in January of that year, I found myself facing my second knee surgery due to a basketball injury, rapidly falling grades, and a much more hostile environment around my “friend” group. My mood and outlook for the future was pretty dreary as everything piled up. I didn't want to pray, I didn't want to study and it was hard to find any positives at all when you are stuck on crutches and are constantly bullied. I quickly became secluded, pessimistic, and nearly friendless.

What did I have to look forward to? Where was I supposed to find motivation to keep going? For all I knew this is what all of college was going to be like — stuck being the broken kid who it was easy to make fun of, never amounting to anything of worth. My self-esteem and faith were in the dumps. It all seemed downhill from here.

As the semester progressed, things started to turn around. Physical therapy helped me ditch the crutches, my English professor, helped me improve my grades, and I cut out of my life people who enjoyed tearing me down more than building me up. Slowly but surely, progress was made. My outlook on the future also started to change — I had been so caught up in the bleakness of the immediate past that I had failed to think about the entire chapter of life I was in. The stagnant feeling my life had started to take on was escapable — it wasn't going to last forever.

Sitting in the chapel one day, I realized the truth — that this rough patch wasn't what all that college was going to be like. Yes, there were going to be ups-and-downs throughout college — and all of life for that matter — but no matter what happened, I could persevere in the long-run.

That spring semester was a very tough time to endure, but once I started to focus on the big picture, I recognized an incredibly important fact — I can change. There is power in accepting that. Recognizing that you have the ability to change is like realizing you have a superpower. Whether it be social skills, studying abilities, waking up on time or any other traits, these can all be developed and improved — you're never truly as stuck as you might think you are.

A recent study from a professor at the University of Texas even suggests that young people who are able to recognize their ability to change can use that as a powerful coping skill to handle stress, insecurity, and other anxieties or pressures. In part of the study, two groups of students were assigned stressful tasks. They were given a five-minute speech about what factors make teenagers popular, and then count backwards, out loud, from 996 — by sevens. Before the tasks, one group of students participated in a reading and writing exercise intended to instill in them the basic fact that people can change, while a second group didn't.

Brain studies after the tasks showed that the group who participated in the change exercise prior to the stressful tasks had significantly less blood-pressure reactivity and a 10% drop in cortisol levels — which is a stress hormone. Meanwhile, the other group that didn't learn about the ability to change saw their cortisol levels increase by 45%. These results show that the students who knew it was possible to change were able to cope, adapt, and handle the stress that they faced.

In the words of Albert Einstein: “The measure of intelligence is the ability to change.”

When something stressful comes up in your life, do you believe you can get through it? And if that answer is at first “no”, do you believe that you can change in order to eventually get through it? This is the question we need to ask ourselves. For you, it might not be a sports injury, or issues with bullying that are causing a dreary outlook on the future — maybe it's a fear of not being smart enough to get into the college you want, or feeling betrayed by a friend because of a guy or girl you both liked. Whatever



the situations are, the important thing to remember is that you can change — as can other people around you. Don't let anyone tell you you're “not good enough”, “you won't ever amount to anything”, or “you'll always be like this.”

God did not create us as pre-programmed robots — He made us to have free will and the abilities to learn, grow, adapt, and adjust. We all have the ability to change because we are all loved by a God whose grace and love for us is unchanging. Recall what the prophet Isaiah says: “See, I am doing something new!” And then the prophet continues: “In the wilderness I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers” [Isaiah 43:19]. If God can make a way through the wilderness of my freshman year of college, then He can most definitely flow a river through any wasteland in your own life. If you desire change in your life, look to Him.

Whether it's changing names — Abram, Sarai, Simon, etc. — or changing hearts — Saul, Paul, Thomas, etc. — our God is well-versed in both bringing about change while remaining constant Himself. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” [Hebrews 13:8]. While the rest of the world will fade away and turn to dust, Jesus Christ is the one constant.

If you're facing stress or feeling stuck in a discouraging situation, have hope! There is only one thing in this entire world that is a guarantee — hint: it's not that you'll never be able to be happy with your reflection in the mirror, or you won't get to be proud of your report card. It's that God loves you, and is right by your side as you strive to change, and to conquer whatever comes your way.

“For I, the Lord, do not change, and you, sons of Jacob, do not cease to be” [Malachi 3:6].

—taken from the writings of Jay Martin, a college student

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Hebrews 9:15-28, Mark 3:22-30
Tuesday:	Hebrews 10:1-10, Mark 3:31-35
Wednesday:	Acts 22:3-16, Acts 9:1-22, Mark 16:15-18
Thursday:	2 Timothy 1:1-8, Titus 1:1-5, Mark 4:21-25
Friday:	Hebrews 10:32-39, Mark 4:26-34
Saturday:	Hebrews 11:1-19, Mark 4:35-41

4th Week in Ordinary Time: Zephaniah 2:3-13, 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Matthew 5:1-12

LIFE TEEN and EDGE:

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

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



LIFE TEEN