

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Blessing on Our Mother ~

Loving God,
You are the source of all life
and your presence is shown to us
through the gift of our mother.
We thank you for her life,
her care,
and the love and value of family life
that she has taught us.
As a mother gives life
and nourishment to her children,
So you watch over your people.

Bless our mothers.
Let the example of her faith
and love
shine forth as a bright morning star.
Help her to hear your voice,
and to follow you each day.
May she teach her children
to love and worship you.

Grant that we,
her family,
may we honor her
with a spirit of love
and profound respect.
May you, O God, fill her with joy
and holiness in your presence.
Amen.

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:

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

Our Lady Chapel



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

MOTHER'S DAY:

Happy Mother's Day to all our Mothers, step-mothers, grandmothers and God-mothers. What a blessing motherhood is — not just the physical “giving birth,” but the nurturing and special love that mothering involves. At our Masses this weekend we are going to celebrate the blessing of mothers. We are delighted that you have chosen to join us this weekend, sharing this time with all those who have shared this beautiful treasure of God. Offer a prayer for them — today and everyday.

**FAITH EDUCATION:**

Because of the busyness of this time of year, we are **cancelling the Faith Education meeting that was scheduled for May 21st. This will end our Faith Education School Year.** Thanks to all of you — and especially to our teachers — for a wonderful year of faith education. **We will begin scheduling for next fall shortly.** God bless all of you and enjoy your summer break! See you in the

**IMPORTANT SCHEDULE CHANGE COMING IN TWO WEEKS: [one time only]:**

Because of graduation, and the Baccalaureate Mass, we will have changes in the Mass times and places for the **weekend of May 27th and May 28th. Saturday evening Mass on May 27th will continue to be at 5:00 PM, but the place will change — Mass will be in the Athletic Center. Our Sunday morning Mass on Sunday, May 28th will be at 9:00 AM. This is a one time change because of graduation weekend.**

PLAY BALL!

Our Lady Chapel is going back to Classic Park to watch the Lake County Captains. Join us on **Friday, June 30th**. 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 4th 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 19th.**

**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 4th - Sunday, August 6th. 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.

**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.

**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.

THE EMPTY CHAIR:

How familiar are we with God's Presence in our lives — I mean, really?!?! We say that we are because that's the right answer to the question. Recently, I came across a story of an old man dying of cancer. The old man's daughter had asked the local priest to come and pray with her father. When the priest arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows and an empty chair beside his bed. The priest assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit. “I guess you were expecting me,” he said. “No, who are you?” “I'm the new associate at your parish,” the priest replied. “When I saw the empty chair, I figured you knew I was going to show up.” “Oh yeah, the chair,” said the bedridden man. “Would you mind closing the door?”

Puzzled, the priest shut the door. “I've never told anyone this — not even my daughter,” said the man, “but all my life I have never known how to pray. At the Sunday Mass, I used to hear the pastor talk about prayer, but it always went right over my head. Finally, I said to him one day in sheer frustration: ‘I get nothing out of your homilies on prayer.’ ‘Here,’ says my pastor, ‘read this book by Hans Urs von Balthasar. He's a Swiss theologian. It's the best book on contemplative prayer in the twentieth century.’ Well, Father,” says the man, “I took the book home and tried to read it. But in the first three pages I had to look up twelve words in the dictionary. I gave the book back to my pastor, thanked him, and under my breath whispered: ‘for nothin’. I abandoned any attempt at prayer,” he continued, “until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me: ‘Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here's what I suggest. Sit down on a chair, place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Jesus on the chair. It's not spooky because He promised: ‘I'll be with you all days.’ Then just speak to Him and listen in the same way you're doing with me right now.’ “So, Padre, I tried it, and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of hours every day. I'm careful, though. If my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm.”

The priest was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old guy to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him, anointed him with oil, and returned to the rectory. Two nights later the daughter called to tell the priest that her daddy had died that afternoon. “Did he seem to die in peace?” the priest asked. “Yes, when I left the house around two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me one of his corny jokes, and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange, Father. In fact, beyond strange — kind of weird. Apparently just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on a chair beside his bed.”

What if we were really attuned to God's Presence in our lives — like this man in the story? What difference would it make given the realities of the world we live in?

—taken from the writings of Brother John-Marmion Villa, 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:

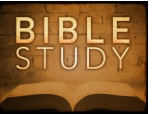
- For Jackie Rusnik, aunt of Jakob Bennish ['30], who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Dale Rusnik, uncle of Jakob Bennish ['30], who is undergoing treatment for various medical issues.
- For Father Diego Irrrazaval, C.S.C., who is critically ill following a stroke.
- For Megan Schaefer Wenker ['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 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 Gail Whitworth, sister of Father Dick Rutherford, C.S.C., who is experiencing serious health issues.

FOR THE DECEASED:

- 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
- For Elizabeth DeChant.
- For Sam Eaton, junior at Archbishop Hoban.
- For Rita Andrich
- For Jean Telzrow
- For Mike Cooper, brother of Brother Jeff Cooper, C.S.C.

NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, MAY 24th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, May 24th 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? — the Resurrection and Pentecost

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 14: 6 th Week in Easter	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, May 15:	Check with Office for time
Tuesday, May 16:	Check with Office for time
Wednesday, May 17:	Check with Office for time
Thursday, May 18:	Check with Office for time
Friday, May 19:	Check with Office for time
Saturday, May 20: Feast of the Ascension	5:00 PM In Person
Sunday, May 21: Feast of the Ascension	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: **Eveyn 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:

Two weeks from now is the great celebration of Pentecost. We are preparing to be more available to the promptings of that Spirit which comforts, protects, guides, and encourages the fuller experience of who each of us is. Each of us has been baptized into that Spirit; each of us is invited to live in hope so distinctly that people will ask us for an explanation. The bottom line here is that we all need to become more of a sacramental people — we need to be bolder in our living and revealing God's word and work.

This weekend, we celebrate Mother's Day in the US. To anyone who has lost their mother, this observance brings a void which is filled with many memories and feelings. Mother's Day is all about relationship — a relationship that never goes away.

In John's Gospel, Jesus talks about his Father-Son bond with God — and of course their relationship was absolutely more than a regular father-son. Jesus says: "realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you" [John 14:15-21]. There is a connection that is beyond death. Jesus rose again, and if we accept him, he lives in each of us. He says: "In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me." We are still connected even beyond this world and into the next. He hasn't just left us here; he's given us his love that doesn't die.

Jesus set himself as a precedent. His love continues and he continues to love us, and we continue to love him. And love does not die. Those we love who have gone before continue to love us too, and we continue to love them. Jesus says: "whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him." Love never dies.

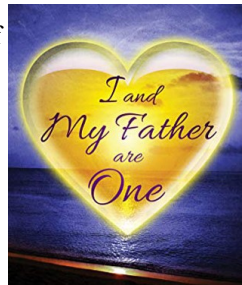
Steven — the first martyr for Christ — is a victim of the persecution of the early Church. Saul, who himself would become a follower of Jesus, greatly encouraged and assisted in this purge. The Book of Acts describes Philip's going away from Jerusalem with many others who were fleeing the persecution. He travels to Samaria and begins to preach about Jesus and performing many miracles. In that town also was a man named Simon the Magician, who has been working the crowds of Samaria before Philip arrives. As Philip preaches, many forsake Simon and become baptized. Even Simon desires a bit of the action and asks if he can strike a deal with Philip by his purchasing with money some of the Spirit with which Philip works his miracles. Philip points out to Simon that this baptism is a free gift as is the Holy Spirit. Even Simon joins the crowd in baptism [Acts 8:5-17].

Peter and John arrive from Jerusalem; they witness the great fervor of the people and then lay hands on those who have heard the Good News and desire to live as "good words" themselves. The Holy Spirit urges incarnation — that is, that those who believe in their hearts might be freed to give flesh to God's goodness within them. The early Church grew through the work of the Spirit and the works of those who lived what they believed.

Next weekend, we will be celebrating the mystery of the Lord's Ascension into Heaven. With that in mind, John's Gospel continues the final instructions and prayers of Jesus over His Apostles. He is going to first leave them after this discourse by giving His life on the cross. He then will leave them after His resurrection through His being taken up out of their sight in the Ascension. The words we hear from Jesus are a comforting reminder that though He will be leaving them, He will send a kind of "holy Lawyer" to be their Advocate, Consulter, Inspiration, and Encourager.

Jesus speaks to His friends about the centrality of "loving" Him. This is a rather difficult spiritual reality — how to "love" God and thereby fulfill the First Commandment that Jesus asks about here. At first hearing, it can sound as if God will love us if we keep each commandment. This could mean also that each Commandment had to be observed quite perfectly in order to allow God's love to flow. This is very dangerous Theology, resulting in a crippling Spirituality.

In the business world, if I do something which is expected and required, then I might be appreciated; but in either case, I certainly expect to be paid accordingly. In school when we do everything correctly

**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.



FOLLOWING THE SPIRIT:

Many of us have a built-in problem keeping us from correctly understanding Scripture. Our catechism-oriented education assured us that we'd always know that we're doing what Jesus wanted us to do as long as we're following the teachings of the institutional church. The Galilean carpenter deliberately set up that organization during his earthly ministry to guarantee his message would always be presented the way he intended it to be presented.

There's just one problem with that reasoning. Modern Scripture scholars — like the late Raymond Brown — are unanimously convinced that the historical Jesus never intended to found a church as we know it today. More than anything, he was simply a reformer of Judaism, not the founder of a new religion. So if he didn't create a formal institution to carry on his ministry, what did he do to guarantee it would always be done the right way? — he gave his followers his Spirit [John 14:15-21].

John's Jesus couldn't have said it better — “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always — the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you and will be in you.” According to John, only those who give themselves over to Jesus' Spirit are authentic other Christs.

That's why Luke believes it's essential for Peter and John to travel from Jerusalem up to Samaria to make certain that community's newly baptized actually have received Jesus' Spirit. Philip — knowing nothing of our modern Trinitarian formula — had only baptized them “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” By the laying on of the apostles' hands, Jesus' Spirit also comes upon them. Their conversion is complete.

We have no idea what formula the author of First Peter employed in baptizing those to whom this homily is directed. But he certainly takes for granted that they've received the Spirit in whatever action preceded his speaking to them. Just as the historical Jesus could defend his ministry and message, so they should be able to follow suit. This is important since suffering is always an integral part of carrying out that ministry and conveying that message. In the author's mind, a person's defense of being another Christ doesn't come in a harmless school exam, but in the midst of suffering. No reason to defend it unless we're in pain because of it. Our unknown writer is convinced that just as Jesus was “put to death in the flesh and was brought to life in the Spirit,” so his Spirit gives us life especially when our suffering is most severe.

In some sense, it's easy to understand why many Christians quickly traded the Spirit for an institution. The late Carroll Stuhlmueller always taught that there are two rules to know when the Spirit's actually talking to us. First, what suddenly comes into our mind is an insight, not a process of reasoning. Two and two equals four, for instance, probably isn't from the Spirit. Inspiration from the Spirit comes out of nowhere. One instant there's nothing, then suddenly!

Second, actually following through on what pops into our mind will cost us big time. The Spirit always demands we leave where we're comfortably ensconced and move to a place where we'd rather not be — a place which makes new demands on us. The Spirit never tells us: “Stay right here! Don't move a muscle!”

According to our sacred authors, only when we're disturbed about what God expects us to do can we be certain the risen Jesus' Spirit is actually at work in our lives.

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

HOPE:

Hope is radical openness for surprise — for the unimaginable. If that is the attitude with which we look, listen, and open all our senses, we enter into a meaningful relationship with whatever Life offers us at a given moment.

—Brother David Steindl-Rast



and politely our teachers are expected to smile and give us a gold star and a good grade. Do we love God by doing the “good works” and then God loves us in response? Absolutely not! God does not love us because we keep the commandments.

The “Spirit of truth whom the world cannot accept” is this Advocate or Spirit of God Who is given to us and to all people of this world as a reminder. The Spirit is sent to confirm the world in the simple truth that we are in Christ Who is in the Father. The “world” cannot accept being that dependent or intimately united. The “world” — and we are a part of that world — wants its own freedom of identity and behavior. To love God is to accept the God-given truth that I am and we are and all is a God-given truth. Accepting this truth is the work of the Spirit as well as living that truth. The good we do is not a price we pay, but a revelation of who we really are in Christ Who is in the Father.

Keeping the commandments of Jesus by our doing things begins with our receiving firstly the command that Jesus is. This Command is to allow ourselves to be loved and to accept our being in Christ. Jesus saves us first from false identities and being lost in the search. The Spirit is sent to continue our becoming more in Christ.

The life of St. John Paul II — and now Pope Francis — was guided by this Holy Spirit. His writings, spoken words, and his actions all increased the experience of the Spirit of God in the Church. John Paul was not a magician — though he did change things mysteriously — but in some way he was a miracle worker of sorts. The increase was not in numbers especially, but in the Church's expressing the “truth which the world cannot accept.” Especially significant is St. John Paul's work on the sacredness of human life — the sacred creation, salvation, and blessedness of each person. The work of Christ's Spirit is not done yet.

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

THE HOPE THAT SUSTAINS US:

The letter of St. Peter was most probably written by a disciple of Peter, the first pope, sometime after his martyrdom in Rome during the persecution of Nero from 64 to 68 AD. The letter was most likely addressed to Christian communities in northern Asia Minor — today modern Turkey. A very common theme of Peter's writing is his constant encouragement that Christians endure the suffering that comes from the world to those who believe as we live out our faith in a hostile environment. Peter advises us to reverence Christ as “Lord in our hearts.” Christ himself, the righteous one, suffered for our sins, was “put to death in the flesh,” and was brought to life in the Spirit,” that he might lead us to God.

Peter reminds us as Christians: “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.” We should do this with “gentleness and reverence,” keeping our “conscience clear” so that those who malign and defame us will themselves “be put to shame” [1 Peter 3:8-18]. In the midst of suffering, we are well advised to turn to Christ dwelling in our hearts, who saved us from our sins by his death and resurrection. We have a responsibility to give an explanation to anyone interested for the hope Christ inspires in us.

Let us imagine ordinary individuals giving effective witness to their Christian hope. Over the years, a father picked key moments to share with his growing son the many ways his Christian faith helped him manage some of the crosses of life — like the death of his mother, and a demotion at work. A wife talked her husband into doing a Marriage Encounter by emphasizing her hope that their marriage could be more mutually enriching. A grandmother comforts her collegiate granddaughter — who remains upset that the presidential glass ceiling is still intact — by sharing her own experience of women's progress as a sign of hope for the future. A geology professor long worried about apathy over global warming found new hope when he saw the positive response of his students to the encyclical *Laudato Si* by Pope Francis.

Are you prepared to give an explanation for the hope that sustains you?

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

LOVE AND THE SPIRIT:

The journey of Easter continues toward the coming of the Holy Spirit. John's Gospel [14:15-21] offers us some very reassuring words from Jesus — He tells us that he will ask the Father to send us an Advocate to remain with us. This is, of course, none other than the Holy Spirit who will continue to lead and guide us and give us comfort in times of distress.

Jesus begins by saying: "If you love me you will keep my commandments. This statement of Jesus is opposite to the way we would ordinarily think — we normally think that obedience to the commandments is a precondition to our loving God. We tend to think that we can only truly love God if we are already following his commandments. But this is not how Christ sees things. It is our deep love of God that must move us in our way of life. The commandments are only meant as "guide posts" in living that love. They are not the means to obtain that love. This means that our motive is not fear of a God who will punish us if we disobey him. Our motive is solely one of love and the consequent desire to please God.

We need to be constantly aware that the basis of the Christian faith is love. Of course, we understand that love is what God is all about; we realize too that the only way to achieve harmony with God is to live a life filled with love. It is love which needs to be our motivating force; we need to put our whole energy into living as truly loving persons.

This will inevitably require sacrifice which is the bedrock of all love. No one can love without making sacrifices for their beloved. And it is the same with our faith-life. The true believer is constantly making sacrifices for God and for neighbor; the Christian realizes that these sacrifices are the evidence that their lives are filled with love.

You can see here the profound switch from the Old Testament view of God — with its emphasis on a more wrathful God. The New Testament understands that God is pure love. This marks a significant growth in our comprehension of the nature of God.

We can see this gradual growth and development of our understanding of God over many centuries as humanity moved from first worshiping earthly and inanimate objects through to believing in a multiplicity of Gods who lived in a spiritual realm. Only after a long time did we come to appreciate the revelation to Abraham that there is only one God. We then made the highly significant move from believing that this one God was harsh and judging into the Christian dispensation where it is revealed to us that God is all love and that God is a Trinity of persons.

Our desire to please God changes our attitude toward God's commandments. No longer are they seen as a set of laws that a capricious God requires us to conform to. Rather they are seen as the best way to live out our human existence. We see God's laws as life-enhancing and enriching. We see following them as the way to our true fulfilment rather than anything onerous or burdensome.

Someone once wrote: "To love the world is no big chore; it's that miserable person next door who is the problem." All too often this is our difficulty. We have no trouble with love in the abstract — we often see ourselves as very open, tolerant and loving people. That is until we come across some actual real people, especially those who get on our nerves. As we encounter this "miserable person next door", we suddenly experience a problem. The way they speak and act annoys us deeply, and soon enough our wonderful open and loving attitude comes to a full stop. The little irritations of everyday life can swiftly bring to an end our highest ambitions to live our lives in the way God wants.

Often, we cannot explain just how another person irritates us. We do not understand what is happening; we simply experience an aversion to them. Something they do or say jars or annoys us, and we end up very irritated. It then becomes impossible to show love to them.

Some of the things that irritate us about others may have a cause — and that cause might be because they don't feel loved enough themselves. Maybe that's why they irritate us; they might be somewhat

by showing some raw muscle power and banging some heads here and now. We are impatient with quiet, moral power that demands infinite patience and a long-term perspective. We want a hero — someone with the blazing guns of a Hollywood superhero but the heart of a Mother Theresa. The guns of the world blasting away evil, that's what we want from our God — not the power of a baby lying mute and helpless against the cruel powers of our time. Like the Israelites facing the Philistines, we are reluctant to send a shepherd boy against an ironclad giant. We want divine power in iron, muscles, guns, and charisma.

But that's not the way intimacy, peace, and God are found.

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

AN INVITATION INTO UNION WITH GOD:

Today, we meet Philip the Evangelist. He was one of the first deacons, but more than that, he was a missionary and the father of four prophet/missionary daughters. Although it might seem that Philip's preaching in Samaria offered little in the realm of "foreign" missions, history suggests that the opposite may be true.

The Jews and Samaritans shared ancient roots and the kind of long-term animosities that only happen among closely related groups. Thus, Philip — a Hellenist [Jew with a Greek heritage] — ventured into adversarial territory, hoping he could get a better hearing than would a Hebrew Christian [Acts 8:5-17].

The reason this story from the Book of Acts of the Apostles appears in the Liturgy of the Word for this 6th Week in Easter is primarily its mention of how the Holy Spirit came upon the people who had begun believing in Jesus. Historically, this reveals something of the development of faith in Christ and the Trinity. Philip's baptism, performed in the name of Jesus, ritualized belief in Christ and his resurrection. Peter and John's completion of baptism in Samaria, calling down the Spirit, symbolized full reconciliation and unity among Jewish and Samaritan Christians.

We see that Acts insists that those who were baptized with John's ritual [see Acts 19], or simply in the name of Jesus needed something more. When Jesus was no longer humanly present among them, they needed the gift of his Spirit in order to participate in the life of the risen Christ.

John's Gospel selection from Jesus' last discourse follows directly on last week's and deals with the situation disciples would face when the human Jesus was no longer among them. Orienting them about how they were to live, Jesus explained: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" [John 14:15-21]. That is no dry injunction to obey — Jesus refers here to the depths of the covenant and his people's daily prayer. To keep the commandments is, in the words of Jesuit theologian Silvano Fausti, to put into action what flows from "the love of a heart that knows it is loved."

In spite of Jesus' love, the disciples knew their own weakness. Jesus recognized their anxiety and promised: "I will not leave you orphans." Helping them face his coming absence, he didn't set up any structure for them, but promised: "I will ask the father for another Paraclete to be with you always." The word "another" implies that the coming Spirit would act as he had among them — leading and teaching them. This promise means that disciples can live like Jesus did. As Jesus speaks of the Father and the Spirit, he is inviting us into the love life of the Trinity, the divine community that created the universe simply to share love with creation.

Jesus promises that our relationship with God can be like his — "I in my Father and me in you." Let us not act like orphans, but be evangelizers who embody the joy of God's Spirit among us.

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



THE POWER OF THE POWERLESS:

There are different kinds of power and different kinds of authority. There is military power, muscle power, political power, economic power, moral power, charismatic power, and psychological power, among other things. There are different kinds of authority too. We can be bitterly forced into acquiescing to certain demands, or we can be gently persuaded into accepting them. Power and authority are not all of a kind.

Imagine four persons in a room: The first is a powerful dictator who rules a country. His word commands armies, and his shifting moods intimidate subordinates. He wields a brutal power. Next to him sits a gifted athlete at the peak of his physical prowess — a man whose quickness and strength have few equals. His skills are a graceful power for which he is much admired and envied. The third person is a rock star whose music and charisma can electrify an audience and fill a room with a soulful energy. Her face is on billboards and she is a household name. She's still another kind of power. And finally, we have too in the room a newborn — a baby lying in its crib, seemingly without any power or strength whatsoever, unable to even ask for what it needs. Which of these is ultimately the most powerful?

The irony is that the baby ultimately wields the greatest power. The athlete could crush it, the dictator could kill it, and the rock star could out-glow it in sheer dynamism, but the baby has a different kind of power. It can touch hearts in a way that a dictator, an athlete, or a rock star cannot. Its innocent, wordless presence, without physical strength, can transform a room and a heart in a way that guns, muscle, and charisma cannot. We watch our language and actions around a baby; less so around athletes and rock stars. The powerlessness of a baby touches us at a deeper moral place.

God's power forever lies within our world and within our lives, asking for our patience. And this is the way we find and experience God's power here on earth — sometimes to our great frustration — and this is the way that Jesus was deemed powerful during his lifetime. The entire Gospels make this clear — from beginning to end. Jesus was born as a baby — powerless — and he died hanging helplessly on a cross with bystanders mocking his powerlessness. Yet both his birth and his death manifest the kind of power upon which we can ultimately build our lives.

The Gospels describe Jesus' power and authority in exactly this way. In Greek — the original language of the Gospels — we find three words for power or authority. We easily recognize the first two — “energy” and “dynamic”. There is a power in energy, in physical health and muscle, just as there is a power in being dynamic, in dynamite, in having the power to generate energy. But when the Gospels speak of Jesus as “having great power” and as having a power beyond that of other religious figures, they do not use the words energetic or dynamic. They use a third word — “exousia” — which might be best rendered as vulnerability. Jesus' real power was rooted in a certain vulnerability — like the powerlessness of a child.

This isn't an easy concept to grasp since our idea of power is normally rooted in the opposite — namely, the notion that power lies in the ability to overwhelm, not underwhelm, others. And yet we understand this, at least somewhat, in our experience of babies, who can overpower us precisely by their powerlessness. Around a baby, as most every mother and father has learned, we not only watch our language and try not to have bitter arguments; we also try to be better, more loving persons. Metaphorically, a baby has the power to do an exorcism. It can cast out the demons of self-absorption and selfishness in us. That's why Jesus could cast out certain demons that others could not.

And that's how God's power forever lies within our world and within our lives, asking for our patience. Christ, as Annie Dillard says, is always found in our lives just as he was originally found — a helpless baby in the straw who must be picked up and nurtured into maturity. But we are forever wanting something else — namely, a God who would come and clean up the world and satisfy our thirst for justice



inept in their personal relationships because they don't feel loved enough. When we encounter such a person we often don't react very well, and it might also be this reaction that is making them feel unloved. One thing feeds on another, and the more we react negatively to whatever it is they are doing leads them to behave in an ever more irritating way.

The only thing to do in these circumstances is to stop in our tracks and to review our own actions. Then we need to try to act more positively towards them — even if we don't feel that really mean it. We might be surprised how their behavior changes as a result. It might be that what was previously a negative spiral now turns into something which is more positive. The upshot might be that we start to see things in them that we like a lot better than those aspects of their character that caused us so much irritation to begin with.

Beginning to realize that the things that irritate us in others might have their origins in our own behavior may just be the clue we need to put these relationships back on track. The psychologists call this projection — it often happens that we see our own faults reflected in the life of other people. It is always good to stop and look at ourselves when someone irritates you. There is a good chance that the fault lies with you and not the other person.

Showing Christian love might be our highest ambition, but it may falter when we encounter actual living people. Christian love is absolutely useless unless it survives contact with the real world.

Before we do or say anything, imagine yourself sitting round that table of the Last Supper together with the Apostles listening to Jesus say the words we have just heard in John's Gospel. That brief moment of meditation might be all we need to put us on the right track, and help us to overcome our instinctive reactions, and lead us to act towards whoever is in front of us in a truly Christian and loving way.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister S.D.S., which appear on the internet

ASKING JESUS:

Our live in Christ comes to us through the sacraments and through listening to Jesus. That listening takes place in daily walk with him. The Scripture Readings for this 6th Week in Easter now take this a stop further — Jesus tells us we must ask: “I will ask the Father” [John 14:15-21]. If Jesus needs to ask the Father, how much more you and me? We come to God by asking.

Some of you have learned the TARP method of prayer. The first two letters — T & A — refer to thanking and asking. The latter two letters deal with reparation and praise. If we did nothing more than thank and ask, that would be a pretty good prayer.

Sometimes we fear asking. Maybe we are like the young man who fears asking his girl to marry him — she might say no or laugh. But Jesus tells us to ask and we will receive, to seek and we will find, to knock and the door will be opened [see Matthew 7:7]. I remember once facing financial difficulties. It seemed like my parish was sinking — and me with it. Someone suggested the Infant of Prague novena. I did the nine days of prayer and received an impressive answer. I didn't get adopted by Bill Gates, but Jesus did bring the relief I was looking for. Today I have the Infant of Prague on the top shelf of my office. The Child Jesus reminds me: Ask and you shall receive — of course, start with gratitude. Acknowledge what God has already given you, then place your most pressing needs before him. And don't forget others who may be in more distress than you.

To ask involves trust. Remember the example of Jesus. He tells us he will ask the Father and the Father will give us the greatest gift. This gift is essential to Life in Christ. Today consider that asking will increase your trust. Put your most pressing need before Jesus. Ask and you will receive.

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

WISE WORDS:

All things are our relative; what we do to everything, we do to ourselves.

—Black Elk

LISTENING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT:

At the beginning of the last century, one of the most desirable and attractive technical jobs was to serve as a radio operator on one of the luxury ships that regularly crossed the Atlantic Ocean. To hold this job, you had to understand the operation of the primitive radios that were available at that time. But you also had to master Morse code — a technical language of longer and shorter beeps that could be sent over the radio by which the ships could communicate with one another.

On one occasion, one of the most successful cruise lines advertised a position for a radio operator. The waiting room for the line's office where the interviews were taking place was filled to capacity. Over 50 people were waiting to interview for the job. They were talking to one another in voices loud enough to make themselves heard over the public address system which every so often would announce that the interviews would soon begin.

In the midst of this activity, a young man entered the room and filled out an application for the job. He then sat down by himself for a few moments. Suddenly he stood up and went through a door marked "private." A few minutes later he returned with a big smile on his face and announced that he had been hired for the job. This caused one of the applicants to protest: "Look, we were here hours before you arrived. Why was it that you went in for your interview before us?" The young man replied: "Any one of you here could have landed this job, but you weren't listening. Over the PA system there was a constant message being sent in Morse code. The message was this: "We desire to hire a person who is always alert. So, if you hear this message, come immediately into the private office."

This story is a good image of our relationship to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is always with us, and yet we have to listen to appreciate that presence. We know and believe that the Spirit is always with us because Jesus has promised us that this is the case. In John's Gospel, Jesus says: "I will ask the Father and he will send you another advocate to be with you forever — the Spirit of Truth" [John 14:15-21]. We know that we have the Spirit because Christ has promised the Spirit to us and Christ's promises are trustworthy.

To truly appreciate the gift of the Spirit, it is perhaps helpful for us to remember what Christ has not promised us. Christ has not promised us that life would be easy. He has not promised us that we would never have to face divorce or rejection or pain. He has not promised us that we would always have a job or that we would always have our health. He has not promised us that we would always be successful or that we would never make a mistake. These are all promises which perhaps we hope would have been made to us, but they are to be found nowhere in the scriptures.

What is found in the scriptures is a greater promise. Time and time again, Jesus promises us the gift of his own Spirit so that he would be in our lives forever. We believe in that promise, and yet we know that we will have to listen if we can benefit from the gift of that Spirit.

The Spirit of God is not always the loudest sound in our ear. The Spirit of God is not always the brightest light in our eye. Often the Spirit of God is found in the subtext of our lives. The presence of God's Spirit is often discernable under the activities and responsibilities that fill up our days. Like a constant message in Morse code playing out beneath a louder announcement, God's Spirit continually assures us of the presence of God. Therefore, we must be careful lest we allow ourselves to become deaf to that Spirit because of all our responsibilities and preoccupations. We must not allow our disappointments over the gifts that we have not received deaden our joy over the gifts which the Spirit has given us.

Even if we have to struggle in life, we are called to discern God's presence in the strength that allows us to continue to move forward. Even though we might have to face hardship and pain, we are



been conveyed to us that we are a disappointment to our parents, our teachers, our employers, or even, for those who are married, to their spouses or their children.

This is really emotional abuse. In fact, in marriages emotional abuse always precedes physical abuse. "Nobody else would want you, at least you have me." [Side note: Young people, ladies as well as also young men, do not accept being treated with disrespect by your boyfriend or girlfriend no matter how good looking or popular he or she is. Dump the garbage.] Look, we know that we are human beings who often sin, but we cannot allow abusive thoughts to destroy us, whether those thoughts come from within us or from others. We are precious in the eyes of God. We are also precious in the eyes of all who truly proclaim God. It is a mistake for me to compare myself with other priests. It is wrong for you to compare yourselves with other people at whatever stage of life you are in.

It is a mistake for parents to compare themselves with other parents, for men to compare themselves with other men, for women to compare themselves with other women. It is a mistake for Teens and young adults to compare themselves with their companions, or classmates. It is wrong for any of us to compare ourselves with our brothers or sisters. We are individuals — not clones. It is wrong for any of us to think, as the Samaritans must have thought, that we are not as good as others. God loves each of us for whom we are — not for what we think we should be like. He loves us for whom He created us to be. We are created in the image and likeness of God; yet in the mystery of God's creation, each of us is a unique reflection of this image and likeness. He loves us for whom we are. We are not rejects. We are not half breeds — only part Christians. We are precious — precious in the eyes of God, and precious in the eyes of all those who really love the Lord.

And He gave us His Son. We possess Jesus Christ.

In John's Gospel, Jesus says: "I am in the Father. You are in me, and I am in you" [John 14:15-21]. We are not orphans. We are not alone in the world. We are not rejects from "the society that matters". For "the society that matters" is the Kingdom of God. Every other society has value only to the degree that it participates in the Kingdom of God. We belong to God. He belongs to us. "I am in the Father. You are in me, and I am in you."

The Samaritans embraced the New Way. They embraced Jesus because He first embraced them through the teaching of Philip. This is the way of Grace. Grace always begins with God's gifts of love. It reaches its goal when we respond by loving God in return. We have received grace. God has showered us with His love. Now He calls us to give witness to the world that His love is real. We can do this. We can proclaim Jesus Christ with our lives. We are good enough, plenty good enough. We are sons and daughters of God. —taken from the writings for Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino, which appear on the internet

CHAPEL ENVELOPES:

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

WEEKLY OFFERING:

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

Offerings-----[Saturday, May 6]-----[Mass, Online, Mail-in]----- \$ 510.00

Offerings-----[Sunday, May 7]----- \$ 505.00

REALITY:

Life is not about showing off our abilities, but a journey towards the One who loves us —Pope Francis

AS GOOD AS THE CHRISTIAN SMARITANS:

They were the people that everyone hated. They were the Samaritans. The Romans and Greeks and other gentiles hated them because they saw them as just another group of Jews — only ones who could not benefit the empire much. The Jews hated them because they saw the Samaritans as half-breeds. The Jews believed that the Samaritans had polluted blood — part gentile and part Jew.

Back in the 8th century before Christ, the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and brought thousands to exile in Assyria. Many of those who remained in the Northern Kingdom married pagans and worshiped both the Lord and the pagan gods. These were the Samaritans.

When two hundred years later the Jews of the Southern Kingdom returned to Jerusalem from the Babylon exile, the Samaritans offered to help them rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews refused their help, telling them that their very presence in the Temple would desecrate it. The Samaritans hated the Jews for looking down on them, and the Jews hated the Samaritans for their history of accommodation with the pagans.

The Samaritans were also looking for the Messiah, but they knew that the Messiah would come through the Jews. What chance did they have of being brought into the New World Order that the Messiah would establish? On the other side of the dispute — as difficult as the Jews had in accepting the concept that salvation would be available for the gentiles — the concept that salvation would be offered to the Samaritans was not even considered a remote possibility. The Samaritans were lower than low.

And then Philip arrived at the capital of Samaria [Acts 8:5-17]. He spoke about the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Could it be that the Messiah of the Jews would also be a Messiah for the Samaritans? The Samaritans were open to faith in the Gospel. Through Philip they witnessed the signs of the Messiah being worked right there among them. Cripples walked. Demons came out of people. Everything that the prophets wrote about was taking place not just among the Jewish Christians, but right there among the Samaritans. They accepted Jesus with joy. They were no longer rejects, but one with the people of the New Way of Jesus Christ.

As happy as they were, the new Samaritan Christians were given an even greater gift than they could have ever expected. Peter and John had heard about Philip's work among them. The two great apostles went to Samaria. They prayed over them and asked God to send the Holy Spirit upon them. They laid their hands on them and the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit the same way that the apostles received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday. They were confirmed in their faith. This, in fact, is one of the earliest biblical references to the sacrament of confirmation. It was very clear to all the followers of Jesus, these Samaritans were equals in the faith, equals in the Body of Christ, equals in salvation.

Have you ever had feelings like those Samaritans must have had before Philip visited them with the Gospel? Have you ever felt that you were not good enough to receive the gifts of the Lord? Have you ever looked at another person in the Church and wished you could be half as good as he or she is? Perhaps we have all felt that way at various times throughout our lives. The Story of Phillip and the Samaritans tells us that in the eyes of God we are good enough. God makes us good enough. He calls us to faith, and then showers us with the gifts of faith. The joy that the Samaritans had is our joy. We are loved by God. He gave us His very life. He gave us his very spirit — the Holy Spirit.

Many of us are still bogged down in the negative self-images we have suffered from during our adolescence or our teenage years. Some of these negative images are due to our not meeting our own unreal expectations. Perhaps we remember that day as an adolescent that we looked into the mirror and didn't see Miss American or Mr. Universe. Sadly, some of the negative attitudes of our lives have been forced on us by people whom we should respect, but who have treated us with disrespect. Perhaps it has



called to recognize God's Spirit in the love of the people who still share life with us. Even though we might have to cope with sickness and death, we are still called to hear the sound of the Spirit in the life that continues and promises us a tomorrow.

The admonition of John's gospel is to believe and to listen. To believe that the Spirit of God is always with us at every moment of our lives, and to listen so we can hear the sound of the Spirit as it moves under our everyday schedules. Yes, we are called to listen, so that we might recognize the message of God's Spirit — the message of love that keeps sounding under all the activities and challenges of life.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Acts 16:11-15, John 15:26-16:4a

Tuesday: Acts 16:22-34, John 16:5-11

Wednesday: Acts 17:15, 22 -18:1, John 16:12-15

Thursday: Acts 18:1-8, John 16:16-20

Friday: Acts 18:9-18, John 16:20-23

Saturday: Acts 18:23-28, John 16:23b-28

Feast of the Ascension: Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 1:17-23, Matthew 28:16-20

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — MAY 20th:

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.

CHALLENGE BRINGS US TOGETHER:

Our brokenness is also the source of our common humanity, the basis for our shared search for comfort, meaning, and healing. Our shared vulnerability and imperfection nurtures and sustains our capacity for compassion.

—Bryan Stevenson



THE CHURCH CAN BE STRONG NO MATTER WHAT:

If someone was to write a list of all the ways to get the most people to like you, being a practicing Catholic would not be on that list. As Catholics, we are part of a Church that faces much opposition. You may have heard of the mockery made of our religious observations with “Glitter Ash Wednesday”. You may just hear someone professing the Catholic belief of the immorality of abortion being labeled “misogynistic” or a “bigot” at school. Your friends may make fun of you or call you a prude for adhering to the Church’s teachings on human sexuality. Or you may have been bullied just for speaking up in class for the Church. You know this. You’ve probably experienced it firsthand.

When we are faced with opposition and persecution for our faith we need to remember and take joy in one thing — the Catholic Church is not defined by the trials we face. Here are some reasons why:

In every age, there’s always been opposition and trials for the people of the Church. The struggles in this time, therefore, are nothing new. Opposition to the Church is not new.

The serpent tempted Adam and Eve to sin. People spat on Jesus and his disciples. Romans intentionally killed early Christians. During the middle ages, Christians were massacred. In the French Revolution, an intentional and strategic dismantling took place in the form of banishing clergy members, desecrating sacred spaces and Churches, burning iconography and outlawing private worship and religious education. The Catholic Church has faced trials throughout the ages.

We can’t let those struggles and trials and people hating on the Church discourage us; rather they must motivate us. When we are mocked or put down for our beliefs, we should not feel discouraged. Rather, we should feel motivated. We should feel motivated to persist on throughout the persecution because it’s what our older brothers and sisters in the faith have done for centuries. It can be hard to not feel discouraged — as it is only human to feel down when others do not treat us well. Here are some practical tips for dealing with the discouragement of opposition:

- **Have a community of friends who can cheer you on.** It is imperative to have some solid Catholics in your life whom you can text, tweet, email, snapchat, whatever — whom you can tell about the trials and hardships you’re facing for the sake of the faith. It feels so good to be able to openly discuss these matters with people who understand and can pray with you and encourage you to persist.
- **Pick a lion-hearted Saint to pray for you.** There are some saints who have faced some serious hardship and trials during their life on earth. Many of them handled the situations in ways we can only aspire to. Like, St. Nicholas who punched a heretic in the face. Or St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe who volunteered as tribute. Or St. Lawrence who was burned at the stake and told his executioners to flip him over because he was done on that side. Having a saint interceding for you can help you remain focused on the goal—to love as Christ as loved, even when you’re met with hate. Reading about your saint’s story can inspire you to be unabashedly holy and unashamedly Catholic.
- **Pray for those who oppose you.** Nothing will bring you greater peace than to love as Christ loved — and that of course includes loving your enemies. Loving people can seem impossible when they are hurtful to you. But praying for them is a great way to ask God to help you love them. And bringing the situation at hand to God to ask for wisdom, guidance, and fortitude is important, too. If you commit to praying for them every day, will you be surprised at how differently your interactions may leave you feeling.



If facing opposition for the faith, know that you are not alone. Know that the whole Life Teen family — and all the Church — are praying for you daily, and have joy! You are partaking in a small bit of what Jesus, His disciples and the saints throughout the ages have experienced. What a gift!

If you follow our faith, you will face persecution. You will probably not be liked by many. You might even be hated by some. If our faith were about being likes, Jesus wouldn’t have died on the cross. So take solace — He has overcome every trial we will face!

—taken from the writings of by Amy O’Connell, a wife and mother.

LIFE TEEN and EDGE:

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



LIFE TEEN

LIFE AS PARTICIPATION:

After conversion, you don’t look out at reality — you look out from reality. In other words, God is not “out there” — you are in God and God is in you. You are in the middle of Reality! You’re a part of it. It’s a mystery of participation. After his conversion experience, Paul is obsessed with the idea that “I’m participating in something that’s bigger than me.” In fact, he uses the phrase “in Christ” 164 times to describe this organic unity and participation in Christ — “I live no longer, not I; but Christ lives in me” [Galatians 2:20]. “In Christ” is his code phrase for this new participatory life.

This is a completely different experience of life. I don’t have to fully write my private story. It’s being written with me and in me. I am already a character on the stage. I am being used, I am being chosen, I am being led. After conversion, you will know that your life is not about you — you are about life. You are about God. You’re an instance of both the agony and the ecstasy of God that is happening inside of you, and all you can do is say yes to it. After transformation, it’s not about doing it right — it’s about being in right relationship. It’s not about being correct; it’s about being connected.

After conversion, you don’t experience self-consciousness so much as what the mystics call pure consciousness. Self-consciousness implies a dualistic split, with me over here thinking about that over there. Your mind remains split until you have a mystical experience. Then the subject/object split is overcome. You can’t maintain it forever, but you’ll know it once in a while, and you’ll never be satisfied with anything less. In unitive experience, you’re freed from the burden of self-consciousness; you are living in, through, and with another. That’s the same as the experience of truly being in love. Falling and being in love — like unitive experience — cannot be sustained at the ecstatic level, but it can be touched upon and then integrated within the rest of your life.

True union does not absorb distinctions, but actually intensifies them. The more one gives one’s self in creative union with another, the more one becomes one’s self. This is mirrored in the Trinity — perfect giving and perfect receiving between three who are all still completely themselves. The more one becomes one’s True Self, the more capable one is of not overprotecting the boundaries of one’s false self. You have nothing to protect after transformation, and that’s the great freedom and the great happiness we see in converted people. There’s no “little richard” here that you need to protect because it’s precisely that little richard that got in the way and has now passed away — with no noticeable losses. Or as Paul puts it: “Because of Christ, I now consider my former advantages as disadvantages — all of it is mere rubbish if only I can have a place in him” [Philippians 3:7-8].

—Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M.