

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ A Prayer of Gratitude ~**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for not abandoning me  
when I abandoned you.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for offering your hand of love in my darkest,  
most lonely moment.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for putting up with  
such a stubborn soul as mine.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for loving me  
more than I love myself.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for continuing to pour out  
your blessings upon me,  
even though I respond so poorly.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for drawing out the goodness in all people,  
even including me.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for repaying my sin with your love.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for being constant and unchanging,  
amidst all the changes of the world.**

**May you be blessed forever, Lord,  
for your countless blessings on me  
and on all your creatures.**

**Amen.**

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

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

# Our Lady Chapel



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

**CROSS AS AGENDA:**

Easter can never hide the cross. In terms of healing and symbolism, everything hinges on the cross. The cross is about how to fight and not become a casualty yourself. The cross is about being the victory instead of just winning a victory. The cross is about refusing the simplistic win-lose scenario and holding out for a possible win-win scenario. The cross clearly says that evil is to be opposed, but we must first hold the tension, ambiguity, and pain of it — “Resist evil and overcome it with good” [Romans 12:21]. The cross moves us from the rather universal myth of redemptive violence to a new scenario of transformative suffering.

On the cross of life, we accept our own complicity and cooperation with evil, instead of imagining ourselves on some pedestal of moral superiority. As Paul taught: “everyone has sinned” Romans 5:12], and Jesus the Lamb of God had the humility to “become sin” [2 Corinthians 5:21] with us.

The mystery of the cross teaches us how to stand against hate without becoming hate, how to oppose evil without becoming evil ourselves. Can you feel yourself stretching in both directions — toward God’s goodness and also toward recognition of your own complicity in evil? If you look at yourself at that moment, you will feel crucified. You hang in between, without resolution, your very life a paradox, held in hope by God [see Romans 8:23-25].

The goal of God’s work is always healing reconciliation — not retributive justice. And like Jesus, we must invest ourselves in this work of reconciliation that “the two might become one” [see Ephesians 2:13-18].

Human existence is neither perfectly consistent, nor is it total chaos, but it has a “cruciform” shape of cross purposes — always needing to be reconciled in us. To hold the contradictions with God, with Jesus, is to participate in the redemption of the world [Colossians 1:24]. We all must forgive reality for being what it is. We can’t do this alone, but only by a deep identification with the Crucified One and with crucified humanity. Christ then “carries” us across!

The risen, victorious Jesus gives us a history and hopeful future that moves beyond predictable violence. He destroys death and sin not by canceling it out, but by making a trophy of it. Think about that for a long time until it cracks you open. And it will!

—taken from the writings of Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M., which appear on the internet.

**PLAY BALL!**

Our Lady Chapel is going back to Classic Park to watch the Lake County Captains. Join us on **Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup>**. Game time is **7:00 PM** to watch the Lake County Captains take on Fort Wayne TinCaps. **Tickets are \$25.00 each and include game ticket, picnic dinner and postgame 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks.** The picnic begins at 6:30 PM and will continue until 8 PM. Sign up on the easel in the narthex. **Final day to RSVP is Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup>**.

**RENEWING OUR EUCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY:**

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, in conjunction with St. Paschal Baylon Parish, is hosting a weekend conference on *Renewing Our Eucharistic Spirituality*, **Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup>**. **St. Paschal Baylon Parish is located at 5384 Wilson Mills Road Highland Heights, 44143.** Featured Speakers include: Bishop Michael Woost, Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland; Father Norman Pelletier SSS, former Superior General of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament; Sister Catherine Marie Caron SSS, former Superior General of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament; Father George Dunne SSS, Dublin, Ireland, former Provincial Superior, Province of Great Britain; Brother Michael Perez SSS, former Novice Master; Father John Thomas Lane SSS, Provincial Superior; and Father Darren Maslen SSS, Great Britain; and Mrs. Evamarie Cross, Youth Minister. Contact St. Paschal Baylon Parish to register.

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For the people of Sudan.
- 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 woman struggling to find a better home situation.
- 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.

**DO NOT LET YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED:**

If we look at Jesus, even in the worst moment we can keep hope. Belonging to a spiritual family does not mean smooth sailing, sweetness and light. The Book of Acts reminds us that even the early Church hit “bumps in the road” [Acts 6:1-7]. Because the Church is far from perfect, people become disillusioned and start to lose hope. In the church, our spiritual family, we see hypocrisy, hurt, conflict, neglect, pettiness, bureaucratic indifference, coldness and other sins. We must always remember that the church is made up of real sinners — including ourselves. Because we are sinners, we hurt each other — sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally.

The comedian, Groucho Marx, said that he wouldn’t want to belong to any club that would let him in. Think about it. If you discovered a “perfect church” would it have a place for you? Jesus tells us in John’s Gospel that in his Father’s house there are many dwelling places. Jesus has gone before us — by his suffering and shameful death — to prepare a place for you and for me.

Because of that promise, Jesus can tell us: “Do not let your hearts be troubled” [John 14:1-12]. Notice that this is not a pious thought or a suggestion, but a command: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” What can Jesus mean? We know that even some of the greatest saints felt deeply troubled. For example, Mother Teresa faced a “long dark night.” It seems strange that she, of all people, would face deep sadness and depression. She had founded a new religious community that was growing geometrically and doing amazing work with the poorest of the poor. In spite of that success, Mother Teresa began to experience “such terrible darkness — as if everything were dead.”

In 1961 she had a conversation with a holy priest. He helped her realize Jesus was giving her a share in his thirst. She later wrote to her spiritual director: “For the first time in 11 years, I have come to love this darkness. For I believe now that it is a part — a very, very small part — of Jesus’ darkness and pain on earth.” When Jesus said: “Do not let your hearts be troubled,” he immediately added: “Have faith in God and in me.” Blessed Teresa of Calcutta found peace by entrusting herself to Jesus.

Sometimes light breaks through only when darkness has become total. Think about this: Exactly when did Jesus say: “Do not let your hearts be troubled?” Not when everything was rosy, but at the Last Supper. In moments he would face betrayal, humiliation, and torture by people who would laugh at him. To face such things requires hope — a hope not just for this world, but a great hope.

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



**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

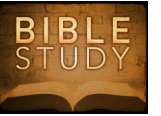
- For Jackie Rusnik, aunt of Jakob Bennish ['30], who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Dale Rusnik, uncle of Jakob Bennish ['30], who is undergoing treatment for various medical issues.
- For Father Diego Irrrazaval, C.S.C., who is critically ill following a stroke.
- For Megan Schaefer Wenker ['09], who is undergoing treatment for lung cancer.
- For Anna Heryak, Aunt for Mike Heryak, great aunt of Lilian Heryak Tran ['09], Rosa ['12] and Edwin ['17] Heryak, who is under the care of Hospice.
- For Paul Hannon, who has serious health issues.
- For Sharon Wilson, wife of Brother Ken's nephew, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Martin Murphy, father of Maureen Linz ['84], Baseball Coach, John Murphy ['88] and Julie Cathey ['90], father-in-law of Amy Sullivan Murphy ['88], grandfather of Michael ['16], Molly ['18] and Megan ['19] Murphy, who is undergoing treatment following a stroke.
- For Ralph Elwart, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For William Schiedel, who is experiencing complications with cancer treatments.
- For Janis Barnes who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Lisa Samples, who is recovering from multiple injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Frank Potenziani, former Trustee, and father of David ['95] and Cyrena ['01] Potenziani, who is seriously ill.
- For Gia Cefferati, aunt of Rylyn ['23] and Jackson ['25] Anderson, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Carl Grassi, father of US Science instructor, Jessica Simonetta ['05] and grandfather of Clare Simonetta ['39], who continues to recover from open heart surgery.
- For Bob Anderson, grandfather of Rob Belknap ['21], and father of former Gilmour instructor, Cindy Anderson., who is recovering from serious surgery.
- For Judith Higbee, wife of Gilmour's. Musical Theater Director, Allan Higbee, who is critically ill
- For Jacqueline Paluszak, grandmother of Brandon Paluszak ['23], who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Joe Bucar, housekeeping employee, who is being evaluated for Parkinson's, a stroke, or some other neurological issues.

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For Velma Hobbs, grandmother of Lower School Instructor, Brian Hill.
- For Diamond Stewart, grandmother of Upper School Science Teacher, Noah Smith.
- For Eleanor "Ellie" McInerney, the mother of Lower School Admissions Director, Christie Radke, grandmother of Luke Radke ['23]
- For Jason Ornstein ['91], brother of Kevin Ornstein ['93]
- For Cooper Andrews.
- For Martha Cellini
- For Daniel Zahn.
- For Rachel Conley, the aunt of Fr. John Conley, C.S.C.
- For Chase Raffaele, former Gilmour student, and brother of Brock Raffaele ['09].
- For HJ McTaggart, brother of Brother Joe McTaggart, C.S.C.
- For Father James Kramer, pastor emeritus of Guardian Angels Parish in Copley.
- For Belva Anthony

**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, MAY 10<sup>th</sup>:**

**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.** Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God's word. It's a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can't come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God's word.



**Our topic: What is next? — grieving and the Resurrection**

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, May 7: 5 <sup>th</sup> Week in Easter	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, May 8:	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, May 9:	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, May 10:	Check with Office for time
Thursday, May 11:	Check with Office for time
Friday, May 12:	Check with Office for time
Saturday, May 13: 6 <sup>th</sup> Week in Easter	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, May 14: 6 <sup>th</sup> Week in Easter	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

**EASTER FLOWERS:**

Once again, we would like to ask for help in offsetting the cost of our Easter flowers. As has been our custom, we will remember your loved ones in prayer throughout the entire Easter Season. Following Easter, the flowers will be planted outside in areas surrounding the chapel. As we celebrate together the new life of Easter, we share also in the renewing of the world of nature. We would like to remember: **Evelyn Bibbo, James Maruna, and Members of the Heryak, Wyrwas, Blazek and Rezabek Families.** Please say a prayer for our loved ones and for their families. **If you would like to add your loved ones to this list of remembrances, please turn in your list of names to Father John.** We will publish this list throughout the Easter Season.



**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].





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

It is five weeks now since the Easter Candle was lit and we welcomed new members into the Church. Five weeks is a long time to sustain the motional charge of this new life of the Spirit — the joy of Christ's resurrection. This becomes a critical issue for us since faith is not a feeling — it is an important part of our life and its choices.

There is the little truism that “Where ever you go, that's where you are.” This is both geographical and spiritual positioning. Have you ever awoken from a deep sleep and tried to figure out where you were? Our consciousness is not always awake before our bodies. One of the more difficult questions to answer honestly is about how we are.

Oftentimes when I go to the gym for my run, the student at the counter will ask: “How are you?” I answer often that I will not know until I am halfway through my run. This is close to the truth. We usually do not give the absolutely honest answer when asked about how we are. Sometimes it depends on who is asking and how much information they can take and how much do we want to give.

In praying, God is more present to us than we are to ourselves. We can ask: “God, where are You?” The better question is: “Self, where are you?” The “how” and “where” of our spirits, memories, and bodies are the beginning of our finding God's finding us. God's truth meets us where we are at, and often we do not know where ours is. We can be aware of where we once were or wish we were, but being awake to the simplicity and humility of our present, right-now self, this takes time and silence.

Sometimes we answer the “how question” with a quick “fine, how are you?” The observant listener would know that we do this as an avoidance rather than an honest answer. With God in prayer, we would all do well to sit in our own pew and allow ourselves to be met right there — in the where of our truth. Only that will enable us to answer the “How are you” question a little more reflectively and honestly.



In the makeup of the human person, there is always the progression or movement from idea to action, from charism to structure, and from spirit to flesh. A group might get together with an idea or an interior sense of need. Human beings need some kind of form, some rules, or ways of proceeding. The early Christian community had been inspired at Pentecost and felt unified and eager to continue Christ's mission. This was the beginning of structure. The early apostles prayed devotionally and conducted communal gatherings to “break bread”.

But there arose this little pastoral problem — things were held in common, but the Greek Jews [known as “Hellenists”] were experiencing their needy ones' not getting as much as the needy of the Hebrew Jews. There was inequality of distribution [Acts 6:1-7]. What we hear is the solution — seven members of the community were chosen to resolve the problem. As often has happened in the history of the Church, a pastoral problem created some reflection which resulted in a teaching moment and a pastoral response. In other words, they discovered more about who they were as a community. This is the beginning of the “Serving Church” — or the Diaconate. Their labors for the poor and neglected resulted in the community's growing because of their care for the needy.

Over the next several weeks, we will be reflecting on parts of Jesus' “Last Discourse” from the Gospel of John. Beginning with the washing of feet, this section of John's Gospel is often called the “Book of Glory” because it focuses on the death and Resurrection of Jesus — the final and greatest display of God's love for us.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Kathy and Jim Pender, parents of Mark ['83] and Michael ['90] Pender, grandparents of Matthew ['11], Charlotte ['13] Pender, and Katherine ['17] and Tyler ['19] Clark, who are both seriously ill with health issues.
- For Kevin Kennedy, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic and lung cancer.
- For Maria Ruiz, mother of Elina Gurney, grandmother of Joseph and Christina Gurney, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Susan Vance-Johnson, sister of Chief Advancement Strategy Officer, Ray Murphy, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Chuck Shade, father of Loren Shade, grandfather of Michael, Madeline, and Charles Shade, who is in seriously ill with several health issues.
- For Chuck Campanella, father of Anthony Campanella, who continues in rehab following serious surgery.
- For Bill McGinley, father of Chief Academic Officer, Elizabeth Edmondson, and grandfather of Mollie ['21] and Abby ['23] Edmondson, who is undergoing health treatment.
- 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 Paula Smith, mother of Tyler ['10] and Alec ['13] Smith, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- 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 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 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.



**YOU ARE A CHOSEN RACE:**

Serious students of Luke/Acts realize how exceptional the event of appointing the seven deacons really is [Acts 6:1-7]. Usually, in depicting the early Christian community, Luke assures us that everything is going along hunky-dory. Jesus' first followers are living an ideal existence — constantly loving one another, always sharing their belonging and property with the needy, and continually growing in number. But then there's a "bump in the road". And this demands some explanation.

It's logical that communities made up of different cultural groups — each with their own languages and customs — will eventually develop snags in their relationships. In this case, Greek-speaking Hellenists are having problems with Aramaic-speaking Hebrews. The issue revolves around the daily distribution of food to the community's widows.

The Twelve's way of resolving the conflict is actually more important for today's church than the solution itself — "Select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task." The seven chosen men are then listed. Except for providing a pronunciation obstacle for lectors, the names don't mean a lot to us. We might recognize Stephen and Philip, who will appear later in Acts, but the other five are easily forgotten.

I guarantee you that none of the seven would have been forgotten in the Jerusalem community. Each man is a Hellenist! If Greek-speaking Christians are having a problem, then Greek-speaking Christians are expected to solve their problem. Christian problems are solved from within — not from outside — the community.

Growing up in a pre-Vatican II church, I presumed our revered pastor would have the answer to any parish crisis. I certainly wasn't alone in that belief. Remember the old story of the pastor who calls a parish meeting to discuss a pressing issue facing the parishioners? After announcing: "We have a problem," he's immediately challenged by a parishioner who reminds him: "The only way we could be having a problem, Father, is if you've got a mouse in your pocket."

The recent establishment of parish councils has given the "laity" some say in what happens in their faith community. But some priests — and bishops — are quick to remind the various council members that they're purely "advisory." The pastor — and bishop — still retain veto power over any of their suggestions.

This is a far cry from the high esteem that Luke, Peter and John's Jesus hold the Christian community — "You are a chosen race," Peter reminds his newly baptized catechumens, "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own, so that you may announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into this wonderful light" [1 Peter 2:4-10]. How do one or two individuals wield veto power over such a prestigious group?

John's Jesus carries respect for the community even further — "Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these" [John 14:1-12]. The risen Jesus trusts all of us not just to carry on his ministry, but to go beyond what the historical Jesus was able to do between 6 BCE and 30 CE.

Ignoring Jesus' teachings, we eventually divided Christians into clergy and laity. One group became superior; the other subservient. One group called the shots; the other took the blows. We 21<sup>st</sup> century Catholics are witnesses of this — still suffering moral consequences 50 years after the church's hierarchical decision on birth control, and today being forced to deal with ever-dwindling Eucharistic celebrations due to the artificial shortage of male, celibate priests.

The early followers of Jesus believed that he left them a way to deal with such problems. But unless we dare to be committed to that way, our problems will certainly remain and increase.

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



Jesus begins this discourse by telling those present — and us — "Do not be troubled." Many people find reading John's Gospel confusing with all the "who's in who" and "Mines are yours". It does take some pondering and study for sure, but there are some wonderful images contained here. The first of these images is the image of God's House [John 14:1-12]. Jesus is going to make a place for His believing followers. Those who have entered through the "gate" of baptism and believe that He is "sent" into this world as the "way, the truth and the Life" will find room in the eternal home.

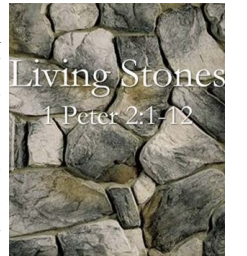
The image has to do with a definition or understanding of love. Our ability to love is quite limited; there is just so much room in our hearts. What Jesus is saying in this image is that God's love for this world is "room" and larger than the world and larger than the world can imagine. Jesus is telling His quite limited followers that despite their personal and collective betrayals — because their hearts are narrow — God's "house" has dwelling places which His death of Love will open to all. Making room for each other will be a continuing sign of what God's love means. In short, Jesus tells Philip — and us — to see the roominess of the love of Jesus — even for His betrayers — and to discover the expansive person of the commodious God.

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

**BUILDING THE HOUSE:**

St. Peter's first letter contains much material that has been very influential in contemporary spirituality. After presenting Christ as the "cornerstone" of the "spiritual house" — the solid foundation and unifying force for the Christian community — Peter goes on to describe the followers of Jesus as "living stones" sharing the life of Christ, and forming with the cornerstone a "spiritual house." We are "a holy priesthood able to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" [1 Peter 2:4-10]. God has called us "out of darkness into his wonderful light." We are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own" with the responsibility to worship God and form a community with Christ.

One of the great contributions of Vatican II is the emphasis placed on the "universal priesthood" of the faithful. This theology is deeply rooted in the teachings of Peter. By virtue of baptism, we all share in the priesthood of Christ, participating in the Eucharist and living the active life of charity in the world. As a result of this conciliar teaching, lay ministry in the United States has flourished as never before. Furthermore, Pope Francis has put renewed emphasis on the Church as the People of God and on the baptismal priesthood, setting the stage for more Catholics to get involved in the internal life of the Church and its mission to care for marginalized people and for our common home.



Future progress can build on the good example of individuals who learned to appreciate and live their baptismal priesthood. To take just one example: Alex originally got involved in his parish when his pastor asked him to serve on the newly formed parish liturgy committee. Although he knew nothing about liturgy, he agreed because he could not say "no" to his pastor. Being a conscientious man, he began a systematic effort to develop a more mature understanding of his faith — acquiring a Catholic Study Bible, the American Catholic Catechism and the Vatican II documents which he used to find answers to questions as they arose. Reading Monika Hellwig's *Understanding Catholicism* gave him a new way of thinking about the major Christian doctrines. Attending a series of lectures taught him that this calls for full active participation by all the faithful and that baptism made him a member of the universal priesthood of Christ with a vocation to become holy and to spread the kingdom in the world. His whole attitude toward living his Christian faith changed. He enjoyed his few years on the liturgy committee — especially when he saw the participation at Mass improving.

Later Alex ran for a position on the Parish Council — not because the pastor asked him, but because he saw serving on the council as an effective way of living his baptismal priesthood. After his term was over, Alex, wanting to stay involved, and so he joined the parish social justice committee which is now working on the problem of global warming. We can hope that Alex's story — and the good example of so many involved Catholics — will inspire others to take more seriously their vocation as members of Christ's priesthood.

What concrete step can you take to live your baptismal priesthood?

—taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik which appear on the internet 5



## WHAT IS REALITY?

Many people believe that living the Gospel message is unrealistic. Numerous times people have begun a conversation with me using the phrase: “Father, out there in the real world…” Their unspoken assumption is, of course, that because I am a priest, I am somehow not in the real world.

History has given us a number of philosophers and thinkers who have told us that Jesus was a beautiful man, possessing tenderness of heart, infinite sweetness, and universal charm. In other words, they are saying that Jesus was an idealist who saw and lived life in an idealistic dream world — not as it really is. They like to talk about Jesus, admiring His ethical code and his moral standards, while at the same time they are locating Jesus out of this world — out of touch with reality.

I suspect that there are some here in church who are here just now for a few moments of relief in order to get out of this world — entering a dream world of sweetness, vague poetry, and universal charm, a place of refuge from the world that is cold, hard, greedy, and overly competitive. But the truth is that we are here in order to enter into the world. The truth is that God has sent His Son into the world with the purpose and mission of transforming it and redeeming it from within it — and in Christ, God is sending us to do the same. How else do we understand the prayer: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?”

Just before He died, we hear our Blessed Lord telling His disciples: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” [John 14:1-12]. This phrase was based on Christ’s understanding that He is utterly a realist. For Him, religion wasn’t a quiet side street — a sort of lovely garden or park in the middle of our metropolitan world. Christ was asserting that His way, His truth, and His understanding of life is the main road.

In fact, it is the only road in this world that’s going anywhere. All other roads lead us into blind alleys and dead-ends. Christ’s declaration was not vague poetry — a beautiful novelty to be applauded and admired from a distance. It was the real thing; it is the only kind of living that ultimate works and has a true destination — one beyond even death itself.

As a matter of fact, Jesus believed that His way was the cornerstone for all living [see 1 Peter 2:4-10]. A cornerstone, we must remember, locates the site upon which a building will be constructed. It orients the direction toward which the building will face. It sets the characteristics of all the other stones that will surround it, along with their texture and their quality. All other stones are measured against the cornerstone. It is the essential stone which grounds the reality of the entire structure.

The worst thing about sin is not what it does to God — even though it put God’s Christ, God’s Anointed one, on the Cross and into the tomb. The worst thing about sin is what it does to the sinner. It brings pain, suffering, and ruination to the sinner. Jesus told us the story about the young man who, in total prodigality, threw all restraint and responsibility to the wind, and went out on his own willful way, and ended up in a pig pen of life [see Luke 15]. Jesus then went on to give us the only realistic thing to do with sin — namely to fact it, acknowledge its existence, and see it for what it is, and repent of it, and then to accept healing forgiveness.

Anyone recovering from any sort of addiction — anyone who has found the only realistic way out of the hellish jail of compulsive addiction or alcoholism — will tell you about it only in the utter realism of recovery. There is no hope of recovery without realism — without ruthless and courageous honesty, without a total grasp of reality. As yourself this question: Are people living in successful recovery living in the real world or in a dream world?

The twelve steps for recovery are all radically grounded on the way, the truth, and the life of Jesus. So are the fourth and fifth steps which require that we make a searching and fearless moral inventory of



understandably discouraged and are walking away from it, towards some human solace, despairing in their hope — “But we had hoped!”

They never get to Emmaus. Jesus appears to them on the road, reshapes their hope in the light of their disillusionment, and turns them back towards Jerusalem.

That is one of the essential messages of Easter — whenever we are discouraged in our faith, whenever our hopes seem to be crucified, we need to go back to Galilee and Jerusalem — that is, back to the dream and the road of discipleship that we had embarked upon before things went wrong. The temptation of course, whenever the kingdom doesn’t seem to work, is to abandon discipleship for human consolation, to head off instead for Emmaus, for the consolation of Las Vegas or Monte Carlo.

But, as we know, we never quite get to Las Vegas or Monte Carlo. In one guise or another, Christ always meets us on the road to those places, burns holes in our hearts, explains our latest crucifixion to us, and sends us back—and to our abandoned discipleship. Once there, it all makes sense again.

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

## THE ANSWER:

I consider myself to be something of a connoisseur of kitschy Catholic magnets. Having had the good fortune, in my lifetime, to spend a considerable amount of time in the kitchens of the elderly faithful, I’ve seen it all. The silhouette of a Rosary with the caption: “Call your mother — she’s waiting to hear from you.” A nativity tableau that reads: “Every family needs a stable foundation.” The classic “WWJD” — a real ecumenical gem, it’s a favorite across all denominations.

One that always irked me, though, was this: “It doesn’t matter what the question is. The answer is Jesus.” This particular magnet adorned my grandmother’s refrigerator for years, and my sarcastic adolescent brain just couldn’t handle it.

That’s just silly, I thought. Jesus is not the answer to every question. Jesus is not, for instance, the answer to the question: “What should I have for lunch?” Or the question: “Who is your favorite Beatle?” Or the question: “Why won’t my parents buy me a car?”

But darn it all if that magnet doesn’t pop into my head as I read the fourteenth chapter of John. Every question has a backstory — even the little ones. Every silly, ordinary question has a larger question floating beneath the surface. What should I have for lunch? Because I am hungry. My body is tired. It needs food. It is a passing thing, a dying thing, and one day it will dry up and crumble away with the dust. Is there anything that could sustain it forever?

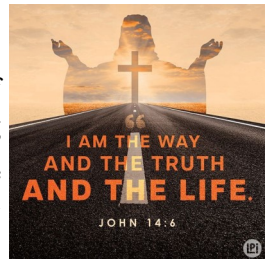
Who is your favorite Beatle? Because we all have opinions about this. Mine is Paul, obviously. Such a great songwriter, and such a tireless performer, and so faithful to his fans. Gosh, I love the Beatles. Their music is great. I can’t explain why. It makes me feel — I don’t know. Is there anything else that makes me feel the way that music does — happy in a way I can’t explain, for reasons I don’t understand?

Why won’t my parents buy me a car? Because I really want a car. I look like an idiot being dropped off at school by my dad every day like I’m 12 years old. Gosh, I care so much what other people think of me. I want them to like me. I want them to love me. Is there someone who could love me even though I look like an idiot all the time?

Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. The answer is always Jesus. Ahh, Grandma — touché.

My grandparents are dead — their belongings long ago dispersed to various relatives. I have no idea what’s become of that magnet — probably languishing in a far-flung Goodwill with a 49-cent sticker affixed to its back. Perhaps one of my aunts salvaged it, but I doubt it — it’s not the magnet that was important. It’s not the magnet that we carried with us from the house when it was being packed up and sold. What we carried with us was the answer to all the questions.

—taken from the writings of —Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman, which appear on the internet 15



## WHERE TO FIND RESURRECTION:

Have you ever noticed that someone or something will find bad in anything and everything? Everything that's good eventually gets scapegoated and crucified. How? By that curious, perverse dictate somehow innate within human life that assures that there's always someone or something that cannot leave well enough alone, but, for reasons of its own, must hunt down and lash out at what's good. What's good, what's of God, will always at some point be misunderstood, envied, hated, pursued, falsely accused, and eventually nailed to some cross. Every body of Christ inevitably suffers the same fate as Jesus — death through misunderstanding, ignorance, and jealousy.

But there's a flipside as well — Resurrection always eventually trumps crucifixion. What's good eventually triumphs. Thus, while nothing that's of God will avoid crucifixion, no body of Christ stays in the tomb for long. God always rolls back the stone and, soon enough, new life bursts forth and we see why that original life had to be crucified — “Wasn't it necessary that the Christ should so have to suffer and die?” [Luke 24:26]. Resurrection invariably follows crucifixion. Every crucified body will rise again. Our hope takes its root in that.

But how does this happen? Where do we see the resurrection? How do we experience resurrection after a crucifixion? Scripture is subtle, though clear, on this. Where can we expect to experience resurrection? The gospel tell us that, on the morning of the resurrection, the women-followers of Jesus set out for the tomb of Jesus, carrying spices, expecting to anoint and embalm a dead body. Well-intentioned but misguided, what they find is not a dead body, but an empty tomb and an angel challenging them with these words: “Why are you looking for the living among the dead? Go instead into Galilee and you will find him there!” [see Luke 24].

Go instead into Galilee. Why Galilee? What's Galilee? And how do we get there?

Since their dream has been crucified, the disciples are understandably discouraged and are walking away from it, and towards some human solace. In the gospels, Galilee is not simply a geographical location — a place on a map. It is first of all a place in the heart. As well, Galilee refers to the dream and to the road of discipleship that the disciples once walked with Jesus — and to that place and time when their hearts most burned with hope and enthusiasm. And now, after the crucifixion, just when they feel that the dream is dead — that their faith is only fantasy — they are told to go back to the place where it all began — “Go back to Galilee. He will meet you there!”

And they do go back to Galilee — both to the geographical location and to that special place in their hearts where once burned the dream of discipleship. And just as promised, Jesus appears to them. He doesn't appear exactly as he was before, or as frequently as they would like him to, but he does appear as more than a ghost and a memory. The Christ that appears to them after the resurrection is in a different modality, but he's physical enough to eat fish in their presence, real enough to be touched as a human being, and powerful enough to change their lives forever. Ultimately that's what the resurrection asks us to do — to go back to Galilee, to return to the dream, hope, and discipleship that had once inflamed us but has now been lost through disillusionment.

This parallels what happens on the road to Emmaus in Luke's gospel [see Luke 24], where we are told that on the day of the resurrection, two disciples were walking away from Jerusalem towards Emmaus, with their faces downcast. For Luke, Jerusalem means the dream, the hope, and the religious center from which all is to begin and where ultimately, all is to culminate. And the disciples are “walking away” from this place, away from their dream, towards Emmaus — Emmaus was a Roman Spa, a place of human comfort, a Las Vegas, or Monte Carlo. Since their dream has been crucified, the disciples are



ourselves and then admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs. As a matter of fact, when you take a look at the fundamental process of psychiatric therapy, you will recognize right away the fact that the road to recovery involves the taking of responsibility for one's actions, and then seeking a healthy resolution for what we've done. And in what do we find that resolution? We find it in taking ownership of our decisions and in seeking forgiveness.

Years ago, *Time Magazine* published an article in which Dr. James Tucker Fisher — an esteemed American psychiatrist — declared: “If you were to take the sum total of all the authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists, if you took the whole of the meat and none of the parsley, and if you were to have these bits of knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount.”

Let me suggest now that if you were to make a short summation of the way and the truth and the life of Jesus Christ, you would speak of living together as members of His family. He gave us His Father. He died on the cross giving us His mother. He declared that we are His brothers and sisters. And He asked us to live each day in a conscious decision to live out our lives in the relationships that are those that are proper to living in His family and under the care of His Father and mother.

In this fragmented, hostile, and broken world of ours — a world filled with broken hearts, broken promises, broken trusts, and broken families — in this world that is more and more littered with damaged human hearts and souls, in a world with an ever increasing culture of destruction and death, what is more realistic — to live as Hollywood TV producers depict in their so-called “reality shows”, or to live in the family in which Jesus Christ invites us to share life?

When anyone declares to you that Jesus was an idealistic dreamer — a man of “infinite sweetness, vague poetry, and universal charm” — when anyone talks to you about religion as if its purpose is only to mold us to live politely and to have good manners, then realize that such a person is only fooling you. He is himself “utterly unrealistic about life.” God expects much more from us than that.

Jesus told it like it really is: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but through me.” Living in truth and living in love makes demands on us — demands that require the courage of faith and the sacrifices of love.

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

## SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — MAY 20<sup>th</sup>:

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

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

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





**DOING THE WORK OF CHRIST:**

John's gospel contains some very famous images. The gospel for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Easter is one of those images — Jesus is going to prepare a place for us in his father's house [John 14:1-12]. It is comforting to know that our belief in Jesus, as the way, the truth, and the life, is our means to eternal life. But if you listen to the gospel carefully, it is clear that it asks more of us than simply believing in Jesus. Jesus asks us not simply to believe in His name, but to do His works. He says, "Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do." So, belief is not sufficient in itself — it must be accompanied by the works that Christ calls us to do.

Now this is not to say that the works that we do in any way earn heaven or our relationship with God. Such gifts are always God's grace. But since such gifts have been given to us, it is imperative for us to live in such a way that our work shows God's love for us and our commitment to God. Believing is essential, but we must also work in such a way that we manifest God's goodness.

A retired priest after a life-long of ministry, died and went to heaven. About the same time a man who had worked his whole life as a taxi cab driver died. The two of them arrived at the heavenly gates at the same time. St. Peter addressed the priest first: "Welcome father" he said, "we're glad to have you here." Then he gave the priest a clean white cotton gown and a wooded halo, and said: "Father you'll be living in a little cottage over by the train tracks. It's a bit noisy but it's clean. You'll like it." The priest was somewhat discouraged about his accommodations in heaven so he decided to wait to see what the taxi driver would receive.

St. Peter turned to the taxi driver with open arms: "Welcome we've been waiting for you. We are delighted that you are here at last." Then he gave the taxi driver a silken white gown and a halo of solid gold. "We are putting you in one of our best properties — a thirty-room mansion on a 15-acre lot of prime heavenly real estate." The taxi driver was delighted and went off to his heavenly abode.

The priest decided to question St. Peter. He said: "St. Peter, is there some mistake? Should I not receive a mansion too. I went to church every day, and I preached the word of God week in and week out." St. Peter replied: "Sorry father, your place in heaven is gauged by the results of your work. When you preached, people slept. But when he drove, everyone prayed!"

The place to produce results is where we live and work. If our faith does not make some impact on the ordinary things we do day in and day out, it is doubtful whether that faith is real. This is certainly the testimony of the scriptures. The great figures of the scriptures often encounter God in the midst of their work. Moses was a shepherd, and while tending the sheep he encountered God in the burning bush [see Exodus 3]. When Jesus was born, the shepherds received the message of the angel while they were tending their sheep [see Luke 1]. The first apostles were fishermen and at their jobs when Christ came to call them. Matthew had a government job and met Christ while he was collecting taxes [see Mark 2]. Martha and Mary came to know and love Christ while worked in their home.

We should expect to encounter God in the midst of our work, and we should work in such a way that it is obvious to others that we are followers of Christ. After all, if we appear the same as everyone else in our day to day activities — if our faith does not somehow set us apart — it is questionable how real our faith is. So, wherever we work — whether it is in an office, whether our work now is going to school, whether our work is caring for a home or driving a truck or working on an assembly line or in a bank — whatever job we have, we need to work in such a way that it manifests that we are followers of Jesus.

Let me give you three qualities that I think can help us do this: integrity, compassion and witness.

**Those that follow Christ work with integrity.** They do not cheat on their algebra test or on their homework. They do not bend the rules of the office to their own advantage. They do not put others



has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him" [1 Corinthians 2:9].

We do not know what heaven is like, but we do know what is required for us here on earth. We are to be living rocks. Like our Lord our lives have to be intertwined with all those around us. The cornerstone connects the walls of a building. It supports the walls. We have to be people who connect others to God. We have to be people who support others. Our Christian charity is a statement of who we are — we are followers of the One who is the Living Rock. As living rocks ourselves, we support and strengthen each other and all others.

St. Peter also reminds us that we are called precious in the eyes of the Lord. We are invaluable. We are cherished. We are highly esteemed. We are loved. We are not pet rocks — we are precious stones.

Why? Why does God love us so much? Is it because of something that we have done? Why are we so precious to Him? Well, why do you, why do we love our children? Why are our children so precious to us? Is it because of what they do? No. Surely, there are many times that we are proud of our children's accomplishments. But we love them even without their accomplishments. When you first held your children as infants, you could not believe you had so much love in you. Yet, the baby did not do anything. Why, then did you love that baby? Why do you love your children? You love them for whom they are, not for what they do. You see God's love in your child. You see a reflection of God's beauty in your child.

Why does God love us? Why are we so precious to Him? He loves us for whom we are — unique reflections of His love in the world. He loves us because He sees in each of us the love He has for his Son, Jesus. He loves us because each of us is a unique reflection of the Love that became flesh in Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the rock that has been rejected by the world but has become the cornerstone of the New World. We are the living cornerstones. The Church is the building of the spirit of God. We are the Church. Jesus is the great high priest who was rejected by the status quo and thrown out of the Temple. He was crucified outside the city. We are rejected by the intellectually arrogant atheists who control so much of our media and society. We are thrown out of the City of Man and laughed at as naïve remnants of an ignorant age. But we remain here in the City of God. We are a holy priesthood, people carrying on the priestly ministry by making God present to others and others present to God. Jesus is the Light of the World, the one who dispels the darkness of sin. We are the people of the Light. We are called to bring hope and light to a world living in fear and darkness.

And we are precious — precious to our God and precious to our brothers and sisters in Christ. What dignity we have! We have the dignity of Jesus Christ. We need to walk through this world with our heads held up high. We need to proclaim to all the people of the world that the gifts of the Father, the special place set aside for his followers, is offered also to them.

We cannot be pet rocks that really do nothing. No, we are called to be the living stones of an eternal home.

—taken from the writings for Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino, 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.

**KNOW THIS:**

The roots of all goodness lie in the soil of appreciation for goodness.

—Dalai Lama



**LIVING STONES:**

Way back in 1975, a fellow named Gary Dahl lost his job at an advertising agency in San Francisco. His bills began to mount up, and he couldn't find any work. But he was a fellow who could think outside the box. Dahl came up with an absurd way to make a lot of money fast — he invented the Pet Rock.

It was such a crazy idea that it took the country by storm. Of course, the pet rocks were not just plain old rocks. Most of them were round smooth river rocks. But that wasn't the thing that made them popular — the key was in the packaging. When you bought a Pet Rock, you weren't so much buying a rock, but buying a series of gimmicks. The Pet Rock came in a box resembling the boxes people used to get when they bought gerbils or turtles at the local pet store. It even had air holes for the rock to breathe through, and bits of wood shaving to keep it comfortable. Inside the packaging was an instruction pamphlet which gave “feeding” and other instructions to make sure the Pet Rock was well cared for. The booklet even gave a lineage for each rock — much like a fancy purebred dog. Of course, many of the rocks, unsurprisingly, had been part of the Pyramids, the Great Wall of China, etc. The pamphlet even taught people how to teach their Pet Rock to obey commands — the best ones were: “stay” “lay down” “sit” and if you wanted to get really fancy... “play dead.” It was a strange fad — an absurd fad — because everyone knows that rocks don't do anything. They are just there — wherever they might be.

St. Peter talks about rocks in his letter for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Easter. He first says that Jesus is a stone — a rock [1 Peter 2:4-10]. But Peter is not talking about an inanimate mineral. He says that Jesus is a living rock. How can a rock be alive? That must have seemed absurd to the people who first heard or read this.

Peter makes an even seemingly crazier assertion. Not only is Jesus a living stone, but his followers are also called to be living stones. What does Peter mean by this? Or, more properly, what is the Holy Spirit saying through Peter? When Peter called Jesus the living stone, he particularly referred to the cornerstone of the building — the stone that unites all the other stones. We are called to be living stones — not inanimate pet rocks — but stones that unite all other stones together to form the Building of the Lord — the Church.

We are not just pet rocks. Nor are we any old rocks laying on the ground. We are living stones. We have Dignity. We have received dignity from the Lord. We have been chosen by God. We are the building that is the church.

It is in recognition of our dignity that Jesus told his disciples that he was going to prepare a special place for them [John 14:1-12]. They, and all his disciples, would have a place in the Father's house. “There are many rooms in my Father's mansion,” the Lord says. There is a place for each of us, recognizing our individuality.

Just think about that. God has a special place reserved for you and for me. We each have a door with our names hung over it. How do we get to this place? How do we find heaven? Jesus said: “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way.” Thomas said to him: “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

If we stay united to the Lord, He will take us to heaven. That special place — the heavenly court of God — is there waiting for us. What will it be like? We certainly will not be sitting on clouds playing harps for all eternity. Boring. In the *Paradiso* — the third Book of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Dante presents heaven as a swirl of love. He might be correct, but we really do not know what heaven will be like. We only know that it will be better than our fondest expectations: “What eye has not seen, and ear



down to make themselves look good or to prime themselves for a promotion. People know that their word can be trusted, that they will make decisions based on the common good rather than their selfish ambition. Those who follow Christ work with integrity.

**Those who follow Christ also work with compassion.** They are aware of the people around them, whether the people in their home or the people on their job. They are willing to take time to listen to a child or to a spouse after a difficult day. They pick up clues from their co-workers of some problem or stress and let them know they are available for support. Those who follow Christ work with compassion.

**Those who follow Christ are also willing to give witness to their faith.** They are willing to let others know that they are Catholic — that they believe in Christ. This does not mean that they try to push their faith on other people. It definitely means that their faith is not something that they are trying to hide. They are willing to find ways to let others know that they believe in God and that they value that belief. This can be done in simple ways such as using God language. When talking to a co-worker and describing some good thing that happened in life, those who follow Christ are willing to name event as a “blessing from God.” They are willing to tell co-workers who are going through a difficult time that they will say a prayer for them. By acting in this way, they witness that they are believers and testify that Christ makes a difference in their lives.

Jesus is the way the truth and the life. Our believing in him leads us to eternal joy. But faith is not sufficient in itself — it must be lived out in a way that it reflects God's love in our lives. Those who are willing to live their lives with integrity, with compassion, and a willingness to witness identify themselves as true followers of Jesus. What will you do this week to make it clear to others that you are a believer? What will you do this week so that others might see God's love in the work that you do?

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

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

**Monday:** Acts 14:5-18, John 14:21-26

**Tuesday:** Acts 14:19-28, John 14:27-31a

**Wednesday:** Acts 15:1-6, John 15:1-8

**Thursday:** Acts 15:7-21, John 15:9-11

**Friday:** Acts 15:22-31, John 15:12-17

**Saturday:** Acts 16:1-10, John 15:18-21

**6<sup>th</sup> Week in Easter:** Acts 8:5-8, 14-17, 1 Peter 3:15-18, John 14:15-21

**WASTE YOUR TIME WITH GOD:**

St. John Eudes talked about that moment, that point, that lies before comparison, before the beginning of the vicious cycle or the self-fulfilling prophecy. That is the moment, point, or place where meditation can enter in. It is the moment to stop reading, speaking, socializing, and to “waste” your time in meditation. When you find your mind competing again, you might plan an “empty time” of meditation, in this way interrupting the vicious circle of your ruminations and entering into the depth of your own soul. There you can be with him who was before you came, who loved you before you could love, and has given you your own self before any comparison was possible. In meditation we can come to the affirmation that we are not created by other people but by God, that we are not judged by how we compare with others but by how we fulfill the will of God.

—Henri Nouwen

**WHY “MAYBE” COULD BE HURTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD:**

Maybe. It is my favorite word when it comes to invitations. It doesn't matter if you are asking me to that concert with you on Saturday, or if I can help you move out of your apartment next week — I'm probably going to reply with a “yeah, I mean, maybe — we'll see.”

Because I just don't know. Maybe I am feeling especially introverted today, and I would rather make a blanket fort in my kitchen and watch *Stranger Things* all day without speaking to anyone. Maybe it is a nice day to move out, but maybe I wake up and it is blistering hot and terrible. And maybe I won't be feeling well.

Maybe gets me half in and half out. It is perfect. Because my mood changes and my feelings change, and I don't want to exclude myself from the concert or being a good friend, but I also don't want to commit.

Wait — there it is. I don't want to commit.

Commitment is scary. When we choose one thing, it means not choosing something else — sometimes it means choosing lots of other things. For a long time I was terrified of marriage. I used to have nightmares about getting married — like, wake up in a cold sweat kind of nightmares. They started my sophomore year of college. I was so terrified of choosing to marry someone and making the wrong decision because I was hurt in relationships before. So, I just avoided them.

And don't think it is just about big decisions, either. One of my favorite hobbies is staring at menus and debating the merits of what I should order because it is “inappropriate” to order multiple entrees — apparently. Because if I choose one thing I can't have anything else, and what if something is better?

From big commitments to small commitments, I just want to keep my options open. Because I could change my mind. I could feel differently tomorrow. A better option might come along. Or I might regret my decision.

Do you ever do this? Do you ever wrap yourself up in “maybe” like a comfortable blanket on a cold winter afternoon? Maybe seems like it gives you all the freedom in the world. You can go to that party — or not. You can join that study group — or not. You can go on that date — or not. It seems stress and anxiety free — except it isn't. It is a lot more like puke.

I was in fifth grade when I threw up in front of the cash registers in our local grocery store. It was a Sunday morning, and the store was packed. As my cinnamon Eggo-waffle vomit splattered across the floor in front of aisle five the sound of conversations and scanning stopped and all eyes turned to me. I stood in front of a giant mess and stared at the horrified shoppers and said the single wittiest thing I've ever spoken: “We need a cleanup on aisle five.”



One cashier laughed out loud while several other people decided not to purchase their waffles. I hate puking in public. I hate puking, in general. It is an awful, foul experience. I guess that is why Jesus uses it to describe a certain kind of person — “I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm — and neither cold nor hot — I will spew you out of my mouth” [Revelation 3:15-16].

Spew. Vomit. Puke. Jesus isn't messing around when it comes to “maybe.” In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that we need to let our “yes” be yes and our “no” be no [see Matthew 5:37]. There isn't an in between. Because maybe isn't a warm blanket — it is a wet concrete that quickly dries over our feet and gets us stuck.

But our culture loves “maybe.” We like the waffling back and forth between one thing and another, never really making up our mind. Commitment is scary because it closes down all other avenues. If I choose one path it means I may not be able to pick another.

A priest friend of mine used to say: “When you promise yourself to someone in marriage, you are

promising not to marry every other person in the entire world.” You get to pick one, and you give up millions of other options. Maybe one is better? Maybe this is why so many people wait so long to get married and are so terrified of it. Maybe this is why there is such a high divorce rate. Maybe.

But the “maybe culture” kills our spirituality and faith because Christ asks us for commitment. He says bold things like “take up your cross and follow me” [see Luke 14:27]. That is decisive language; that is the language of commitment. When Jesus asks you to come and follow Him, there is no “maybe” — there is “yes” and there is “no.”

And this is the amazing thing about Jesus — He is constantly inviting us. Maybe our answer is “no,” right now. Fine, but don't think Jesus won't ask again. Jesus is relentlessly after you. He knocks daily, asking you to come and follow. Jesus can work with “no.” But maybe? Well, maybe does something to our hearts. Maybe makes us feel good. It makes us feel like we are doing something when we aren't doing anything. It makes us feel like “yes” when our heart is really “no”. It keeps our options open, but our options actually are slowly closing.

Choosing not to decide or remain the middle doesn't bring us anywhere — it won't help us grow in relationships with others or with God. It is sinister because it allows us to put off doing something about our faith. We can feel good about not saying “no” to God, but we aren't really saying “yes” either.

Maybe doesn't transform the world. Maybe keeps us from the adventure of discipleship. Maybe leaves us behind. You weren't made for “maybe.” God wants all of you — Jesus asks us to jump in with both feet. Yes, the world around us fears commitment and loves “maybe.” But in a world where being in the middle is the norm, the people that commit to Jesus pave the way to extraordinary.

Let go of “maybe” today. Jesus is waiting for you — ask Him if you can trust Him if you commit your life to following Him. Ask Him if he has great adventure planned. Ask Him if following Him fully will lead to an extraordinary, joy-filled life.

His answer won't be “no”. And it definitely isn't “maybe”.

—taken from the writings of Joel Stepanek, Vice-President of Life Teen

**LIFE TEEN and EDGE:**

**Our Life Teen and EDGE youth group is meeting in-person again.** We will meet for an hour beginning at 11:30 AM following our 10 AM Sunday Mass in the Lennon Board Room. If you are unable to join us, there are many resources available for you on the Life Teen website — [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com). There are numerous blogs and videos for you to connect with. The Life Teen national office continues to release many new programs. **Please contact Father John for more information. And please join us each Sunday for our Mass at 10 AM — in person or live-streamed, and then come to our Life Teen/EDGE gathering after Mass.** And above all, let us continue to join each other in prayer. **Father John is available for you. Please contact him [cell: 216-570-9276].**

**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, April 29]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 440.00  
Offerings-----[Sunday, April 30]----- \$ 425.00