

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for Dignity ~

**O God,
we thank you for the fact
that you have inspired men and women
in all nations and in all cultures.**

**We call you different names:
some call you Allah;
some call you Elohim;
some call you Jehovah;
some call you Brahma;
some call you the Unmoved Mover.
But we know that these
are all names for one and the same God.**

**Grant that we will follow you
and become so committed to your way
and your kingdom
that we will be able to establish
in our lives and in this world
a brother and sisterhood.**

**May we establish here
a kingdom of understanding,
where men and women will live together
as brothers and sisters
and respect the dignity and worth
of every human being.
In the name and spirit of Jesus.
Amen.**

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

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

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.

**BEING AT HOME WHILE STILL ON THE WAY:**

When God has become our shepherd, our refuge, our fortress, then we can reach out to him in the midst of a broken world and feel at home while still on the way. When God dwells in us, we can enter into a wordless dialogue with him while still waiting on the day that he will lead us into the house where he has prepared a place for us [see John 14:2]. Then we can wait while we have already arrived and ask while we have already received.

This is what Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi: “There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus [Philippians 4:6–7].”

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 Chiacchiari [‘96], uncle of Aurelia [‘28], and Olivia [‘30] Chiacchiari, 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 Bob Wolfe, who is undergoing treatment for serious health issues.

FOR THE DECEASED:

- 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], and uncle of Mark [‘76] and Neil [‘79] Freer
- 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.
- For Sister Rita Kuhn, O.S.U.
- For Duwayne Sloan, grandfather of Zinyah George [‘26]
- For Sharon Winterich, sister-in-law of Upper School Associate, Kathy Lynch.
- For Bruce Bechhold [‘58], brother-in-law of Vincent Horrigan [‘67]
- For Michael Butz [‘82], brother of David [‘80] and Gerald [‘84] Butz, and Catherine Butz Hughes [‘87]

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria; also for their families and all the first responders.
- 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.

THE GRACE OF GOD:

The word “wilderness” or “wilderness experience” is a symbolic term used to represent a near-destruction situation in which God gives personal direction to the believer and thereby helps her make a way out of what she thought was no way.

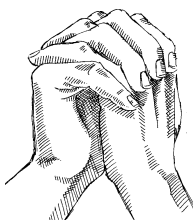
—Delores Williams

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Brother Dan Kane, C.S.C., long-time Brother in Residence here at Gilmour, who is undergoing medical treatment for health issues
- 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 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 critically ill under the care of hospice.
- 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 Chiacchiarri, mother of Mark [*94], mother-in-law of Michelle DeBacco [*96], grandmother of Aurelia [*28], and Olivia [*30] Chiacchiarri, 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 12: 6 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, February 13:	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, February 14: Sts. Cyril & Methodius	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, February 15:	Check with Office for time
Thursday, February 16:	Check with Office for time
Friday, February 17:	Check with Office for time
Saturday, February 18: 7 th Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, February 19: 7 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

BEING AWAKE:

Religious teachers — including Jesus, the Buddha, as well as many Hindu sages — are always telling us to wake up — to be alert, alive, awake, attentive, or aware. The AA recovery program is based on this. But how can you do that? What does being awake actually mean?



Being conscious or aware means that I drop to a level deeper than the passing show, I become the calm seer of my dramas, I watch myself compassionately from a little distance — almost as if “myself” is someone else, I dis-identify with my own emotional noise and no longer let it pull me here and there, up and down, and I stop thinking about this or that and collapse into pure or “objectless awareness” of nothing in particular.

I don't get there — I fall there. At first, it does not feel like “me” — it is unfamiliar territory because up to now I thought that my thinking was “me,” yet now my thinking has ceased. I believe this is the meaning of Jesus' teaching on “losing oneself to find oneself” [see Luke 9:24]. This new and broader sense of “me” gradually, over time, begins to feel like my deepest and truest self; it seems solid and unchanging. At this point, God, consciousness, I, silent emptiness, and fullness all start to feel like the same wonderful thing! This is what spiritual teachers mean by growth in holiness.

—Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

A REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:

The Scripture Readings for this 6th Week in Ordinary Time is all about options — good and bad, right and wrong. With free will, we have actual options. We can choose, but those choices come with ramifications and outcomes. We have what we need to make good choices. We have the commandments; these laws are not capricious or onerous. They are appropriate and eternal — don't kill; don't cheat; don't steal. They come down to treating each other respectfully and showing that we love God by loving his creation. It's really simple at its basis — love God and love one another.

There is an old saying that goes like this: "I hear what I want to hear." Sometimes it seems that I just will it, and I hear it. When I am not interested in something — well, I don't listen, and so I tune it out. What I want to hear — wanting to know — provides the energy for my hearing. As a priest who often has to give the homily at Mass, I often wonder what the congregation wants to hear — and also what they do not want to hear. Where is their energy for listening?

What do you want to hear from God, from the Church, from life? Our personal and family problems get our attention easily. We long to know more, feel deeply, understand mysterious things. What do we not want to hear from God, from the Church, from life?

Sirach — or the Book of Ecclesiasticus — is full of wonderful images and wise sayings about most aspects of life. The whole book centers around the depth, presence, and practicality of Wisdom. This spirit, this awareness, this sensitivity, is a participation in the Divine. God knows all, created all, loves all, and allows us human beings to participate in that Wisdom [Sirach 15:14-20]. But God allows us a freedom to exercise just how deeply, or to what extent, we will share it.

In the Book of Sirach, we learn that the whole Jewish "law" is complete with God's Wisdom, and God has shared it with humanity. Wisdom is living the "law" — not merely keeping it out of fear. The many aspects of the "law" of Moses were meant to guide and invite God's people to live in harmony, prosperity and fertility. Wisdom is God's way, and we are choosers. We have been given the gift — or burden — of our freedom. Our wisdom is using our knowledge according to our faith in God's ways.

Near the end of my Jesuit training I asked an older professor, whom I trusted, about my going on to study for a Doctorate. He thought a while and then said: "You don't need more knowledge — you need wisdom." My response was: "Can I get a Doctorate in Wisdom? Are they not the same?" He responded that my response proved his point. Wisdom is not a degree — it is received by sensing, listening to, living through the experiencing of choices. It is experienced-based, but that includes the ponderings and wonderings and struggles it takes to make choices, and then the patience to live the consequences. It is all about listening and hearing.

Matthew's Gospel for the 6th Week in Ordinary Time [Matthew 15:17-37] continues Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is doing a lot of comparing and contrasting — what has been heard in the past and what needs to be listened to now. Jesus is not spinning the Law and the traditions passed on through the prophets — He is applying a proper spirit to what had become too legalistic. In a sense, the dictates of the "law" were for the head to inform or guide the five senses. The spirit of Jesus is to form the heart as well as the mind.

Mark Twain, an American humorist, of the 19th century, once wrote that the New Testament is one of those books that you wished everybody else would read. Laws are meant for the keeping and the keeping of order. They invite security in one sense. But the ways of Jesus invite us to let go of exactness and conformity for the sake of slavish fear of being punished or excluded. This whole Sermon, at the beginning of Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of Heaven, is not meant for exact execution, but for our interiorizing the heart and mind of Jesus. It is not about doing this or not doing that — it is about the "why" of our doing anything.

**THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN WE THINK:**

It's clear from various parts of the Christian Scriptures that one of the main reasons people originally began to imitate Jesus' dying and rising was that it gave them a freedom that they'd never before experienced. Psychologists and psychiatrists frequently remind us that, on any given day, we rarely do anything which is totally free. Most of our actions — even our "religious" actions — are simply habitual, or performed either because we're afraid of the consequences of doing the opposite, or because we want to maintain an image of ourselves which we've cultivated over the years. They're far from being free.

But such freedom didn't begin with Christianity. At least two centuries before Jesus' birth, the author of Sirach reminded his readers that their Jewish faith revolves around making free choices — "God has set before us fire and water, life and death, good and evil. Whatever we choose shall be given us" [Sirach 15:14-20]. We have at least some control over our lives.

It's important to remember that when Sirach originally penned these words about choice, he had no concept of an afterlife as we have today. The "life" he expected his readers to choose wasn't an eternal life in heaven; it was a "new and improved" life right here and now. Our earthly lives will become fulfilled and meaningful only if we make the choices that the Lord expects and wants us to make.

Yet, as Paul reminds his Corinthian community, it isn't the easiest thing in the world to find out what God really wants us to do. Obviously not everyone who claims to know God's mind actually knows it. According to the Apostle, the "rulers of this age" certainly have no inkling of God's will. Unlike the risen Jesus, they're leading us away — not toward God's "mysterious, hidden wisdom" [1 Corinthians 2:6-10]. That's why it's essential for other Christs to have Jesus' Spirit. His Spirit alone makes our mind one with God's mind, leading us to look at everyone and everything around us from a unique perspective — God's perspective.

Matthew is dealing with a community which, as Jews, believed they understood God's mind long before they came in contact with Jesus. But that encounter turned everything upside down. That seems to be behind Jesus' assurance that "I have come not to abolish but to fulfill the law and the prophets" [Matthew 5:17-37]. There was nothing wrong with what they did before; Jesus is simply taking them to a new level. He's concerned not with the afterlife, but with the here and now of entering "the kingdom of heaven" — of experiencing God working effectively in their daily, humdrum lives. To pull that off they have to freely choose to go beyond the 613 Laws of Moses.

When Matthew's Jesus says: "You have heard that it was said . . ." he's quoting one of those covenant regulations. But in each case, he takes his followers beyond the usual interpretation of that particular regulation, giving it a new meaning, one that surpasses the "righteousness" of even those "super-Jews:" the scribes and Pharisees. His disciples, for instance, are not only to avoid physical murder — they're to renounce even the psychological murder of someone that comes from verbally abusing them.

Modern moral theologians often remind us that God will eventually judge us only on the things we freely chose to do. Whatever we did out of force or fear — like going to Mass on Sunday because our parents gave us no other choice — will play no role in our eternal future. The historical — and risen — Jesus certainly wants us to make free choices — choices which will not only get us into heaven one day, but will even now enable us to experience the heaven that's already around us.

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

FAITH AND LIFE:

"Wherever your faith is, there is your future."

—Nathaniel Bronner

were predetermined or controlled by fate [Sirach 15:14-20]. Belief in fate or freedom generates a self-fulfilling prophecy. Unless your name is Sisyphus, most people who feel controlled by the fates will not struggle against them. Meanwhile, people who believe they have free will usually opt to choose how to deal with all that happens, no matter their degree of control over their circumstances.

Paul, in his letter to the Church at Corinth, calls the Corinthians' to a different sort of wisdom. According to Paul, mature Christians have learned the mysterious wisdom of the cross — an apparent failure that ushers in blessing beyond measure. Paul is operating in the paradoxical realm of Gospel living. For him, real wisdom leads people to admit and accept the fact that they understand only the slightest sliver of the truth. In Paul's way of thinking, the people who are animated by the Spirit are wise enough to trust that neither their eyes nor ears, nor even heart can comprehend what has been begun in them and will be completed by God [1 Corinthians 2:6-10].

Matthew's Gospel is not a sermon, but a revelation of Jesus' own consciousness and wisdom [Matthew 5:17-37]. The interpretive key to everything Jesus wanted to say is encapsulated in the phrase: "I have not come to abolish, but to fulfill." Jesus, the prophetic Jewish preacher, understood that his vocation was to demonstrate the deep meaning of everything that had gone before him — particularly of God's loving interaction with humanity.

In an oppressed society hoping for military victories, Jesus preached radical nonviolence. In a religious tradition that cherished sacrifice as humans' best offering to God, Jesus taught that interpersonal reconciliation was worth more than any material offering.

In a patriarchal and slave-holding society, Jesus preached that looking on another as an object for self-gratification rather than as an equal subject before God was tantamount to adultery — remember, adultery was the most common description of Israel's religious unfaithfulness and it was more a question of the unfaithfulness of idolatry than anything sexual.

In a society that valued physical integrity and saw disability as a sign of God's disfavor, Jesus claimed that being maimed or blind was preferable to denigrating another in thought or action.

Any one of Jesus' phrases summarizes his whole teaching. Yet the simplest and clearest is "Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes' and your 'No' mean 'No.'" Who could ask for a more straightforward call to the never-ending task of living with integrity? When we describe Jesus with words like holy, wondrous, loving and faithful — each of those describes a dimension of his integrity as son of God and son of man, as the person who fulfilled the human vocation to be an image of God.

As Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus revealed his own discernment about the purpose of life and the place of law. Jesus had realized that anger, resentment, the use of others for personal pleasure or gain, and the easy severing of relationships were nothing more than diverse expressions of profound disrespect for the other.

Jesus preached, not to burden others, but to invite them into profound freedom. Today, he would surely remind us that relishing anger or grudges — even at injustice — confines us in self-made mental/emotional prisons and implicitly reveals that we consider our opinion of others as infallible. Jesus' warning against lust applies also to racism, sexism, and all the bigotries that assume that our way is the norm while others are deviants.

The Scripture Readings invite us to lay claim to the freedom to live in love. We cannot control others, but we can choose how to respond to them. In baptism and every celebration of the Eucharist we say yes to Christ's way. Let our yes be yes!

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



For instance, we are encouraged not to lust sexually in our relationships with each other, but the issue here is why we should not do this. It is about reverence of the human body and the sacredness of love and life that is important. This sacredness of life extends to killing all forms of human life as well. Killing relationships with our brothers and sisters is a violation of the new way of living the Old Law as well.

While the Sermon on the Mount is quite lengthy, it demands much pondering. We here in the United States love the exactness of laws so we know what's right and how we can get around or through or under or above what's written. God so loved the world that God sent a Relational Person to share the sacredness of our lives, and the sacredness of God's relationship with us. The Wisdom of Jesus is not "how" He lived, but the "why" he lived. He came and continues coming, respectful of our freedom, to encourage us to reverence our lives, the time we have, and the lives and times we have with others.

—taken from the writings of Tamora Whitney and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appears on the internet

LIVING WISDOM:

The scripture readings for this 6th Week in Ordinary Time begin with an exhortation from an inspired writer who shared the same name as our Lord — Jesus. More fully, his name was Jesus ben-Elazar ben-Sira, and he lived long before our Lord. The name that he held in common with Christ was one of the most common male names among Jews of his era. Jesus ben-Elazar ben-Sira wrote these words sometime in the opening decades of the second century before Christ [Sirach 15:14-20].

Ben-Sira was a man who had great reverence for the Law of Moses and for the traditions of his people; he saw fidelity to the ways of the past as a guide and point of reference for present-day difficulties and questions. In keeping with his reverence for the Mosaic law and for history, ben-Sira makes a statement which stands on its own merits as common sense — but which is actually a reference to the book of Deuteronomy: "Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him" [Sirach 15:17; see. Deuteronomy 30:15, 19-20]. This allusion to the Torah might have slipped by us as we read the scriptures or heard them proclaimed, but it certainly would not have escaped the notice of ben-Sira's earliest readers. They would have immediately recognized the call to look to the law as the sure guide for living.

In this regard, ben-Sira's words provide a perfect introduction to the Lord's own preaching in Matthew's gospel: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets" Jesus says. "I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place" [Matthew 5:17-37]. But as soon as we think we understand that he is simply reaffirming the law, Jesus states four times: "You have heard that it was said — but I say to you..."

What Jesus is doing here is bringing the law to perfection by demonstrating its full implications in two ways: [1] by fulfilling and extending them — showing their complete meaning and their great challenge; and [2] by revealing that for both for the Jewish people and for Christians, faith is the key to the law. It was the faith of Abraham, whom St. Paul indeed describes as our ancestor in faith [see Romans 4:11-12], that led the patriarchs to anticipate the law, the prophets to proclaim it, and sages like ben-Sira to extoll it. Borrowing from St. Paul again, we find that "the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, though testified to by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" [Romans 3:21-22].

Thus we learn that in Christ we must make a fundamental choice — to place our faith in Christ so that the end to which the law was directed [drawing people ever closer to God] might be realized in us, and we might thus be numbered among those who inherit "the kingdom of heaven".

—taken from the writings of Father Edward Mazich, O.S.B., which appear on the internet.

FREEDOM:

Freedom! Throughout the world, we have been hearing about freedom for centuries — people struggling to be able to live their lives as they see fit; people struggling to become the people that they need to be. Over two hundred years ago our own nation rebelled against an unfair king and found freedom. And ever since then as a nation we have been obsessed by the notion of freedom and our right to be a free people. This quest has led people to suffer imprisonment and death in pursuit of freedom. Having observed Martin Luther King Day a few weeks ago is a great example of this point.

Freedom is also very much a part of our spiritual heritage. Jesus says: “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free” [see John 8:32]. In one of those extraordinary Christian paradoxes Paul tells us if we want to be truly free, we must surrender ourselves completely to God or as Jesus says it even more paradoxically, we must lose ourselves if we want to find ourselves, and for him that’s the only true freedom that there is [see Romans 14:8].

You remember the story of the rich young man who came to Jesus asking him what he must do to be saved [see Luke 18]. Jesus said keep the commandments. He replied that he had done that. Then the Gospel says that Jesus looked on him and loved him and told him: “If you want to be perfect then go, sell what you have, give the money to the poor, and come and follow me” [Luke 18:22]. But the man went away sad because he was very wealthy. Now he was not a bad man. He had kept the commandments and Jesus loved him. But he was not free. He was not free to accept the greater challenge to a more perfect life that Jesus was offering.

In our Scripture Readings for this 6th Week in Ordinary Time, we hear about choices. Choices of course presuppose freedom. Ben Sirach says if you choose you can keep the commandments and they will save you. But then he says, before you are life and death, good and evil, whichever you choose will be given you [Sirach 15:14-20]. But the implication is that anyone who chooses evil would be foolish. Well, we know from history — and also from what we see and hear in our newspapers and on television — that there have been and still are many foolish people in our world. And when people abuse their freedom to make evil choices, this has repercussions and affects not just themselves, but many people — possibly entire nations, possibly the whole world.

St. Paul speaks about making the right choices in freedom. Listen to what he says to his friends in the Church at Galatia: “You were called for freedom, brothers and sisters. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, rather, serve one another through love. For the whole law is served in one statement, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another” [Galatians 5:13-15].

Jesus sets choices and freedoms of another kind before us in Matthew’s Gospel. These are some of the greatest challenges of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus asks us to use our free will to choose rightly. But the choice here is not between good and evil or life and death. The choice is whether or not we will use our freedom to reach beyond the commandments and follow the far more challenging law of love. Jesus challenged his listeners — and he challenges us as well — to leap beyond minimum observance into that realm of love where there is no measure, no limit, no end — “You have heard it said,” he challenges, “but I say to you” [Matthew 5:17-37]. That challenge points directly at human freedom and to all the possibilities for good that are inherent in this gift. That challenge recalls and affirms the invitation of Jesus: “If you would be my disciple” [see Luke 14]. That challenge assures us that even when we, like



His loyalties were less selective and his embrace was much wider. Thus, he refused to bring down an ideal just because the majority of people rejected it. At the same time, however, he refused to condemn those who could not live that ideal. For him, genuine compassion lies in doing both — retaining an ideal and in walking with those who cannot keep it. Thinking this way got him into a lot of trouble — but nobody could ever accuse him of loving too selectively.

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

THE HEART IN YOUR HANDS:

In my work as a freelance writer, I often find myself producing content on the subject of Catholic schools. For more than ten years, I’ve written hundreds of articles about Catholic schools, coming at the issue from every angle. I’ve written about current Catholic school families, and the sacrifices they make to ensure their children receive a Catholic education. I’ve written about alumni and their feelings about the education they received in a Catholic educational setting. I’ve written about the importance of Catholic identity in a Catholic school, and the lengths to which teachers and staff members will go to ensure their classrooms aren’t offering merely a private education, but a Catholic one. All this writing — hundreds of thousands of words, if you added it all up, I’m sure — and it all says basically the same thing. It’s about the whole person.

In a Catholic school, you’re not just going to learn math and science and language arts and all other sorts of things that are good for your intellect — you’re going to learn about the Incarnation, about God’s plan for you, about salvation history and the Great Commission. You’re going to learn about the stuff that’s good for your soul. It’s about the whole person.

That’s the catchphrase when it comes to Catholic education, but it reflects the Catholic worldview as a whole, and it’s a worldview that has its origins in Matthew’s Gospel — when Christ breaks the bad news that he hasn’t come to do away with any rules, but to add one ginormous, supreme, uber-important clause to every existing part of God’s law [Matthew 5:17-37]. It’s a clause, I think, that can best be expressed in the words of St. Camillus de Lellis: “Put your heart in your hands.” It matters if you have anger in your heart, Christ tells us. It matters if you have lust in your heart. It matters. It’s about the whole person.

Whatever you do, you have your heart in your hands. It doesn’t matter if you’re offering a sacrifice exactly as the Book of Leviticus dictates it should be offered. Your heart is now in your hands, and if the heart is not pure, neither is the sacrifice. It’s the whole-person approach to the law.

It’s significant, too, that, when Christ tells us to “be reconciled with your brother or sister” before making an offering to God, he doesn’t forget to tell us to make the offering in the end — “and then come and offer your gift.” As he said, he’s not here to abolish the law. He doesn’t care only about what is in our hearts, he cares what our hands are doing, too. The law is still in effect — it matters what you do. But it also matters why you do it. The law now includes the heart.

It’s about the whole person. —taken from the writings of Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman, which appear on the internet

FREEDOM TO LIVE IN LOVE:

“It’s up to you.” When you hear that, do you believe it’s true? Advertisers hawk phrases like this to imply that the right choice is available for a price you can’t afford to pass up. When my mother would say, “It’s up to you,” the consequences for making the wrong choice were predictably unpleasant.

How much freedom do we really have? That’s the question that the Scripture Readings for this 6th Week in Ordinary Time are really asking.

Almost 200 years before Christ, Yeshua — the author of Book of Sirach — responded to this question in a collection of the best wisdom and religious advice he could gather. Yeshua asserts that human beings are free to choose life or loss. He wanted to liberate people from the idea that their lives



BEYOND LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE:

More and more, it is becoming clear that we need to move beyond the categories of liberal and conservative. Simply put, both have shown themselves to be dysfunctional in terms of trying to help lead us beyond the problems that beset us. Both are too narrow and too selective in terms of the morality they espouse, the loyalties they embrace, and the ways within which they dispense their sympathies to be the basis for anything other than what we already have. At the end of the day, neither has the width or depth to merit the label Catholic.

Nowhere is this more evident than in our moral discourse — especially in our attempts at dialogue about private morality — that is, about such areas as abortion, sex, marriage, homosexuality, and the like. The conservative and the liberal, each in their own way, invites us to a certain narrowness and intolerance.

How can the church claim to be compassionate and in touch with the suffering and needs of people? The liberal does this by being intolerant of the ideal and of moral principle. Crassly put, liberal ideology tells us that if the majority of people do not, or cannot, keep a commandment, well — then we should change the commandment. What possible sense does it make, it is asked, to have a moral precept that the majority of people do not accept? How can the church claim to be compassionate and in touch with the suffering and needs of people, if it makes them feel guilty for not keeping certain commandments in which they no longer believe? How can the church be so out of touch, so ivory tower, in its morality so as to ignore the “sensus fidelium” — the sense of the faithful — in these crucial moral areas? Ironically, the liberal is pretty reluctant to apply this same kind of reasoning to the social encyclicals.

Conservative intolerance generally puts on a crasser face. To illustrate this with a typical example, allow me to recount an incident. Several years ago, immediately after a talk that I gave, a man challenged me. He approached me as I left the stage — angry and bitter. He attacked me with words to this effect: “Father, I can’t believe the wishy-washy bunk you’ve just given. That’s not the church’s teaching! Why don’t you put things as you’re supposed to put them — tell people what the law is, and if they can’t take it, they should walk!” The reasoning here is pretty clear and simple — the written rules of the church — the commandments and canon law — are the benchmarks. You either measure up or you do not. If you do not measure up, you leave the church, or, at very least, assume some kind of penitential or second-class role within it. Ironically, too, like his liberal counterpart, the conservative is not eager to apply that same criterion when it comes to the social teachings of the church.



Now perhaps these are caricatures — indicative only of the extreme — may not be always typical. Few liberals and conservatives would identify with the positions. That may be true, but good caricatures distort in the same way in which art distorts — namely, by highlighting an essential form that ultimately gives shape to the picture, but is not always so consciously clear. Hence, what these caricatures do is highlight what is narrow and dangerous in both liberal and conservative ideologies — at least as these pertain to moral discourse. Neither is really tolerant, compassionate, and wide enough to reflect the charity and catholicity of Jesus Christ.

Both the liberal and the conservative, in the end, are fundamentalists because each, in their own way, on the basis of good intention, vastly oversimplifies things. The conservative does it by canonizing the commandments and the law in such a way that they — and they alone — become the criteria of genuine religiosity and sincerity. There is not sufficient allowance made, however, for those who, for whatever reason, find themselves unable to live these precepts. The liberal oversimplifies things in the other direction. For them, the existential ability, or lack of it, to keep certain moral precepts by the majority of the people becomes the criterion for whether or not those precepts should be retained or not. Each is narrow — one in the name of orthodoxy, the other in the name of compassion.

Neither, however, approaches things as Jesus did. Jesus was neither a liberal nor a conservative.

good servants, have done everything prescribed in the law, we have only scratched the surface of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Our love for him leads us to choose in freedom, not the letter of the law, but the spirit of the law, which is love. If we do this daily and deliberately, then we can call ourselves disciples.

Oh, but Father, you may say, it’s too hard. Yes, it is hard, but remember, we are not alone in what we do. We have a good and gracious God who is constantly calling us, urging us on, showering us with grace and the help we need to do what He asks us to do. Remember too, what may seem impossible for us, is possible for God. We have to pray for the strength, the courage, the conviction of a Paul who said: “I can do all things in him who strengthens me” [Philippians 4:13].

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

WISDOM OF THIS AGE VERSUS THE WISDOM OF GOD:

In his letter to the Church at Corinth, the apostle Paul offers us an instruction on true wisdom. When Paul was writing in the middle 50’s, there was a worldview — common among both Jews and Gentiles — that contrasted “this age” of waiting with “the age to come” when the secrets of the universe would be revealed. Paul reminds the Corinthian Church that he did not speak to them with a wisdom of this age — a worldly wisdom of the rulers who put Jesus to death. Rather he treated them as “mature” persons, proclaiming “God’s wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory” [1 Corinthians 2:6-10]. Quoting some unknown author, Paul writes: “What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard and what has not entered the human heart” — suggesting the ultimately mysterious character of the divine plan of salvation. However, through the Spirit, who “scrutinizes everything, even the depth of God,” we know something of what God has in store for us.

Paul encourages us to reflect on ways that divine wisdom challenges worldly wisdom today. Our culture, for example, suggests that having more things is the way to achieve happiness. Divine wisdom teaches us that being is more important than having, that acquiring more possessions does not satisfy the deepest longings of the heart, that spiritual growth is more fulfilling than financial gain. An affluent executive found greater inner peace when she simplified her lifestyle by giving away some of her prized wardrobe, limiting her new purchases, and increasing her charitable contributions.

In our society today there is a worldly wisdom with some questionable assumptions about sex — it is an autonomous possession available to maximize pleasure; the more sex the better; sexual restraint makes no sense; guilt over sex is neurotic. There is a Christian outlook on sex inspired by divine wisdom — sex is a gift from God to be used responsibly; physical expression should reflect commitment; a faithful permanent marriage provides the best setting for spouses to grow together in various dimensions of their lives, physically, emotionally, morally, intellectually and spiritually. A husband celebrating ten years of a happy, fulfilling marriage is grateful to God for rescuing him from the promiscuous lifestyle of his collegiate years, which left him feeling empty, and calling him to marriage, which demanded fidelity.

What specific step could you take to incorporate divine wisdom in your own life?

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

PRAYER:

I am increasingly convinced that the word “prayer,” which has become a functional and pious thing for believers to do, was meant to be a descriptor and an invitation to inner experience. When spiritual teachers invite us to “pray,” they are in effect saying, “Go inside and know for yourself!”

—Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

TEACHING THE COMMANDMENTS:

The challenge of Jesus's words in Matthew's gospel is this: not only does he ask us to follow God's commandments; he also asks us to teach others to do the same. He says that whoever breaks one of the least of the commandments of God and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But, whoever obeys and teaches the commandments will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven [Matthew 5:17-37]. Therefore, Jesus is asking us to not only obey God's commands, but to teach others to obey them as well. Now, when we hear this command of Jesus to teach others, we should not imagine that Christ is asking us to obtain a theological degree or become a classroom catechist. We are to teach others to obey God's commands by the example of our lives.

A few years ago, a husband, for his twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, took the video of their wedding ceremony and had it transferred onto a DVD, as a surprise for his wife. The plan was to have a simple dinner together followed by a movie — their movie. It was a date she never made. Two months before the anniversary, the wife died of kidney cancer. So, when the anniversary came, the husband took the DVD and placed it in the player. Then he sat down in the family room to watch it, smiling, laughing, and crying all at the same time. His eldest son — an 18-year-old teenager — came in and sat down next to him to watch for a while. He saw his father on the screen, only a few years older than he was now. He saw his mother, so young and so happy. He only sat by his father for a while, because he knew his father needed space by himself to celebrate this first anniversary without her. It certainly had been difficult for the son and his two younger brothers to lose their mother. But, it was just as difficult for them to watch their father grieving the loss of the love of his life.

Yet they were making it. The family was still intact. They continued to be a family. And, somehow, they knew how to do this right from the beginning. As they were coming home from hospice on the day that she died, the oldest boy took his mother's seat in the front of the van. He was the first to break the exhausted silence. He turned to his father and to his brothers in the back seat and said: "Well, it's just the four of us now. We will need to take care of one another." Now, no one told him to say this. No one instructed him to assume a more mature role in this grieving and broken family. But he had been taught how to live, and what to do by the love that he had always seen between his mother and his father. It was a love that was both serious and funny, romantic and routine, flirtatious and forgiving. It was a love that surrounded him as an infant, a love that he experienced in the fun of family vacations, and in the dialog and teasing at meals. It was a love that he saw in the faithfulness present in the hospital room. He and his brothers knew how to live, knew how to sacrifice, knew how to be family. They knew how to follow the commandment of God to love one another because they were taught by the example of the love that their mother and father shared with each other.

We are always teaching by the way that we live — either teaching people to follow God's commandments or teaching them to break them. We are either showing the people in our family, at work, at school, in our neighborhood how to live well, or how to make our lives a disaster. Today, then, it is appropriate to be thankful for the people in our lives whose love has taught us how to live well. It is also right to re-double our own efforts to be the best example we can be to others. Because if we obey the commandments of God and teach others how to obey them, we will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven [see Mark 9:33].

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

**A PROVERB:**

One kind word can warm three winter months.

—Japanese Proverb

action is good or bad. For example: "I saw you playing with your cousin today and sharing your toys with him or her. That was very good. Do you know why? Because people are more important than our stuff." Or: "I heard that you went into your brother or sister's room and borrowed their toy and broke it. That was not good. Do you know why? Because you have to respect their possessions just as you want them to respect your possessions." "You did very well on your report card. That is very good. Do you know why? Because you are showing a respect for the gift that God gave you by developing your mind."

Maybe we need to do the same thing for ourselves. For example: "I am here in Church. This is good. Why? Because I belong to God and He to me. I need to have this intimate union with Him in the Scripture and the Eucharist at least once a week." Or: "I really lost it with my spouse or my kids. This is bad. Why? Not just because anger is bad, but I sinned against the love that animates our family, the love which really is the Love of God."

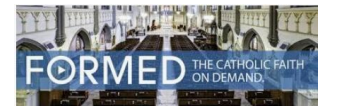
You see, it is not in the action itself, but it is in the motivation behind the action where the person's true identity is found and formed. We are called to take upon ourselves the very identity of Jesus Christ. We are called to be selfless givers. We are called to be eternal lovers of the Father. We are called to rejoice in His presence in our families. We are not called to be minimalists in the faith. We are called to develop the facility of finding meaning in the laws that God gave us so that our external actions might truly be a reflection of our internal attitudes.

So, is it easier to be a modern Christian than an ancient Jew? Absolutely not. Christianity is extremely demanding upon us all because it calls us to be 100% committed to living in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we make efforts to be wholesome and sincere, then our holiness — yours and mine — will surpass even that of the scribes and Pharisees. Tall order. Absolutely. And that is we need God's grace

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

PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CHAPEL FAMILIES:

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



FORMED provides amazing content 24/7 for you to grow in your faith. **It's free and easy to register.** Go to stfrancisgm.formed.org, 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 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.

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.



SURPASSING THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES:

Matthew's Gospel [5:17-37] continues Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Remember that Matthew's Gospel was written primarily for Christians who were grounded in the scripture and traditions of the ancient Hebrews — or simply Christians who had first been Jews. The gospel also focused on Jews who were considering becoming Christians as well as all who wanted to learn more about this New Way — as our faith was first called.

Thus, Matthew's Gospel is structured with numerous references to the Torah — the most important part of the Hebrew Scripture. We know the Torah as the first five books of the Old Testament — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. In the Gospel of Matthew, there are five main talks or discourses of the Lord modeled on the five books of the Law or the Torah. The first main discourse of the Law is the most important — the Sermon on the Mount. Just as Moses went up Mount Sinai to bring the Ten Commandments — God's Law — to the people, Jesus climbs the mountain of the Beatitudes to present the New Law to the people.

Perhaps with this in mind we can understand Jesus' opening remarks — "I came not to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them." In the eyes of the Lord, the Hebrew Scripture are not only valid — they hold a place of greater reverence than ever before. But merely fulfilling the ancient law was not enough. The attitudes and lifestyles of the Christian must reflect living the law.

When Jesus introduced the New Law of the Kingdom of God, he said something that was absolutely shocking — He said that the holiness of the people had to surpass that of the scribes and the Pharisees. How could anyone be holier than the Pharisees? They dressed wearing numerous images of their religion — including phylacteries, or miniature lists of the Ten Commandments hung from their headbands so whenever they turned their head they would fulfill the law — keep these commandments always before your eyes. They fasted. They said loud prayers for all to hear. But Jesus said that his followers had to be holier than these holy Pharisees. How could that be possible? Well, Jesus explains that our external actions must be a reflection of what we really are like. If what we do is not a reflection of who we are, then we are hypocrites.

Hypocrite — that's the word that Jesus uses over and over to describe the Pharisees. Maybe we also used the word hypocrite when we were teenagers or young adults — applying it to those who were older than us who did not fulfill our ideals. Hypocrite is also a word that we all secretly fear others would use about each of us. To avoid being a hypocrite, our whole attitude in life must be Christian.

To demonstrate his point, Jesus contrasts the written law of the Torah with the new attitude of the Kingdom that must motivate this law. For example, Jesus says: "You have heard it said that murder is wrong, but harboring hatred is also wrong even if you don't physically kill someone. Why? Because murder is conceived by hatred. The person who hates but does not murder is not a good person. He or she is just a person who has followed the social norms perhaps to avoid punishment. It is the same with all the laws and rules of the New Kingdom. The Lord's point is that following the law demands living the lifestyle that gives rise to the law. Living the life of the Lord motivates the Christian rather than the minimal performing the law.

It is important that we convey this message to our children. I know how adamant parents are to provide the best for their children. I also know how active most parents are in their children's education. That is an exemplary way of life. I want to re-enforce the efforts that I know you are making to have your children understand the motivation for their actions. Consider asking the children "why" a particular

**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.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Genesis 4:1-25, Mark 8:11-13
Tuesday:	Genesis 6:5-7:10, Mark 8:14-21
Wednesday:	Genesis 8:6-22, Mark 8:22-26
Thursday:	Genesis 9:1-13, Mark 8:27-33
Friday:	Genesis 11:1-9, Mark 8:34-9:1
Saturday:	Hebrews 11:1-7, Mark 9:2-13

7th Week in Ordinary Time: Leviticus 19:1-18, 1 Corinthians 3:16-23, Matthew 5:36-48

CHAPEL ENVELOPES:

There are many ways that you can support our Holy Cross Mission and support Our Lady Chapel. You can place your offering at the door of the chapel as you enter; you can use our on-line donation link; or you can mail in your offerings to the Chapel itself — whatever best serves your needs. If you need a supply of envelopes, please pick them up off the table in the Narthex of the Chapel when you come to Mass. Or you can call the office or stop in to request them. **If you would like us to send you a supply of envelopes, please call Father John or Patty at [473-3560], and we will get them right out to you..**

WEEKLY OFFERING:

Thank you to those who have begun to send in weekly offerings. We really appreciate it. Thanks for not forgetting about us.

Offerings-----[Saturday, February 4]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 223.00
Offerings-----[Sunday, February 5]----- \$ 271.00

THE TOOLS WE NEED TO FIGHT SPIRITUAL BATTLES:

I want to share something with you and I pray your heart is open to it. The devil and evil are real. We can't actively fight against evil unless we acknowledge it's presence. Now that I've shared that, I ask you to open your heart once again to hearing this truth. Our God is bigger, stronger, and more powerful than the devil. Let that really resonate and ring true in your heart. It may be hard to read that the devil and evil are real. It may be scary — or seem unbelievable, or impossible to overcome, but let God into that fear. There is still good news.

The past two years I've been living at the Life Teen Mission Base in Haiti. The Lord has done great and wonderful things in my heart throughout the years I served Him in that beautiful country. The hardest things I experience during that time was the spiritual battle I felt myself in every day, and the spiritual battles I witnessed in the teens we served.

For myself, I found it difficult to pray in a new language, hear unfamiliar songs at Mass, and experience new traditions during the Mass can be overwhelming. But God revealed Himself to me every day through the joy of the Haitians I got to live amongst. I saw the power of God each time I would be a part of the prayer team that prayed with someone who was experiencing a spiritual attack. Often times there seems to be a demonic intervention which is combated with spiritual intervention.

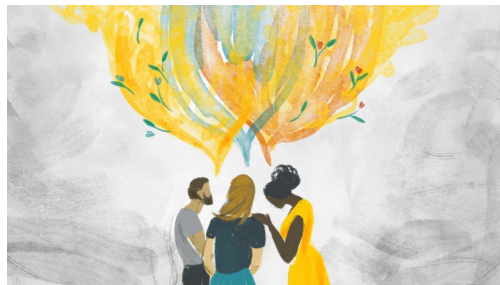
In America, the ways I see this spiritual battle the most is in how we treat our bodies, the destruction of other's lives through abortion and the death penalty, divorce, disagreements based on race, sexual orientation and religion, cyber bullying, greed, jealousy — just to name a few. The devil is working his way into all of these places, and is seeking to destroy the humanity and dignity of each person. We need spiritual tools to fight those things — just as much as I needed spiritual tools in Haiti to pray with teens experiencing spiritual attack.

One of the most powerful prayers I have found to combat evil is the rosary. In Haiti, when a teenager was experiencing a spiritual attack from a demon, the teen would scream, thrash their body, or run away from Jesus in the Eucharist. This would happen at Mass or an XLT. When this would happen, the missionary team would hold the person so they would not hurt themselves or others. The devil would be using the person's body, but their soul would never be compromised.

Then a team of missionaries — Father Louis and any available ordained priest or deacon, and Sister Flo — would gather together and begin to pray. Most times this wouldn't be instant fix. We would find ourselves praying for hours. A prayer team inside the chapel would be prayed for by the prayer team outside of the chapel. Often times we would call upon our brother and sister missionaries in the US to flood the heavens. The teen would have to desire a change in their own heart, go to the sacrament of Reconciliation, and live a life striving to be a saint. Because they are human they would falter, but Jesus would be waiting for them — as He waits for all of us — with arms stretched open wide.

My prayer would always be the rosary. The Blessed Mother is so powerful. She crushed the snake in the garden, and continues to crush the devil through her intercession. Each time we would pray with the teens we would also call upon the Holy Spirit, all the Saints and Angels — and especially Saint Michael — to come to our aid. The Catholic Church has a pretty stacked army — I wouldn't mess with them. Through the intercession of all of these holy men and woman, Jesus would begin to heal the teen and the devil would flee.

Throughout these experiences praying with the teens, my devotion to the Blessed Mother grew tremendously. December 8, 2014 I consecrated myself to the Blessed Mother and began to wear a scapular. If this is something you're interested in doing I highly suggest using the book *33 Days to*



Morning Glory by Father Michael Gaitley. I gave myself fully to the Blessed Mother and asked for her protection over my life.

Praying a daily rosary, entering into the sacrament of Reconciliation, living out chaste relationships, going to Life Teen, developing a rhythm of daily prayer, are all ways to combat the how the devil is trying to infiltrate our lives.

I recognize that all of this talk about the devil and evil can bring about some fear. If that's the case for you, I recommend a few things. Go talk to your parish priest. He will be able to lead you and guide you through this topic. He will also be able to offer you the sacrament of Reconciliation — which I highly recommend! Second, meditate upon this scripture, and ask Jesus to speak to the depths of your heart. As St. John reminds us: “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear” [1 John 4:18].

May you live in the truth every day that God has already claimed victory. By His death and resurrection, we can live in true freedom. When we live a life fully for Christ, it can seem like a radical adventure. It should be one of thrill and joy.

My final words for you are a creole prayer that we would say after a teen would come out of this time of demonic intervention — “Pa gen anyen Bondye pa ka f e!” — which means: “There is nothing the Lord can't do!” I have this tattooed on the inside of my right arm to remind me daily to trust in Jesus, and allowed the Blessed Mother to intercede for me.

—taken from the writings of Amanda Cassar, a LifeTeen Missionary.

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].**

**THE TASK WITHIN THE TASK:**

There is much evidence on several levels that there are at least two major tasks to human life. The first task is to build a strong “container” or identity; the second is to find the contents that the container was meant to hold. The first task we take for granted as the very purpose of life — which does not mean we do it well. The second task is more encountered than sought; few arrive at it with much preplanning — purpose, or passion.

We are a “first-half-of-life culture,” largely concerned about surviving successfully. Probably most cultures and individuals across history have been situated in the first half of their own development up to now, because it is all they had time for. We all try to do what seems like the task that life first hands us — establishing an identity, a home, relationships, friends, community, security, and building a proper platform for our only life.

But it takes us much longer to discover “the task within the task,” as I like to call it — what we are really doing when we are doing what we are doing.

Problematically, the first task invests so much of our blood, sweat, tears, and years that we often cannot imagine there is a second task, or that anything more could be expected of us. “The old wineskins are good enough,” we say, even though according to Jesus they often cannot hold the new wine. According to him, if we do not get some new wineskins, “the wine and the wineskin will both be lost” [see Luke 5:37–39]. The second half of life can hold some new wine because by then there should be some strong wineskins, some tested ways of holding our lives together. But that normally means that the container itself has to stretch, die in its present form, or even replace itself with something better.

No pope, Bible quote, psychological technique, religious formula, book, or guru can do the journey for us. If we try to skip the first journey, we will never receive its real fruits or understand its limitations.

—taken from the writings of Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M.