

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer to Know God ~

**Jesus
My shepherd,
Lead me out
Of my wanderings and weakness.
Set me on the path
Of holiness and wholeness.**

**Guard me against the lure
Of easy answers
And quick fixes.
Strengthen me
With patient endurance
In my struggle
To know you
And to conform to your image.**

**Attune me
That I may recognize your voice
And follow your way.
Clear my heart
And mind.**

**Open the way
For the gifts and fruits
Of your Holy Spirit
To become a reality in my life.
Amen.**

Our Lady Chapel



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

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:

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

BLESSING OF THROATS:

Friday of this past week, February 3rd, was the Feast of St. Blaise. Blaise was a physician and regarded as a righteous man. At an early age, he was elected bishop by the citizens of Sebaste [Armenia]. Beyond those few facts, much of what we know of Blaise comes from legends. A miraculous cure of the boy suffering from the fish bone is attributed to St. Blaise, and because Blaise had been a physician — all lead to the belief that St. Blaise could cure most illnesses but especially those of the throat. As early as the ninth century in the Western Church, he was invoked for throat ailments, and by the 15th century, the blessing of the throat ritual had begun. **We will be blessing throats after our Masses this weekend.**

**INDOOR CHAPEL PICNIC — FEBRUARY 19:**

Put this date aside; mark your calendars! Our Chapel Indoor Picnic is returning following a COVID Hiatus. Sunday, February 19th is the date. What better way to spend a winter day — and the Sunday before Lent starts — than by having an **indoor picnic in the middle of winter — a great idea.** So here it comes once again. It will be a great event for the entire family. The picnic will be held in the **Commons** from **11:15 AM – 1:15 PM.** **Family Mass takes place at 10:00 AM** and the picnic begins right after Mass. **The menu for the day is being planned.** The rest will be pot luck. **Families are asked to sign up on the Easel in the vestibule of the chapel.** Please feel free to bring your favorite side dish or desert if you wish. Come and enjoy family and friends. **Get your Bingo fingers ready.** In order to properly prepare for our picnic, we ask that you please **RSVP by February 15th to Patty [440-473-3560]** in the chapel office, or simply **sign the sheet on the easel in the narthex of the chapel.**

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

Faith Education meets next on Sunday, February 26th and then again on Sunday, March 5th at 8:45 AM. There are no classes on Sunday, February 12th [Super-Bowl Sunday] or February 19th [Presidents' Day]. 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.** 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

**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.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- 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 William Rogal, father of Jill, who is undergoing treatment for kidney issues.
- For Susan Vance-Johnson, sister of Chief Advancement Strategy Officer, Ray Murphy, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Brother Dan Kane, C.S.C., long-time Brother in Residence here at Gilmour, who is undergoing medical treatment for health issues.

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Karuna Singla, Sister-in-law of Science teacher, Neena Goel, aunt of Nikhil ['13] and Nupur ['17] Goel.
- For Shirley Donley.
- For Dennis Sating
- For Jean Caputo, mother of Jeff ['83]
- For Larry Pitorak
- For Evelyn Bibbo, mother of Randall ['71] and Donald ['72] Bibbo.
- For Frank Karfes, father of James Karfes ['85]
- For Ethel Nagy, mother of Lazlo Nagy, grandmother of Rich ['16] and Josh Nagy
- For Sister Mercia Maddigan, O.S.U.
- For Ann Dornback, mother of David Dornback ['78]
- For Charles Walsh, grandfather of Joey DiNovo ['26]
- For Frank Lauria
- For Sister Janelle Strancensky, S.N.D.
- For Philip O'Neil ['50], father of Katherine O'Neil ['88], Sarah Hannibal ['89], and Ann Fitzgerald ['92, and grandfather of Henry Hannibal ['28]
- For Richard Zakrajsek, father of Associate Figure Skating Coach, Terri Messner.
- For Danielle Clark, sister-in-law of Fine and Performing Arts Program Coordinator, Lucas Clark.
- For Angela Wahl.
- For Louise Rathke, grandmother of Father Zach Rathke, C.S.C.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

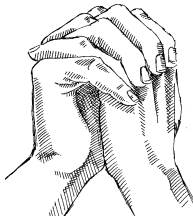
- For the Holy Cross Religious in Haiti, and for the people of that country, which is under siege because of political and civil strife.
- For a family going through a difficult time.
- For an end to violence and racial injustice in our society.
- For an end to sexual abuse and lack of respect for human 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.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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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 Laurie Lozier, sister of Fathers Bill and Jim Lies, C.S.C, who has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of dementia.
- 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 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 under the care of hospice following a fall.
- 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 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.



NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, February 15th 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, February 5: 5 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, February 6: St. Paul Miki	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, February 7:	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, February 8:	Check with Office for time
Thursday, February 9:	Check with Office for time
Friday, February 10: St. Scholastica	Check with Office for time
Saturday, February 11: 6 th Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, February 12: 6 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

LOVE BEARS FRUIT:

Against my own best intentions, I find myself continually striving to acquire power. When I give advice, I want to know whether it is being followed; when I offer help, I want to be thanked; when I give money, I want it to be used my way; when I do something good, I want to be remembered. I might not get a statue, or even a memorial plaque, but I am constantly concerned that I not be forgotten, that somehow I will live on in the thoughts and deeds of others.

But the father of the prodigal son [See Luke 15:11-32] is not concerned about himself. His long-suffering life has emptied him of his desires to keep in control of things. His children are his only concern; to them he wants to give himself completely, and for them he wants to pour out all of himself. Can I give without wanting anything in return, love without putting any conditions on my love? Considering my immense need for human recognition and affection, I realize that it will be a lifelong struggle. But I am also convinced that each time I step over this need and act free of my concern for return, I can trust that my life can truly bear the fruits of God’s Spirit.

—Henri Nouwen

A REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:

We have been seeing the theme of light a lot lately in the liturgy. Beginning with the Christmas season — the season of lights — and now with Jesus calling us to be lights in our world [Matthew 5:13-16]. We can say that we are beginning to see the Light. The Light of course is Jesus of Whom the prophets foretell. Jesus has come to fulfill those prophecies and also our human and individual need for being led out of darkness. To “educate” is literally “to lead out”, and Jesus is presented, not only as savior, but the One Who teaches, or enlightens.

In order to be ready and open to the working of the Lord, we need to start with ourselves — we bring our best and our worst selves to be blessed and called for the unexpected surprises of our ordinary days. We need to become more attentive to how God has been and is active within the moments of each day.

The prophet Isaiah opens our Scriptural reflection for this 5th Week in Ordinary Time. He tells us that the light will break forth like the dawn in us when we share our food, when we clothe those who are naked, when we don't turn our back on the suffering brothers and sisters in the human family. If we remove oppression through laws, community behavior, attitudes of the self-centered, attend to those who are starving for the good, whether that is food, education, beauty, clean water or whatever else the human family genuinely thirsts for, then the light will rise, and the gloom of our world will transform to midday [Isaiah 58:7-11].

This pronouncement of a prophet hundreds of years before Jesus should challenge us to listen closely to Jesus' words in the Gospel about being the light of the world. The light comes from living in God's presence. To be with God is to be an agent for God's mercy in the harsh places of the world.

The context from which Isaiah's admonition is taken is an instruction from God about true fasting. Doing penance is not about rolling around in ashes and hanging ones head in shame; it is more positive and life-giving — it has more to do with what one does for the good of others than what penance does for one's self.

The gloom and darkness which the prophet announces is personal, soul-felt, shame, and personal negativity. For the person who can give food to the poor, clothe the naked, give shelter to the homeless, the personal gloom and doom will be lifted and midday brightness will occur. The sins of darkness are those of deliberate neglect of strangers and kin. There is a divine payoff. When the request from God is heard and accomplished, the prayers addressed to God will likewise be heard, and God will say: “Here I am!”

Matthew's Gospel continues Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Having begun by stating his socio-religious platform — the Beatitudes — Jesus now reminds us that our good works are not to be hidden, but are to be revelations of the Light of Christ [Matthew 5:13-16]. God is to be tasted and seen by the spice of life and the light of life within us.

I recall a parade that my family attended when I was quite young. Ahead of the first marching band was a little-older-than-me girl with white boots, spangled skirt, red, white and blue top and a headdress of plumes who appeared so confident and in charge that I hated her. She twirled a baton, threw it high, and caught it without missing a step. I hated her high stepping and showing off as she strutted right down our street. I hated her showing off, and I hated that I wasn't her. Her light was shining, and in my sidewalk-standing gloom, she seemed full of pride — a sin which was not allowed in our Irish-Catholic house and hearts.

Jesus is telling His disciples that there is a difference between showing-off and showing-up. Showing-off is a play of pretense; showing-up is a display of truth. Jesus is telling His friends that their truth is His light in them and their spirit is seasoned by His preserving flavor within them. If they stay

**MAKING IT HAPPEN:**

Long before 1624, when John Donne penned the famous line: “No man is an island,” our sacred authors were convinced of the truth of that statement. They believed each of our lives inevitably affects the lives — for good or bad — of the people around us. This certainly is true of the Hebrew prophets. Once we eradicate the false idea that they were mainly concerned with predicting the coming of Jesus and concentrate on their actual messages, their emphasis on creating life-giving relationships becomes embarrassingly evident. The prophet Isaiah is a classic example of this fact.

Although Isaiah is deeply committed to convincing the recently freed Babylonian captives to return to the Promised Land and rebuild Jerusalem, he never lets his people forget what they should be doing in the meantime. Whether they're living in one of the Babylonian suburbs or in downtown Jerusalem, they're to “share their bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked, and not turn their backs on their own” [Isaiah 58:7-11]. In other words, their lives should make a positive difference in other peoples' lives.

One of the most interesting facets of Isaiah's theology is his belief that many of our personal problems would disappear if we were more concerned with helping others get rid of their problems — “If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech;” he proclaims, “if you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday.”

Matthew's Gospel can carry more of an impact if we would remember that Matthew positions the Sermon on the Mount at the beginning of his writing. Matthew is obviously concerned that his readers appreciate not only how the unique behavior which Jesus demands of them will change their lives, but also how their behavior will change the lives of those who aren't followers of Jesus — “You are the salt of the earth; a city set on a mountain. Matthew's Jesus reminds his followers that “no one lights a lamp, and then puts it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others” [Matthew 5:13-16].

We who follow Jesus are responsible for letting others see that what Jesus asks of us can really be done — that people can actually imitate Jesus in their daily lives. If we don't carry through on the morality that Jesus taught and lived, his ideals remain just pie in the sky — something no one would ever dare integrate into how they lived their lives.

After reading the Sermon on the Mount, we might want to beg off carrying it out because we're either not strong enough to follow through on how Jesus expects us to relate to others, or we're too weak to put up with the static which will come our way if we actually try to do so. But in either case, Paul beats us to the punch. He tells his Corinthian community that if he can do it, then anyone can do it [1 Corinthians 2:1-5]. He certainly didn't talk any one of them into becoming a Christian. He didn't have the ability to do so. He could zero in on Jesus' weakness by simply pointing to his own weakness. The only way he was able to make Jesus' morality his morality was to totally give himself over to the risen Jesus, and let him/her work through him.

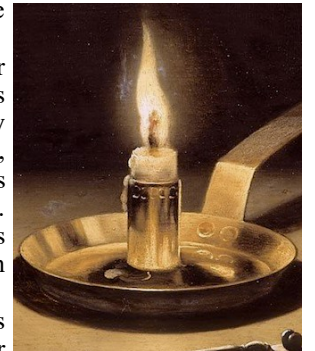
Perhaps one of the most important lines in Scripture is Paul's admission that living his faith doesn't depend on his own power, but on the “power of God” working through him.

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

ONE DAY AT A TIME:

One day at a time — this is enough. Do not look back and grieve over the past for it is gone; and do not be troubled about the future, for it has not yet come. Live in the present, and make it so beautiful it will be worth remembering.

—Mary Morrison



used practical examples to describe the path to personal fulfillment and the way to offer genuine light to the world. For Isaiah, the just person possesses a light that leads them through dark periods even as it shines for others to see [Isaiah 58:7-11].

Paul will tell the Church in Corinth that being light has nothing to do with fancy words or intellectual showmanship. It's as simple and as countercultural as Christ crucified, as unpretentious and as challenging as was Jesus' life for others [1 Corinthians 2:1-5]. Paul's reflection leads into Jesus' description of disciples as light and salt for the world.

Isaiah's instructions are quite striking when we ponder them. He tells us to share our bread with the hungry, to shelter and clothe those who are vulnerable in any way and to never turn our backs on our own. Isaiah's subtext comes down to saying that we need to treat everyone in need as one of our own, as our clan, as the people to whom we owe first allegiance.

It's interesting to note that this theme appeared in the Psalms many years before many of our scripture texts were written. For example, Psalm 112 emphasizes that the just person is a light in the darkness of an unjust and cruel world. Those who treat needy others as members of their family are people whose experience of goodness and trust in God has freed them from fear of want, from the need to accumulate what others need for survival [see Psalm 112:4-9].

These people can lend in such a way that they create an honest and trusting society. They shall not be moved from their unshakeable trust in God. Their heart is firm in the conviction that all are one. Because they know that what happens to one happens to all, they can share and trust that they will never go hungry if another has something to share.

It takes little to realize that these messages apply to communities — not just to individuals. The community Isaiah wants to build — the community that we, too, are called to build — will bring a new dawn to the world. Isaiah tells us that when we treat another's need as our own, we create the kind of society that reflects the very glory of God. In such a society, no cry for help goes unanswered — not because God swoops in, but because the people of God live their vocation to reflect and effect God's love.

This is exactly what Jesus, the Jewish preacher, was talking about when he called his listeners to be salt of the earth and light for the world [Matthew 5:13-16]. Jesus knew Isaiah's teaching and he prayed the psalms. He realized that neither salt nor light exist for themselves, but to call attention to something else.

As salt and light, the people of God do not simply note the needs of others; they prove by their activities that such needs can be addressed and alleviated. Their light demonstrates that the reign of God is a real and growing phenomenon in our world.

This brings us back to our questions about our own lives. Isaiah, Paul and Jesus want their people to live in joy and to know meaning. In short, they want people to understand and find the fulfillment of living their vocation — of discovering what they were made for and how they can best use the gifts they have been given for the good of the world.

That is the simple and countercultural truth about why we were created.

The Scripture Readings between now and Lent invite us to keep asking about the good life — about the reign of God in our midst. We can begin today by asking ourselves when we have experienced real joy and depth. When we look at those moments, it may surprise us to see how closely they align with the type of activities Isaiah suggested, how much they are actually experiences of the reign of God in our midst. Remembering and contemplating that will be enough for this week.

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



faithful to who Jesus claims them to be, then their flavor and light will display the God Who strutted the Divine stuff through creation and now through Jesus.

But there is an important lesson to learn here. This ability to be the light does not just come from ourselves. It comes when we discover that we have been loved — loved by God. We first need to allow ourselves to be loved and to know the compassion of God. Saint Paul reminds the Corinthian Church that life and faith have to rest on the power of God. Paul sees himself as coming to preach God's love out of his own weakness rather than great strength [1 Corinthians 2:1-5].

Each of us is in a constant process of revealing ourselves — even if we are not aware of it, or really are not sure of the self we are revealing. Every gesture speaks volumes and others can read the signs and hear the wordless statements. We are followers of Jesus Who heard and believed Who He was. As followers we hear and yet find it hard, to believe who He says we are. We have first-hand evidence of our un-defining self-centeredness. How can I be what He says, when I say what I am by my pretenses and showing-offs.

What Jesus came to save us from is the eternal consequences of not knowing who we are — and thereby not acting as we should. He is Savior from and Savior for. The “for” is the living as the highest form of God's creative love. Jesus is telling us that though mountains and stars and fantastic beauty can display the awesomeness of God, it dwindles before the gestures of compassion, generosity, self-sacrificing and creativity of a light and salty human being who knows who she/he really is. This is so important now — especially for us in the Northern Hemisphere who are still caught in the throes of deep winter darkness.

We who follow the divine “Drum Major” are invited, required, and encouraged to strut His stuff by going public with the gifts God has shared with us. We belong to God, and are designed to display the person and mission of Jesus. He has given us our marching orders and the grace to let it all out.

—taken from the writings of Eileen Burke-Sullivan and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

JESUS....ARE YOU SERIOUS?

The revelation of the Sermon on the Mount continues. If we were to witness the events of the Gospel as taking place today, we would probably find them humorous. Imagine Jesus telling a motley group of puzzled followers — many illiterate — that they are the light of the world [Matthew 5:13-16]. This would be like a freshman religion teacher standing up in front of the class and telling the freshmen that they would determine how our postmodern world ultimately would be defined. The class would probably all laugh with a clearly audible whisper: “O God.” Freshmen are not quite sure they are up for that task.

Don't be misled. Jesus is not just talking to those first disciples — Jesus is talking to us. And deep down — like the freshman class — we know we are not capable of being the light of the world. But what is important here is that we hear what Jesus is saying. Jesus himself is the light of the world. He is so empty of self, and so transparent to the divine action in his humanity, that he will be called Emmanuel — “God is with us.” It is only because we, through the gift of the Spirit, become one with Christ that we can be the light of the world — never by our own light alone.

The life implications of this gospel are practical and profound. The optimism of the great song: We Shall Overcome is too easily shattered when racism — or the violence of any injustice — seems to overcome the light. An invincible hope is possible only when we realize that it is through divine action that the kingdom of God is established in this world. We Shall Overcome is a song of unconquerable hope when the “we” includes “God is with us.” Jesus is saying to you and me: “your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

—taken from the writings of Campion P. Gavalier, O.S.B., which appear on the internet.



PUT A LITTLE SPICE IN YOUR LIFE:

Jesus says we are salt and light. He doesn't say: "You should become salt and light" — he says: "You are salt and light" [Matthew 5:13-16]. So what does all that mean and how does it affect us today?

We are salt and light by the very fact that we follow Jesus. By our baptism and as members of this community that we call church, we are salt and light. Now what do salt and light do? Salt, of course, can make things tasty. Even more importantly, it was used to preserve food. Salt changed what it touched, kept it from spoiling, rotting, corrupting. Salt even purified. That's why in Old Testament times they used salt to season every sacrifice. It is interesting that in the Book of Leviticus, God states: "With all your offerings, you shall offer salt" [Leviticus 2:13].

And what about light? If you think of those one-room cottages in Jesus' time, those small dish-like lamps where they burned oil were essential. It wasn't a particularly bright light — nothing in comparison to what we have today — but without it life would have been gloomy indeed. Inside the house I could not have seen you once the sun went down. Much of life would have stopped at dusk. So, the light made life more pleasant, more enjoyable.

So what is Jesus asking us to do by calling us salt and light? It seems to me he is saying we should make our world a little tastier — perhaps add some spice to life. We should help enlighten the world around us. Bring light to darkness, help to dispel the gloom. Where there is sadness bring joy. In other words, the world we live in should be a better, happier place because of us.

Isaiah the Prophet talks of light as well. He reminds us: "Your light shall break forth like the dawn and your wound shall quickly be healed" [Isaiah 58:7-11]. When will that happen? Through the prophet, God says that will happen when we share our bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when we see them and not turn our backs on our own.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta was someone whose light broke forth like the dawn and who brought light into the lives of many people living in darkness and gloom. But, of course, we can't all be Mother Teresa. However, there is another person who brought light to many people, who helped make life better for them but who is not very well known.

Let me tell you about Bea Gaddy. Have you ever heard of her? Bea Gaddy was a homeless woman in Baltimore. She lived on the streets. One year around Thanksgiving time, she invested fifty cents in the lottery and lo and behold her number came up and she won \$70. What to do with this new-found wealth? Bea was not a selfish person, so she decided to use her winnings to throw a Thanksgiving dinner for a few of her friends.

The next year, she managed to scrape together some more money, enough to invite a few more people to share Thanksgiving dinner with her. Well, this went on year after year and every year the party grew bigger. More and more people heard about Bea and what she was doing. Many people started contributing to the preparation of her Thanksgiving meal for the homeless — some with money, some with food, some with helping to prepare and serve the meal. I don't know exactly where this celebration is today, but the last time I heard about it, Bea with all her helpers had served 17,000 people on Thanksgiving Day. That was about twenty years ago. Obviously, she had a lot of help. She managed to have someone donate a huge tent that was raised in Patterson Park in East Baltimore and people kept coming all day long — either to help out or to share the meal. It's an extraordinary story.

I don't know how religious a person Bea was. But she obviously had the spirit that Isaiah was talking about, and that Jesus talks about when he tells us to feed the hungry.

Lent begins next month. It's a time to reflect upon ourselves and our response to God's call. The church asks us to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and to abstain from meat on all Fridays until Easter. But it asks us to think also in terms of what we can do for others.



our possessions rather than owners of them. Implicit in all of this, of course, is the implication that we can be moral and healthy only when we view private ownership in a larger picture that includes the poor.

We need, always, to be giving some of our possessions away in order to be healthy. The poor do need us, but we also need them. They are, as Jesus puts it so clearly when he tells us we will be judged by how we gave to the poor, our passports to heaven. And they are also our passports to health. Our health depends upon sharing our riches.

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

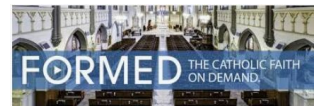
READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Genesis 1:1-19, Mark 6:53-56
Tuesday:	Genesis 1:20-2:4, Mark 7:1-13
Wednesday:	Genesis 2:4-17, Mark 7:14-23
Thursday:	Genesis 2:18-25, Mark 7:24-30
Friday:	Genesis 3:1-8, Mark 7:31-37
Saturday:	Genesis 3:9-24, Mark 8:1-10

6th Week in Ordinary Time: Sirach 15:15-20, 1 Corinthians 2:6-10, Matthew 5:17-37

PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CHAPEL FAMILIES:

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



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

FOR THE GOOD OF THE WORLD:

At some point around middle adulthood, many people begin to feel the itch of new/old questions about life. A man may realize that having been a star at football or chemistry has lost its luster. A middle-aged woman figures out that looks don't count for much at all. As achievements are losing their luster, nagging questions arise: What are we doing here? What's the difference between satisfaction and joy; between achievement and meaning; between career and vocation? Those questions — all the same in the long run — are the thread that weaves through the Scripture Readings for this 5th Week in Ordinary Time.

Isaiah wanted his readers to think critically about what they considered a good, meaningful life. He

OUR NEED TO SHARE OUR RICHES WITH THE POOR:

We need to give away some of our own possessions in order to be healthy. Wealth that is hoarded always corrupts those who possess it. Any gift that is not shared turns sour. If we are not generous with our gifts, we will be bitterly envied, and will eventually turn bitter and envious ourselves.

All these axioms have the same warning — we can only be healthy if we are giving away some of our riches to others. Among other things, this should remind us that we need to give to the poor — not simply because they need it, though they do, but because unless we give to the poor we cannot be healthy ourselves. When we give to the poor, both charity and justice are served, but some healthy self-interest is served as well — namely, we cannot be healthy or happy unless we share our riches, of every kind, with the poor. That truth is written inside human experience and inside every authentic ethical and faith tradition.

For example, we know from experience that when we give of ourselves to others, we experience a certain joy in our lives, just as when we selfishly hoard or protect what is ours we grow anxious and paranoid. Native American cultures have forever enshrined this in their concept of “Potlatch” — namely, their belief that, while everyone has a right to private property, there are real limits to how much someone may own. Once our wealth reaches a certain point we need to begin to give some of it away — not because others need it, but because our own health and happiness will begin to deteriorate if we hoard all of those possessions for ourselves.

For Luke, generosity is the key to health and heaven. Jewish spirituality shares the same idea. Again and again in the Jewish scriptures, we see that when a religious leader or prophet tells the Jewish community that they are the chosen people — a nation specially blessed — that affirmation comes with the admonition that this blessing is not for them alone, but that, through them, all the nations of the earth might be blessed. In Jewish spirituality, blessing is always intended to flow through the person receiving it so as to enrich others. Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic spiritualities, each in their own way, also affirms this — namely that it is only in giving away some of our gifts that we ourselves can remain healthy.

Jesus and the Gospels, of course, teach this repeatedly and without compromise. For instance, the Gospel of Luke — a Gospel within which Jesus warns us that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven [see Luke 18:25], nevertheless praises the rich who are generous, condemning only the rich who are stingy. For Luke, generosity is the key to health and heaven. In the Gospel of Matthew, when Jesus reveals what will be great test for the final judgment, his single set of criteria have entirely to do with how we gave to the poor — did you feed the hungry? Give drink to the thirsty? Cloth the naked? [see Matthew 25]. Finally, even more strongly, in the story of the widow who gives her last two pennies away, Jesus challenges us to not only give of our surplus to the poor, but to also give away some of what we need to live on [see Mark 5]. The Gospels, and the rest of the Christian scriptures, strongly challenge us to give to the poor — not because they need our charity — though they do — but because our giving to them is the only way we can stay healthy.

We see the same message, consistent and repeated, in the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. From Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 to Pope Francis’ recent, *Evangelii Gaudium*, we hear the same refrain — while we have a moral right to own private property, that right is not absolute and is mitigated by a number of things — namely, we only have a right to surplus when everyone else has the necessities for life. Hence, we must always be looking towards the poor in terms of dealing with our surplus.

Moreover, Catholic social doctrine tells us too that the earth was given by God for everyone and that truth too limits how we define what is really ours as a possession. Properly speaking, we are stewards of



If we ever get discouraged thinking of all the awful things happening in our world these days, it might be encouraging to think of people like Bea Gaddy, like Mother Teresa, like Dorothy Day, like Horace McKenna. We might take some inspiration from people like them.

I think we could say they were not just light — they were the salt of the earth as well. With her Thanksgiving dinners Bea Gaddy certainly made things tastier for a lot of people.

How about us? How will we be salt and light?

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

LIVING IN THE POWER OF GOD:

As cosmopolitan seaport city [1 Corinthians 2:1-5]. Before coming to Corinth, Paul preached in Athens — the symbolic center of Greek culture. In a cleverly crafted sermon, he noted that the “unknown God” they worshipped was really the Creator who made the whole world and gives to everyone “life and breath and everything.” This God will “judge the world with justice” through a man raised from the dead. At this, the cultured Athenians scoffed at him and dismissed him, saying they would hear him again on this matter some other time [see Acts 17:23-32]. Chastened by this failure to connect with the Athenians, Paul came to Corinth with a new approach.

As he talks to the Corinthian Church, Paul explains that he proclaimed “the mystery of God,” to them, not with “sublimity of words”, but by concentrating on “Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Paul goes on to admit that he came to the Corinthians in “weakness and fear and much trembling” — not with “persuasive words of wisdom”, but in the power of the Spirit, “so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.”

In a culture that valued eloquent public speaking, Paul turned his own limitations as a preacher into the wise strategy of letting the power of the Gospel speak for itself. Christ crucified and risen is himself the good news, the revelation of God's love, and the source of salvation for all.

There are no single perfect messengers of Christ — not Paul, not the Church hierarchy, not theologians, not homilists, not religion teachers, and not parents trying to instruct their children in the ways of the faith. But the whole people of God, anointed by the Spirit, has kept alive the memory of Christ and preserved his fundamental teaching. As individuals like Paul, Mother Teresa and Pope Francis remind us, the Gospel of Christ in its beauty and simplicity has an amazing power to touch our minds and hearts.

I can imagine various distinct responses to Paul’s letter. A Christian feminist develops a more positive outlook on the Apostle Paul as a truly humble man. A conservative Catholic, very upset with some progressive views of Pope Francis, decides that he is going to stay in the Church he loves because he finds Christ there. A father of three realizes the best way to instruct his children is by living his faith. A woman who is generally disappointed in her pastor’s homilies still tries to find some point she can use for further reflection.

How can you stay more open to the intrinsic power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

—taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik 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.



SALT AND LIGHT:

Jesus tells us that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world [Matthew 5:13-16]. What does he mean by these images? How are we light and salt? Two stories might help. The first story begins 2,700 years ago in the city of Jerusalem. The king at the time was King Hezekiah, and King Hezekiah had a problem — the water source for the city of Jerusalem lay outside its walls, therefore, making the city very vulnerable to attack. For if an army besieged the city, they could cut off the water supply and thus assure that in a very short time the city would have to surrender. King Hezekiah decided he was going to dig a tunnel, and he did so through solid rock — 1,700 feet of tunnel that brought the water from the outside source into a pool within Jerusalem. Now the tunnel's source was secret at the time so that the enemies would not know about it. It was only recently discovered by archeologists. Today, if you go to Jerusalem, you can walk through King Hezekiah's tunnel.

This week I ran into an account of a pastor from Washington, DC, who did just that. Here's how he describes it: "You have to go with a guide and put on a bathing suit because the tunnel still has water in it. Because the tunnel is twisted and of different levels, you have to walk carefully because sometimes the water is at your waist and sometimes it comes up to your chest. Also, there are times when the ceiling is low and there is only just enough space to get your head through. The guide also gives a candle to each participant so that there would be some light. Each participant must follow the person ahead of him or her as the guide leads the group."

Our pastor from Washington, DC was bringing up the rear of this small procession. He was taking his time soaking in the history of the place. But when he was about half-way through the tunnel, for some reason his candle went out. The rest of the group was already far ahead and had turned a corner, so the pastor found himself in absolute darkness with 800 feet of solid rock on either side of him before daylight. Now, of course, there really was no danger because he knew that the guide would come back to find him. But he said that as he stood there in absolute darkness, with the water up to his waist, waiting, he never felt so alone, so helpless, so vulnerable. He waited as it seemed to him forever until he saw ahead of him a small flicker and then the tour guide turning the corner holding a candle. It was a small light, but how brightly it shone for someone who stood in darkness.

For those in darkness, light is a sign of hope and salvation. This is the sense in which we are the light of the world. Our role is the role of the guide — the role of bringing light to others so that their darkness is dispelled.

To clarify how to do this, we can turn to the second image in Matthew's gospel — the image of salt. Salt is used to flavor things. It has a distinctive taste which sets it apart from all else. Therefore, the image of salt is one of distinctiveness. When Jesus tells us that we are to be salt for the earth, he says that we are called to stand apart, to be distinctive from who are around us. We are to be distinctive not for the sake of being different, but for the sake of being transformative.

Here's the second story: There's a small French mountain village called Le Chambon. Everyone in the village went to the same small Christian church. When the Second World War broke out, Jewish families began to arrive in the train station at Le Chambon trying to escape the Nazi death camps. It was, of course, illegal to help these refugees. But the people of this small village — to a person — defied the law. They took Jewish families into their homes, fed and clothed them, helped them obtain new documentation, and smuggled them across the border into Switzerland. It is said that in the years from 1940 to 1943, there was not a wine cellar, an attic, or a hayloft in the village that had not sheltered a Jewish child. There was never a report that any refugee had been turned away or betrayed to the authorities by the citizens of Le Chambon. During the course of the war, it is estimated that this city saved the lives of 5,000 Jewish people. After the war, the



May we have the courage to be the people God created us to be.

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

SALT AND LIGHT:

You and I may not have such dramatic moments to be salt and light. But even in our abundant society we encounter the abandoned and lost — perhaps in our own families. In his letter to the Church at Corinth, St. Paul tells us today that he did not come with sublime words; he came with power — God's Spirit [1 Corinthians 2:1-5]. In the Scripture Readings for this 5th Week in Ordinary Time, Jesus tells us that "we are the hidden wisdom of God in the way that we live." Jesus tells us to become salt and light [Matthew 5:13-16]. Isaiah tells us that if we share bread with the hungry and give shelter to the homeless, it will be like dawn breaking [Isaiah 58:7-11].

I saw that when I was in Peru. Not that I did anything heroic; in fact, during the time I was there, I spent most of my time feeling sorry for myself. I was struggling with some illness that took away my voice, and when I finally got back a raspy voice, I would start coughing before I finished a full sentence. In the final week I had scheduled an early morning Mass with the St. Teresa of Calcutta Sisters. While I had cancelled many events, I couldn't back out on the Mother Teresa Sisters without considering myself the biggest wimp in the Western Hemisphere. So I rasped my way through the Mass. After Mass one of the volunteers at the center asked me to visit an abandoned man in the countryside — to give him the anointing of the sick. In my self-pitying mood I thought: "I might need it more than he does." I'm glad I held my piece.

When we finally arrived at the small adobe hut, we found a man in terrible circumstances — 84-years-old, abandoned by his one son, he was dependent on the charity of strangers. He described the pain he was experiencing in his body. I hacked my way through the anointing rite, but suddenly my pain seemed small and my blessings enormous. We went back to the Mother Teresa Sisters. They said they would take the man into their home as soon as possible.

This hidden wisdom becomes apparent in salt and light. You and I may not have such dramatic moments to be salt and light. But even in our abundant society we encounter the abandoned and lost — perhaps in our own families. So share bread with the hungry and shelter the homeless. Then, says the Prophet Isaiah: "your light shall break forth like the dawn, your wound shall quickly be healed, light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday."

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

NOVENA TO BLESSED BASILE MOREAU:

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

**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].



LET HIS LIGHT SHINE:

Recently I was at a restaurant where the waiter was from India. I asked him what part of India he was from and he said: “Goa.” “Goa.” I said: “My guess is that you are Catholic.” He said: “I certainly am,” and gave me a thumbs up. We realized that we have something wonderful in common — our faith. We are not just members of a club or some sort of association — we are intimate parts of God’s plan for the world. We are Christians. We are Catholics. We exist to bring God’s Light to the world. Our faith is not just a matter of what we believe. Our faith is not just a matter of how we live our lives. Our faith is the reason why we exist. We exist so the world might find its salvation in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Faith is a matter of what we are and who we are. What are we? We are children of God — sons and daughters of God. God, the Creator of the Universe — the One who knows what is happening on remote planets in our solar system millions of light years away from here — looks at us and says: “Those are my children. They entered my family when they were baptized. I did not just give them life; I gave them my life.”

Many of us are confirmed. The Lord looks on the confirmed and says: “These are the leaders of my people. They are my front line. I am giving them my Power — my Holy Spirit — so they can bring others to me. They are mine and I am theirs.”

What are we? We are here because we are children of God.

And yet we are more than just members of his family. We are unique individuals. Who are we? Each of us is an individual — a unique reflection of God. Each of us brings His Presence into the world in a way the world never experienced before and will never experience again. Do you realize that God knows who you are? For all of us, there are times when you feel that no one really knows you — no one really understands you. We are right, and yet we are wrong. Even if you are married, your husband or wife really does not know what it is like to be you — they don’t fully know you.

Many of us have close friends — people we have been friends with since kindergarten. Our best friends do not really know us. You are my favorite people. I have laughed and cried with some of you. You have prayed for me when I was sick and I pray for you every day. If someone were to ask you if you knew a Monseignor Joe, you would say: “Yes?” Some might even say: “Very well.” But you really don’t know what it is like to be me. Nor do I know what it is like to be you. But God knows us. God understands us. In fact, God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows the role that each of us has in His plan for the salvation of the universe.

Now, fathom the unfathomable with me. Our lives mean more to God than they mean to anyone else in the world — including our parents, your husbands and wives, your best friends. Why? Why has God bothered with us? Why does He love us so much? It is all because He sees Himself in each one of us. He sees His Son. He loves us like a good parent loves his or her child, unconditionally, for whom that child is.

He sees His Light. God sees the Light of Christ in each of us. “Now, take that Light,” Matthew’s Gospel tells us, “and illuminate the world” [Matthew 5:13-16]. The Light we have been given is meant for others to escape the darkness of the world. Did you listen to that Isaiah the prophet said to you: “Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless, clothe the naked when you see them and do not turn your back on your own, then your light shall break forth like the dawn” [Isaiah 58:7-11]. Jesus says: “You are the Light of the world; your light must shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Heavenly Father.”

So what are we? We are children of God. Who are we? We are each unique reflections of God on earth. And why do we do what we do as Christians — as Catholics? Our actions in words and deeds, our reaching out to others as well as our union with God, our charitable life and our prayer life, are ways that we lead others to glorify our Heavenly Father.



pastor of this small church was interviewed and was asked what motivated the heroic courage of this community to risk their lives and property for people they did not even know? The pastor responded that they were not trying to be heroes. They were simply trying to be Christians. This is what it means to be salt for the earth — to believe in the love of God and the call to justice that we stand apart from what is expected and normal.

And that leaves each one of us with a question. If we were to look at our own lives, could we find signs that our lives are different from those who do not believe in God? Would people looking at us see something distinctive in the way that we love our families, treat our employees, or care for our neighbors? Is there a taste that tells that we are motivated by something beyond our own self-interest, self-preservation, or comfort?

If you live your life, like everyone else does, you cannot be salt for the earth. If you do not give hope to those who are in darkness, you cannot be the light of the world. You might not have the opportunity like the people of Le Chambon to do something heroic, but the question still remains: if it ever became a crime to follow Jesus, would anyone find enough evidence to convict you?

—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.

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 28]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 570.00

Offerings-----[Sunday, January 29]----- \$ 511.00

WHY CHEATING SUCKS — THE MERITS OF ACADEMIC HONESTY:

It was tempting because nobody would find out. I also needed the money. And it was one paper. I remember the moment clearly, standing at my locker and contemplating the offer. \$20 for a paper. My friend, desperate for a decent grade, asked me to write his English paper in exchange for payment. He wasn't even looking for a good grade. He just wanted a B. I could crank out a B level paper in 45 minutes — maybe even less.

I had an argument inside my mind. "It's English class and he wants to be an auto mechanic. Does it really matter if he does it or not?" "You need the money." "It's a dumb grade and it doesn't matter. Plus, he's your friend." "It's this one time." "It's wrong."

It was the last voice I couldn't get over. I told my friend I couldn't write his paper.

In the grand scheme of sin, cheating in a class probably feels pretty low on the list of "bad high school sins." Unless you are in a class that grades on a curve, it might not seem like anyone is hurt by cheating — or as your school probably calls it: "academic dishonesty". Your teacher isn't hurt, your friends aren't hurt, and you get a good grade. If anything, it can feel like people will be happier with you.

But that's the problem with sin. It always starts out as "not so bad." We reason that nobody is hurt and that, really, this is just something that everyone does. When it comes to academic dishonesty, we might even reason that we are more clever than sinful. If we can get the answers to that test, plagiarize a paper, or find another way to get a good grade — other than putting in the work — shouldn't we do that?

Even if nobody seems to be hurt, cheating is destructive to our integrity and our relationship with God. Worse, it can degrade our decision making over time. Remember, sin never starts out as "so bad," but every big sin had a small beginning.

Repeated enough, behaviors become habits. In the spiritual life, we call these habits "virtues" when they are good and lead to holiness. We call them "vices" when they are bad and spiritually destructive. A person who lives a life of virtue is called "virtuous", and a person who lives a life marked by vice is "vicious." It's important to note that something that is "good" might not seem good at the time, and something that is "bad" might not seem bad at the time. We look at action in terms of eternal impact, not immediate feeling.

We can say all of the right things, but vice and virtue are about action, and we become what we do. We have a word for people who say one thing but do another — we call them hypocrites. And while all of us may be hypocritical sometimes — even St. Paul wrote that he found himself doing things he didn't want to do in Romans 7:15-20 — there is a difference between the times we fall short and intentionally saying one thing by doing another.

Academic honesty — or dishonesty — is a simple doorway to virtue and vice. We want to cultivate virtue so we can become holy. If you are struggling with academic honesty, or find yourself tempted to cheat, there are three things you can remember and do:

1. Remind yourself it is OK to fail — as long as you learn from it. You didn't study for a test. You procrastinated on a paper. You didn't ask for help when you should have asked. Failure is looming. This is where we need to be courageous and remember that it is OK to fail sometimes, as long as we learn from it. No person will be perfect. We cheat because we fear failure, but academic dishonesty just postpones failure. Eventually, our refusal to accept the things we are doing wrong will catch up with us.
2. Recognize your actions still might hurt someone. We often think of academic dishonesty or cheating as a "victimless crime." This isn't always true, though. Some classes you take and assignments you receive may be graded on a curve or modify a passing grade to be above the class average. In this case, your falsely inflated grade may throw off the numbers and impact someone who actually did the work — or who was at least honest.



3. We represent something bigger than ourselves. You represent Jesus to your friends and academic dishonesty is a great way to show them Jesus doesn't matter. Even if your friends don't think it is a big deal — whether you realize it or not, they hold you to a higher standard. As a believer in Jesus and disciple, they expect different behavior from you and that's a good thing. This is how you witness the faith to your friends. If you are so concerned about a grade that you need to cheat, though, it tells your friends you are far less concerned with living as an honest disciple and more concerned about yourself.

While avoiding sin is important, we need to practice virtue to truly safeguard ourselves. Just like small sins turn big, small, virtuous actions also grow. Practicing academic honesty will help you grow in three key areas of virtue:

1. **Temperance.** By choosing to moderate our time, we grow in virtue. We are probably tempted to cheat when we feel unprepared. We are often unprepared because we aren't spending our time well; when we stop our scroll and put our phone in another room to study, we are growing in virtue.
2. **Prudence.** There may be opportunities when cheating seems easy. Prudence helps us to make clear decisions. By choosing wise, or prudent, actions we grow in virtue.
3. **Courage.** We also need to call out sin when we see it. You may find yourself having some tough conversations with friends when you challenge their academic dishonesty. Courage is a central virtue for every Catholic; we can practice it in small ways when it comes to academic honesty.

I'm glad I didn't take that \$20 for the paper. I needed the money, but that money wasn't worth the potential consequences I faced at school and definitely wasn't worth the eternal consequences. Whether it is a midterm project, a final exam, or anything else in between, remember that academic honesty isn't just about following rules — it is about building virtue, avoiding vice, and becoming the person Jesus is calling you to be.

—taken from the writings of Joel Stepanek

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].**

A VISION OF ULTIMATE BEAUTY:

The great vision of the New Jerusalem at the end of the Book of Revelation is a vision of ultimate beauty. The word beauty doesn't occur much in the Bible, but the celebration of creation all the way from Genesis, through the Psalms and prophets, on into the Gospels and here in Revelation, should alert us to the fact that, though the ancient Jewish people did not theorize about beauty, they knew a great deal about it and poured their rich aesthetic sensibility not only into poetry but also into one building in particular — the temple in Jerusalem, whose legendary beauty inspired poets, musicians, and dancers alike. This is the temple where YHWH's glory is glimpsed, not as a retreat from the world but as a foretaste of what is promised for the whole world. In the great vision of John, the temple has disappeared because the whole city has become a temple; the point of the city is not that it is a place of retreat from a wicked world but that its new life is poured out into the whole world, to refresh and heal it.

—NT Wright