

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for Peace ~

O God,
you are the source
of life and peace.
Praised be your name forever.
We know it is you
who turns our minds
to thoughts of peace.
Hear our prayer
in this time of war.

Your power changes hearts.
Muslims, Christians, and Jews
remember, and profoundly affirm,
that they are followers
of the one God,
children of Abraham,
brothers and sisters;
enemies begin to speak to one another;
those who were estranged
join hands in friendship;
nations seek the way of peace together.

Strengthen our resolve
to give witness to these truths
by the way we live.

Give to us:
Understanding that puts an end to strife;
Mercy that quenches hatred;
And forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.

Empower all people
to live in your law of love.
Amen.

Our Lady Chapel



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

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.
phone: [440] 473-3560 [office] or 216-570-9276 [cell].
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ALUMNI & CHAPEL MEMORIAL MASS — NOVEMBER 19:

November is the month of Thanksgiving. It is also traditionally the month set aside to remember our deceased. What better way to offer thanks than to remember the special people in our lives who have gone before us to the Lord — our lives are built on the heritage they have left behind. As the *Catholic Catechism* reminds us: “We who journey together on our earthly pilgrimages, must accompany each other at our journey’s end and surrender each other into God’s hands” [CC, #1683].



In order to properly celebrate for our November remembrance, we are going to have a **Memorial Mass** at **Our Lady Chapel** on **Sunday, November 19th at 10:00 AM.**

We are particularly remembering **all of our alumni who have passed away within this past year. We are also remembering all members of our Chapel family who have gone to the Lord. Please place the names of your loved ones whom you would like to remember in our Memorial Basket located on the table in the narthex of the chapel.** The Memorial Wall will not be put up this year because of the construction which prevents us from setting the wall up. Please use the basket.

MEN’S DAY OF RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:

Tuesday, November 7th from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. We will begin with Mass together in the Chapel, and then move to the Lennon Boardroom to continue our prayer and reflection together. **Father John** will facilitate our evening of reflection. Light refreshments will be served. **There is no cost for the evening.** [If you can’t make it for Mass, come anyway when you can.] It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal. **Sign up on the retreat sheet which is located on the easel in the narthex of the Chapel, or call [440-473-3560].**

**STUCK IN THE MUD:**

My cousin walked into my aunt’s kitchen with a look of concern on his face: “There is a calf down in the stream bed — I think it is stuck in the mud.” It had been a snow-heavy winter in the upper Midwest, and now with spring finally setting in, the water from the melting snow was pooling above the thawing ground. And this Easter afternoon, as my children had done their annual Easter ride in the truck with their cousin around the farm, they had spotted the calf.

My uncle, the male cousins, and my husband all looked at each other. This was not how they had envisioned their Easter celebration, but even on Easter Sunday, the animals had to be cared for, and we folks visiting from the city were ready to help. When the men came back in, several hours later, they were caked with mud, tired, and hungry and ready to celebrate Christ’s Resurrection.

As we ate our Easter dinner, we talked about how the rescue of the calf was like the saying of Jesus to the Pharisees from Luke’s Gospel: “Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath or not?” [Luke 14:3] — and not an unfitting activity when spiritually interpreted. God saw us stuck in the mud of our sin and fallenness, took on the messiness of human life, and pulled us out, raising us to the level of His “sons”—or for us, His daughters. Further, His descent into hell happened on the Jewish sabbath, and He rose on Sunday, which is the new day of rest and our Christian sabbath.

And this is the point of the Gospels. Any day is the right day to be rescued by God, to receive His love, to accept your place as His daughter or son. I know this message seems so simple, and we have heard it again and again. But do we really know it in our hearts? Do we believe that we are worth being pulled out of the mess, worth being made daughters of God? Listen to what God says to you over and over again: “I love you and you are mine” [Isaiah 43:1]. Embrace this gift of relationship and life that God has given you.

—taken from the writings of Susanna Spencer, which appear on the internet

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Heidi Herten [‘84], mother of Hope [‘13] and Montessori Instructor, James [‘15] Herten, sister of Larry [‘73] Terry [‘76], Teresann [‘78], and Tony [‘80] Weber, and daughter of long-time Gilmour instructor Vern Weber [anniversary]
- For Sam Barrick.
- For Rosanna Buttazzoni
- For John Manning.
- For Father James Murphy, C.S.C.
- For Adam Johnson
- For Jackie Weiler-Adkins
- For Lois Kowitz, grandmother of Associate Athletic Director, Spencer Kowitz.
- For Dan O’Malley

TAKING LEADERSHIP:

In his letter to the Church at Thessalonica, the apostle Paul recalls how he and his fellow missionaries — Timothy and Silvanus — interacted with the Thessalonians who embraced the Christian faith. He writes: “We were gentle among you, as a nursing mother cares for her children.” Paul and his companions developed such affection for their converts by sharing “not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well.” In those days, itinerate preachers were commonly provided with hospitality and sent forth with some recompense. Paul reminds his readers that he and his colleagues did not take advantage of those social customs, but worked “night and day” preaching the Gospel and plying their trades — for Paul, tent maker — so as “not to burden any of you.” Giving “thanks to God unceasingly,” Paul insists that they preached not a “human word” but “the word of God which is now at work in you who believe.”

God used the generous ministry of Paul, Timothy, and Silvanus to help create a vibrant, influential Christian community in Thessalonica. Communal life, based on shared convictions, is typically enriched by dedicated members who give generously of their time, talent and treasure. Self-sacrificing love that goes beyond normal expectations carries an inherent power of persuasion. Individuals who go the extra mile in serving others make Gospel truths more credible. Sometimes magnanimous individuals inspire others to do more to serve the community.

Perhaps reflecting on the good example of generous individuals can deepen and expand our own sense of service. For many years, Millie gladly served as a focal point of unity for her extended family — sharing information, remembering birthdays, visiting the sick, hosting parties, attending important events — baptisms, First Communions, graduations, weddings — and making sure everyone had a place to go on Christmas and Thanksgiving.

Distressed that their parish was not doing much by way of charitable outreach and working for justice and peace, Sally and her husband Bob worked diligently for more than a year to establish a parish Social Justice Committee. In doing so, they gained the support of the pastor, hosting open meetings to get parishioner input, developing a core group of supporters, sponsoring a presentation on Catholic Social Teaching, overseeing initial meetings, helping to compose a mission statement, writing a bulletin insert on the project, and helping to surface ongoing leadership for the committee. This initial, long, hard work of Sally and Bob has paid off as the Social Justice Committee now sponsors a food distribution center and supports the work of Bread for the World as well as other peace and justice efforts.

Who has inspired you to become a more generous Christian?

—taken from the writings of Father James Bacik 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 Father Larry Jerge, C.S.C., who is under the care of Hospice.
- For Loretta Seidl, sister of Brother Robert Lavelle, C.S.C., who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Elizabeth Toth, daughter of Jeffrey Toth ['84], nephew of James ['86] and Jennifer ['94]. And cousin of Tim ['24] and Kate ['27] Papczun, who is undergoing treatment for a serious health issue.
- For John Zippay, family friend of Bernadette and Stephen Ritley, who is critically ill.
- For Cheryl Zenobi, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Robert Harrison, Gilmour soccer coach, who is recovering from a heart attack.
- For Elizabeth Benson, grandmother of Izzy DiPuccio ['25] who is hospitalized
- For Sister Mary Ann Lavelle, C.S.J., sister of Brother Robert Lavelle, C.S.C., who is in hospice care.
- For Jill Thompson, who is undergoing treatment for mental health issues.
- For Patty Szaniszló, Chapel Office Associate, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.
- For Nora Beach, wife of former Gilmour Religion Instructor, Bob Beach, mother of Hannah ['98] and Miriam ['99] Beach, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jennifer Burger ['06], sister of Rachel ['10] and Paul ['16] Burger, who is undergoing treatment for rare form of breast cancer.
- For Sister Grace Corbett, S.N.D., who is under the care of hospice.
- 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 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 Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian ['09], Rosa ['12] and Edwin ['17] Heryak, who is seriously ill.
- For John Roddy, brother of Tim Roddy ['87], and brother of Gilmour Marketing associate, Mary Roddy Stretar, uncle of Katie Stretar ['29], and cousin of Daniel ['83], Mike ['85], and Matt ['86] Roddy, who is undergoing treatment for a recurrence of cancer.



PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For an end to the war between Israel and Hamas.
- For the victims of the earthquake in Afghanistan
- For an end to violence as a means to resolve differences.
- 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.

POWER OF LOVE:

When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace. —Jimi Hendrix

NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, November 15th at 6:30 PM. Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God's word. It's a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can't come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God's word.



Our topic: Thanksgiving

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, November 5: 31st Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, November 6:	NO MASS
Tuesday, November 7:	NO MASS
Wednesday, November 8:	NO MASS
Thursday, November 9: Dedication of Lateran Basilica	NO MASS
Friday, November 10: St. Leo the Great	NO MASS
Saturday, November 11: 32nd Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person only
Sunday, November 12: 32nd Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

MAKE YOUR FAMILY'S ADVENT WREATH:

Again this year, we are going to be making family Advent Wreaths on **Sunday, December 3rd at 11:30 AM** in the **Commons**. **Cost of the Wreath is \$25** — this includes trimmings, candles, and everything else you will need. Please know that cost is not a reason to not making an Advent Wreath; please contact **Father John**. **Sign up sheet is located on the easel in the Narthex of the Chapel, or you can call the chapel office [440-473-3560]. Please sign up early because we have to purchase the materials for the wreaths.** If you have any questions, please contact the chapel office.



FAITH EDUCATION — SUNDAY, NOV. 5th and 12th:

Our Faith Education classes have begun. Our Faith Education classes meet on **Sundays from 8:45—9:45 AM**. Please join us as we come together to begin our faith journey for this year by entering into prayer and worship together. If you have any questions, please contact Patty in the Chapel Office [[440-473-3560]. **Upcoming class dates: November 5-12-19 and December 3-10.** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.



REFLECTION FOR THE WEEK:

What a difference there is between how God is seen in the Old Testament and how he is seen in the New. Those of us who are older remember the days of the *Baltimore Catechism* — pages and pages of questions and answers for us to memorize. Everything was so concrete and literal. There was no gray — everything in this world was a black and white as the ink and pages of the *Catechism*. God was a God of brimstone and damnation. While we learned of God's love for us in giving his only Son for our redemption, we were motivated more by fear of damnation rather than love and salvation.

After Vatican II, the emphasis on God turned from fear to love. Folk Masses were introduced; there was a huge difference in the liturgies, and especially the songs. Songs of love and unity, of forgiveness and redemption, of walking hand in hand.

Fast forward to today. Have we strayed too far from the God of brimstone and damnation with the emphasis on love? Some would say we have. But, there is a more important question here: is fear of parents what truly motivates us, or is the critical motivation about love and not disappointing? Isn't the latter more important?

Did you ever hear your parents say to you as a child: "Do as I say, not as I do." This does not mean that parents are not good examples of very positive behavior and role modeling. Rather, they were aware of their own shortcomings and feet of clay. While they would always strive to do the right things, they were keenly aware that we will all — including them — fall short at times. Their saying this was not to discourage us from emulating those positive behaviors, rather to caution us that their actions were at times incongruent with how they wanted us to act. Clearly, at times when the actions and teachings were out of sync, parents want their children to remember the teachings. Jesus is encouraging us to do the same.



And so on this 31st Week in Ordinary Time, we hear Jesus say to us: "do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach, but they do not practice" [Matthew 23:1-12]. This is a very important lesson. All of us have experienced people whom we admire who would at times do or say things that were not worthy of my emulating. Just because someone was in a position of authority — be it in work, in education, in church, in government -- it wasn't a guarantee of correct behavior. Policies in any of those environments may speak to the "high road" and one could assume that activities would be laudable as well. However, the actions were/are at times reminiscent of the "road not taken."

Malachi [1:14-2:10] has strong words for the religious leaders of his time. We hear words of anger and denouncing. What we do not hear is how the priests have been pretending. They were taking blind animals, blemished animals, lame animals to be sacrificed at the altar of the Lord. They were retaining or holding back for themselves what was real and holy to the Lord.

Malachi begins with a proclamation of the kingship of God. We all are children of the "one God" Who has created us all. If we continue the misuse of our God-given powers, then terrible things will happen to us. By our misuse of our gifts, others have fallen by the way. We have tended to ourselves and not extended the keeping of the Law justly to all of God's people.

All of us at times are pretenders — and for some of us, it can be a way of life. In talking to the religious leaders of his time, Jesus is reminding the "pretenders" to stop holding in front of themselves religious symbols. "Phylacteries" are containers affixed to arms and or foreheads possessing important verses of the Law. These will impress the people who see them — they will judge that those who wear them are as holy as the verses themselves. Jesus is reminding His listeners that it is not what one wears on the outside that makes a person a follower of God's ways. It is not the name "teacher" or "father" or "master" which make a person a reflection of God's holiness. It is only when we become a servant, a

PROCEED WITH CAUTION:

We religious leaders might actually be embarrassed by the Scripture Readings for this 31st Week in Ordinary Time. If so, we've fallen into the trap set for us by our sacred authors. Back in 1966, the late John L. McKenzie published his controversial book, *Authority in the Church*. In it, the highly respected Scripture scholar pointed out, among other things, that the authors of the Christian Scriptures say very little about our obligation to obey those who exercise authority over us. The vast majority of biblical passages dealing with the subject are almost always concerned with the abuse of such power. That's how the authority problem surfaced in the early Christian community.



Of course, as we hear Malachi preach — the same problem predated Christianity by at least four centuries [Malachi 1:14-2:2, 8-10]. The prophet is forced to attack the priests of his day and age, not for offering ritual sacrifices incorrectly, but for failing to instruct people in their faith — "You have turned aside from the way, and have caused many to falter by your instruction." These religious authority figures are cursed for especially not teaching people about their covenant with God. They seem to have gotten so taken up with the external trappings of the faith that they're neglecting the essentials of that faith.

The same poison seems to have infected some leaders in the biblical Christian community. Though Matthew's Jesus appears to be condemning Jewish leaders in this oft-quoted passage, scholars agree he's simply employing a gentle way to attack Christian leaders. If the evangelist's readers didn't have these problems, he'd never have written this passage.

They, like Malachi's accursed priests, have forgotten what's at the heart of their faith. For Christians, it's the dying and rising of Jesus, and the obligation laid on his followers to constantly imitate that dual event. The historical Jesus' disciples quickly discovered that the principal way of achieving that death was to become completely one with those around them — especially their fellow Christians. Yet for many in authority the temptation was simply too great to set themselves apart from the rest of the community.

As we hear in Matthew's Gospel [23:1-12], they accomplished this by demanding special places at gatherings, lording it over anyone not on their authority level, wearing distinctive clothes, and expecting to be greeted with honorific titles. Does this all sound familiar?

McKenzie constantly pointed out that the gospel Jesus provides a unique definition of authority — "The greatest among you must be your servant. Those who exalt themselves will be humbled; but those who humble themselves will be exalted." The Christian community is forbidden to compare itself to any other institution. It only has one ideal to live up to — Jesus of Nazareth.

This is certainly how Paul evangelized Thessalonica. He was unlike any other religious functionary they had ever encountered — "We were gentle among you, as a nursing mother cares for her children. We were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well" [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13]. Unlike most modern Christian ministers, the Apostle held down a full-time job, simply so he wouldn't be a "burden" to anyone.

Probably Paul didn't have to say many words during the evangelization. His personal behavior played a major role in the gospel he proclaimed.

I grew up often hearing our church compared to General Motors or some other large corporation — our leaders put on the same level as business executives. About 20 years ago, in an anniversary article commenting on the history of his archdiocese, the editor of its diocesan paper actually stated: "Had our archbishop and the mayor of our city exchanged places on any given day, no one would have noticed."

We should read the readings for this 31st Week in Ordinary Time very carefully.

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

Thessalonians — people of Greek heritage — were not steeped in the Hebrew Scriptures, so Paul was not concerned about connecting his preaching to them with Jewish traditions. Thessalonica was, so to speak, virgin territory for the Gospel — a situation that called Paul to discern about how to make the Gospel alive for cultures other than his own.

Coming from Greek and Jewish patriarchal societies in which women's contributions were undervalued, his contemporaries might have thought Paul had gone off the deep end with his description of his mission. Presumably an unmarried man, Paul compares the way he and his companions approached the Thessalonians to the loving action of a nursing mother. Steeped in a religious tradition that prized dogmatic teaching and theological debate, Paul described his ministry as filled with gentleness and affection. Finally, closing the circle of images, he said that he and his companions longed to share their very selves with the community — an image of exactly what a nursing mother does for her child.

In contrast to the Lord's warning to the priests who "have caused many to falter" [Malachi 1:14-2:2, 8-10], Paul thanks God for the way his word has reached the community as the very word of God. Unlike the officials Jesus criticized for posing as teachers without interiorizing the message they preach [Matthew 23:1-12], Paul and his companions strove to give witness by their lives as much as by their words. They rejoiced in the fact that their community has discovered the same power of God working in their own lives.

In his letter, Paul outlined a theology of vocation and ministry. He described his approach to evangelization as being as natural and wondrous as the way a mother's body produces nourishment for her hungry infant. Because she is willing to provide and because the child is hungry, she is capable of giving of herself in what is one of the most unique and intimate ways any creature can give to another [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13]. By describing his ministry as like that of the mother, Paul echoed the Last Supper scene in which Jesus offered his own body for others and commanded them to do the same.

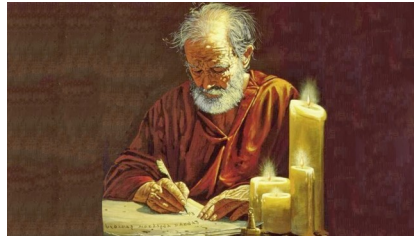
We hear these readings at the beginning of National Vocation Awareness Week [November 5-11]. While the bishops' conference calls this "Vocation Awareness," the website of the U.S. bishops' conference concentrates on "religious vocations" — vocations to religious communities, the diaconate and priesthood.

But there are many vocations. For example, Augustinian Fr. Richie Mercado explains that the witness of his parents' joy in their married vocation inspired him to seek what would bring him the greatest joy. He added that anyone will be happy in life as long as they are authentic in their response to God's call. Highlighting the mystery of vocation, Sr. Vicki Lichtenauer of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, described the fit of her choice for religious life saying: "I don't know if I ever felt like I was falling in love, but essentially I was falling into something." Each in their own way, these people explain that their vocation has called the best out of them and led them to the service of others.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus ended his tirade about hypocritical ministers with one of his pet themes: "The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts self will be humbled; but whoever humbles self will be exalted". Paul's self-giving response to others' needs reflects that. By using the image of the nursing mother, Paul assures us that the living of our vocation will come naturally as long as we are willing to be generous and responsive to others.

Paul didn't ask the Thessalonians to be missionaries like himself. He only asked them to allow the word of God to continue to work in them as it had in him. To say that no one could ask more is an understatement! Young or old, celibate or in a committed relationship, no matter our gender, all God asks is that we give of ourselves exactly as we are — and that we give our all. Then, as happens through the nursing mother, God's grace will flow through us for the good of all.

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



child, a humble person, that we reveal true godliness. Jesus lives what He is preaching, and he invites His followers to be unpretentious.

We are all inside-out people as human beings. We are in contradiction when we go outside-out. The question is not about "do I wear a cross," but rather "do I bear the cross?" It is not whether or not I go to mass or celebrate the liturgy, but do I get sent out to live what I have received. At the Mass, the priest — the celebrant of the Eucharist — covers himself up with religious garbs of various colors. What the priest is literally doing is "putting on" Christ. He holds "in front of him" Christ as he offers Jesus first to the Father and then to the community. The priest must desire deeply not to hide behind Him or use Him as a substitute for his being present.

This past week, we celebrated All Saints Day. It is the day we celebrate all those who put aside their natural pretenses, and live the Christ within them — inside-out. Holiness is letting the Holy One out — Who also retains a holy place inside us. We give what we have received. We do not pretend that we haven't received. We do not pretend we are nothing but a costume. We humble ourselves by being ourselves. God exalts us by God's love for us just as we are. Holiness just might be the result of the long process of taking off anything that hides God's goodness within us.

Our life is God's gift to us; what we do with it, is our gift to God. What do others see? What do our children and grandchildren see? Is this belief evident in what they see? Hear? Ooh, my feet of clay still show . . .

—Edited from the writings of Nancy Shirley and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

OLC "ADOPT A FAMILY" PROGRAM:

For many years, Our Lady Chapel community has worked with St. Adalbert Parish in adopting families to help them celebrate the Christmas Season. In recent years, we have had many requests from our families to begin this project earlier in order to take advantage of pre-Christmas sales, etc. So again this year, we have begun to collect the names of families from St. Adalbert at the present time. **The need is greater than ever.** St. Adalbert identifies families — most often single parent, below poverty level families; we are given the grade levels of the children & other family information, so that you can purchase gifts appropriate to each member. In addition, if possible, we ask that you also provide a Christmas meal for the family [non-perishable items in a food basket, and/or Gift Cards for Giant Eagle, Aldi's or Family Dollar.] Those from our chapel family who participated in this project last year spoke very highly of the benefit of this project to their own families. Even our Life Teen and EDGE Groups have adopted families and gone shopping together on a Sunday afternoon at an outlet Mall. This is a project that the entire family can get involved in. Families can be matched according to family size, ages, etc. It was truly inspiring. Adopt-a-family gifts should be WRAPPED. **Please call Patty at the Chapel Office [440-473-3560 or szanislop@gilmour.org] if you and your family would like to participate in this program, or if you have any questions.**



EUCHARISTIC 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.



BE TRUE TO WHO YOU ARE:

When you face the sun you get a tan, but when we stand before Jesus in the eucharist, we become Eucharist we become saints!" —Blessed Carlo Acutis

FULFILLING OUR ROLE:

Matthew's Gospel for this 31st Week in Ordinary Time presents us with a bit of a dilemma since Christ forbids his disciples from using the title father or teacher [Matthew 23:1-12] — and yet we priests find ourselves using these titles all the time. If we took this instruction of Jesus literally, not only would we be forbidden to call priests by the title "Father", but also we would be forbidden from using the word "teacher" to describe those who guide us at school. And if we were to take it even more precisely, it seems as though we are even forbidden to call our male parent "Father". This can hardly be what Jesus means!

Actually, it would be pure nonsense; and indeed, the Church has never taken this teaching at its face value. The hierarchy of the Church is littered with titles, even if — thankfully — in latter years there has been a noticeable pruning of them.

As always, we must look at the context, and then look below the surface. The context is Jesus' teaching about practicing what you preach. He points out that the Pharisees do not practice what they preach, and Jesus is instructing his disciples to be sure that they do not follow this example.

The Pharisees used to insist that the people call them "Father" or "Rabbi" or "Master" — but these are titles to be earned and not claimed as a right. Anyone who insists on being called "Rabbi" — that is "teacher" — must fully live up to the title. They must have something to teach — something worth communicating to others, and something people need to hear. And certain this would be even more true if they claim to be preaching the message of God to the world.

These titles of "Father", "Teacher" and "Master" strictly speaking only belong to God. Only he can be called "Father" since he is the unique creator; only he can be called "Master" since it is solely to him that we all owe allegiance. He is the only true Teacher since all revelation comes from God and is communicated to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

These are not new things to us in the Church — they are deeply rooted in our Christian faith. It is this basic attitude that Jesus is surely speaking about. He is concerned that we should have a right relationship with God and especially when it comes to those with leadership in the Christian community that they should not interpose themselves between God and the people.

When we on earth are given these titles, it should not swell our head; it should do the exact opposite. We acknowledge from whom these titles originate, and we ought to walk in his way with great trepidation and in all humility.

Hypocrisy is the great sin of the New Testament — one which Jesus is constantly accusing the Pharisees. The greatest tragedy of all would be for his own followers to fall into the same trap. This is surely why he stresses the point.

Take the prophet Malachi for example [Malachi 1:14-2:2, 8-10]. He is admonishing the priests of the Temple to be true to their calling. The worship in the Temple is to be pure and according to the instructions handed down from God. Their teaching is to be true and they are not to lead the people astray otherwise they will quite definitely incur God's anger.

Christ, of course, inaugurates the New Covenant and the sacrifices of the Temple are replaced by the Eucharist. But this does not invalidate the warning in Malachi.

We priests, as ministers of the New Covenant, must pay attention to what we are doing. We must celebrate the liturgy in accordance with the instructions handed down to us. We must do so in a way which is worthy of the dignity of this great sacrament of God's love. We must do so with real reverence and with the participation of all.

Actually, the Church has been paying great attention to the celebration of the liturgy in the last few

take as owed what's offered as gift — lies at the root of many of our deepest resentments towards others — and their resentments towards us.

Invariably when we are angry at someone — especially at those closest to us — it is precisely because we are not being appreciated — that is, thanked — properly. Conversely, I suspect, more than a few people harbor resentments towards us because we, consciously or unconsciously, think that it is their job to take care of us.

Like Adam and Eve, we take, as if it is ours by right, what can only be received gratefully as gift. This goes against the very contours of love. It is the original sin.

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

R.C.I.A [Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults]:

Our RCIA program will begin shortly. If you have been thinking about investigating the Catholic faith, or if you know someone who has been thinking about it; if you have been away from the Catholic Church for a while, or are interested in learning more about the Catholic faith; if you know someone who is not fully initiated [Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation] in their Catholic faith — then consider joining or having them join our RCIA program. **Please contact Father John [440-473-3560] for more information.**

**TO CARE:**

To care one must offer one's own vulnerable self to others as a source of healing. To care for the aging, therefore, means first of all to enter into close contact with your own aging self, to sense your own time, and to experience the movements of your own life cycle. From this aging self, healing can come forth and others can be invited to cast off the paralyzing fear for their future. As long as we think that caring means only being nice and friendly to old people, paying them a visit, bringing them a flower, or offering them a ride, we are apt to forget how much more important it is for us to be willing and able to be present to those we care for. And how can we be fully present to the elderly when we are hiding from our own aging? How can we listen to their pains when their stories open wounds in us that we are trying to cover up? How can we offer companionship when we want to keep our own aging self out of the room, and how can we gently touch the vulnerable spots in old people's lives when we have armored our own vulnerable self with fear and blindness? Only when we enter into solidarity with the aging and speak out of common experience, can we help others to discover the freedom of old age.

—Henri Nouwen

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.

**GIVING OUR ALL:**

How many times have you heard St. Paul bashed for what he says about women? In his letter to the Church at Thessalonica, we get a very different take on Paul's attitudes. Sandwiched between two readings that berate religious leaders for failing their vocation, Paul's reflection portrays authentic ministry in distinctly feminine terms.

This — the first of Paul's letters — is probably the oldest text in the Christian Scriptures, giving us fascinating hints about the life and thought of our earliest Christian sisters and brothers. The

GRATITUDE THE BASIC VIRTUE:

There's a Jewish folk-tale which runs something like this: There once was a young man who aspired to great holiness. After some time at working to achieve it, he went to see his Rabbi. "Rabbi," he announced, "I think I have achieved sanctity." "Why do you think that?" asked the Rabbi. "Well," responded the young man, "I've been practicing virtue and discipline for some time now, and I have grown quite proficient at them. From the time the sun rises until it sets, I take no food or water. All day long, I do all I do all kinds of hard work for others, and I never expect to be thanked. If I have temptations of the flesh, I roll in the snow or in thorn bushes until they go away, and then at night, before bed, I practice the ancient monastic discipline and administer lashes to my bare back. I have disciplined myself so as to become holy." The Rabbi was silent for a time. Then he took the young man by the arm and led him to a window and pointed to an old horse which was just being led away by its master. "I have been observing that horse for some time," the Rabbi said, "and I've noticed that it doesn't get fed or watered from morning to night. All day long it has to do work for people, and it never gets thanked. I often see it rolling around in snow or in bushes, as horses are prone to do, and frequently I see it get whipped. But, I ask you: Is that a saint or a horse?"

I was struck by the fact that the man — even in his great pain — remained conscious of the fact that life, love, care, and everything else come to us as a gift, not as owed. This is a good parable because it shows how simplistic it is to simply identify sanctity and virtue with self-renunciation and the capacity to do what's difficult. In popular thought there's a common spiritual equation — saint = horse. What's more difficult is always better. But that can be wrong.

To be a saint is to be motivated by gratitude — nothing more and nothing less. Scripture everywhere and always makes this point.

For example, the sin of Adam and Eve was, first and foremost, a failure in receptivity and gratitude [see Genesis 3]. God gives them life, each other, and the garden, and asks them only to receive it properly in gratitude — receive and give thanks. Only after doing this, do we go on to "break and share". Before all else, we first give thanks.

To receive in gratitude — to be properly grateful — is the most primary of all religious attitudes. Proper gratitude is ultimate virtue. It defines sanctity. Saints, holy persons, are people who are grateful, people who see and receive everything as gift.

The converse is also true. Anyone who takes life and love for granted should not ever be confused with a saint.

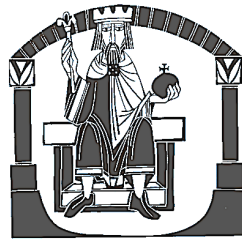
Let me try to illustrate this. As a young seminarian, I once spent a week in a hospital, on a public ward, with a knee injury. One night, a patient was brought on to our ward from the emergency room. His pain was so severe that his groans kept us awake. The doctors had just worked on him, and it was then left to a single nurse to attend to him.

Several times that night, she entered the room to administer to him — changing bandages, giving medication, and so on. Each time, as she walked away from his bed he would, despite his extreme pain, thank her. Finally, after this had happened a number of times, she said to him: "Sir, you don't need to thank me. This is my job!"

"Ma'am!" he replied, "it's nobody's job to take care of me! Nobody owes me that. I want to thank you!"

I was struck by that — how, even in his great pain, this man remained conscious of the fact that life, love, care, and everything else come to us as a gift, not as owed. He genuinely appreciated what this nurse was doing for him. And he was right — it isn't anybody's job to take care of us!

It's our propensity to forget this that gets us into trouble. The failure to be properly grateful — to



years. As we are all aware the translation of the Mass into English was revised. Even if we are entirely happy with the final result, no one can argue its intent — to help us become more aware of the sanctity of the Eucharist. The revision has definitely made us all think about how we are celebrating the liturgy, and the meaning of the words and actions we use.

Reflecting on how the liturgy is celebrated can only be a good thing. It is good for us to do so individually and in various groups such as servers, readers, singers and so on — but we also have to consider how we as a whole congregation participate in the Mass. Coming to Mass should never be a merely passive experience; we ought to participate as fully as we can. Although all of us may feel that we were not called to be lectors or servers, we are all called to participate by saying our prayers, by following the readings attentively, and by joining in the hymns. One of the most important areas of participation is saying the responses — in particular the Great Amen at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer.

The word "Amen" means "so be it", and by saying the Great Amen you — the people — give your consent and express your faith in all that has been said on your behalf by the priest.

Actually, the priest should not normally say the Great Amen himself — he stays silent holding up the host and the chalice — it's the job of the people to chime in loud and clear with what we call the Great Amen.

We come to Mass and we expect to be fed. We are fed with the Bread of Heaven and the Cup of Life as well as being fed with the Word of God. But you — the people — have to bring something to the party as well; you have to participate and be attentive to all that is going on.

We are a community gathered in the name of Christ; that alone guarantees his presence among us. But Christ is also present in Word and Sacrament and in many other ways. He is certainly among us now, so let us worship him and pay him honor and do him service. Let us rejoice in his presence, and let our prayer be the words of Scripture — speak to us Lord, for you have the message of Eternal Life!

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

LET THE GOSPEL COME ALIVE IN YOU:

Context is a most important means to interpret what something means, and Matthew's Gospel is no exception. When Jesus says to call no man rabbi, teacher, doctor, father, he's not rejecting titles of honor. For example, Jesus himself refers to "father Abraham" [see John 8:53]. What Jesus wants is for us recognize the ultimate teacher, doctor, and father — God himself.

Paul himself speaks about God as the source of all paternity. In his letter to the Church at Thessalonica, he writes: "You know how we dealt with each of you as parents deal with their own children: encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into the kingdom and glory. To my brothers here I say: Your paternity and mine comes from God" [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13].

Once a mom came to me with child in arm. She shared the struggles she was facing. I listened and then prayed over her and her child. When I finished she looked at me and said: "you are my father." I've now completed over 50 years of priesthood, and still the greatest satisfaction is to be a spiritual father.

We all need to do a better job of being a parish family — a spiritual family. We are family in flux — I can't get to know each of you as closely as I would like, but I do want to communicate with you. One way of doing this is to share contact information with your parish priest.

The prophet, Malachi, speaks about keeping faith with each other [Malachi 1:14-2:2, 8-10]. This often means accepting the "drudgery and toil" of daily life. Doing so springs from love. As Paul says: "With such affection for you, we were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well." Always know that you are cared for and loved.

—taken from the writings of Father Phil Bloom., which appear on the internet. 7



HUMILITY TAKES THE POISON OUT:

“Those that humble themselves will be exalted” [Matthew 23:1-12]. What a peculiar statement by Jesus! How can we understand it? How can we exalt ourselves by being humbled? Perhaps the place to start is with the understanding of the word “humble.”

The English word humble comes from the Latin word “humus” [earth or dirt]. The humble person, therefore, is the person who knows the stuff of which he or she is made. Remember that in the book of Genesis God creates the human person out of the dirt of the earth [see Genesis 2:7]. So, the humble person is the honest person, the person who can admit the common clay, the imperfect stuff out of which all of us are made. The humble person is the honest person, the person who can admit failings, shortcomings, and sins. That person knows that he or she is not perfect and there is no impulse to pretend differently.

Now Jesus’ criticism of the Scribes and Pharisees in the gospel is an invitation to this kind of humility. The Scribes and Pharisees were no more hypocritical or proud than any other group of people in any time of history. Their role in the story is to stand in for us. Their faults and shortcomings are meant to represent our shortcomings and faults. Their hypocrisy, insensitivity, and love of honor are a reminder to us of how often we are hypocritical and insensitive and addicted to the respect of others. In light of those shortcomings in us, Jesus invites us to humility; he invites us to honesty, invites us to recognize the flaws of our life. Jesus promises us that, if we can own the imperfect clay out of which we are made, we can release both goodness and power.

There is a story among the American Indians of a twelve-year old boy who was bitten by a poisonous snake and died. His grieving parents carried the boy to the holy man in the village. The parents and the holy man sat around the dead boy for hours in silence. Finally, the father got up and he placed his hands on the feet of his son. He said: “In all my life, I have not been as attentive to my family as I needed to be.” With those words, the poison left the boy’s feet. The mother then got up and placed her hands on the boy’s heart. She said: “In all my life, I have not loved my family as deeply as they needed me to love them.” The poison left the boy’s heart. Then the holy man got up and placed his hands on the boy’s head. He said: “In all my life, I have not truly believed the words that I have preached to others.” The poison left the boy’s head and he sat up alive again.

This story proclaims the truth that admitting who we are has the power to heal. Admitting our own faults and shortcomings can bring something that is dead back to life. That is why Jesus calls us to humility and honesty; this is why he says that those who humble themselves will be exalted. Because in humbling ourselves with the truth of our own imperfections, we release power and life into our world.

How contrary this truth is to the beliefs and practice of our society. Politicians from the President on down are always spinning, trying to make us believe that they make no mistakes and that they have nothing to hide. Executives in business spend millions of dollars settling lawsuits so that matters can be resolved without admitting any liability or recognizing that any harm has been done. The Bishops of our church — even though they acted quickly to protect our children when the scandal broke about sexual abuse — were rather slow in admitting their own responsibility. There are still but a handful of bishops willing to say: “I’m sorry. I’m sorry for the mess and the harm that was done.” So, if leaders in government, in business, and in our church are reluctant to admit that they have made mistakes, does it not make it more difficult for us to admit the humble honest truth about ourselves.

What our society seeks to do with our imperfections is hide them and deny them. Against all of this influence, Jesus calls us to be honest, to be humble, to admit the truth about ourselves and our own imperfections. He assures us that such humility will not harm us, but rather deepen our life.

What power there could be in marriages and in friendships if we could more easily say: “I’m

of Matthew’s Gospel: “whoever exalts himself shall be humbled. Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.” Priests need to take as their guide the first American saint who was not a martyr, St. John Neuman of Philadelphia. He wrote the pope that he was more than willing to give up ministry if he ever was ever viewed by Church authority or by anyone as an obstacle to people finding God.

But what Jesus is saying is not just about priesthood, though. It is about how all of us use our position in the Church. We all have authority — some as priests, some as teachers, some as parents, some as catechists, etc. Many of you are parents. Do you parents demand that your children respect you because you are on an ego trip and want someone in the world to look up to you? Not if you are good parents. If you are good parents, you demand that your children respect you as the representative of God in this stage of their lives. You also want them to learn respect for all those whom God has given any form of authority. The same message can be applied to all of us in whatever share of authority the Lord has given us. Most of us are confirmed. That means that we are given positions of leadership in the Church.

Jesus also speak about teachers. We all are teachers in many ways. We are teachers because we want to form young people into productive citizens of family, country and God’s Kingdom. In that way you will continue the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ.

We are all involved in charitable ministries. We don’t do this so we can have others respect us. We reach out to others to serve Christ in the needy. We are all called to help others so that others can see and understand the working of God in their worlds. In whatever way this leadership is manifested in our lives, we have to be sure that we are leading others to God — not to a meeting of our own fan clubs. That’s what Jesus means when he says: “let your right hand not know what your left hand is doing” [Matthew 6:3]. That is hard to do when we are patting ourselves on our own backs.

The basic message that Jesus has for us is to make sure that our lives are about Jesus and not about ourselves. We have to understand that we are His servants. Our priests must manifest God’s fatherhood — not their own fatherhood. As teachers, each of us is part of the teaching ministry of Christ. We are not teaching for our own glory. In all things, God must be exalted. If that means at times stepping back while another continues the work of God more effectively than we can, so be it. It is better to humble ourselves and be exalted by God then to exalt ourselves and be humbled by God.

Too many people use the Church to trumpet their own self-worth. That is not why we go to church. That is not why we are Roman Catholics. We go to church because we need God. We are Catholic because Catholicism is the authentic way of finding God. We know what we are like without him. But we also know the wonders that He works through us. May we all have the humility to be servants of the Lord.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Romans 11:29-36, Luke 14:12-14

Tuesday: Romans 12:5-16, Luke 14:15-24

Wednesday: Romans 13:8-10, Luke 14:25-33

Thursday: Ezekiel 47:1-12, 1 Corinthians 3:9-17, John 2:13-22

Friday: Romans 15:14-21, Luke 16:1-8

Saturday: Romans 16:3-9, Luke 16:9-15

32nd Week in Ordinary Time: Wisdom 6:12-16, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Matthew 25:1-13

CALL NO MAN YOUR FATHER:

We used to have a delivery man here at our parish who must have been in continual trouble with his bosses because he was never concerned with finishing his route in the allotted time. He used to like to spend time chatting with me and the secretaries in the office. There was one problem though — he could not figure out what to call me! He would not call me “Father” because the leaders in his Church had instructed him to follow what Jesus had said in Matthew’s Gospel [23:1-12] — “call no man father.” Actually, the translation says: “call no man my father,” but I was sensitive to his difficulty. The only thing was that I told him it was not “OK” with him calling me “Joe” in my own office. So we settled on “Hey You.”

Actually, I don’t think that the Lord was asking that his priests be called “Hey you.” But let’s look at what St. Matthew is saying — even though most of the time we all just “skim through” what the Gospels are about. There are messages here about our relationship with God, as well as our own views of ourselves.

First of all, Jesus is not banning the use of the term, “Father.” In fact, he expects us to respect our physical fathers and to call them “father.” He also tells us to respect our spiritual ancestors calling many of them, “Father.” Abraham is often referred to as Father Abraham. St. Paul will often remind people that he is their spiritual father. The apostles and all who founded churches were called to be the fathers of those churches. In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus also tells his disciples to call no one “teacher”. But the New Testament continually refers to God’s appointing some to be teachers. To find out what Jesus means when he says: “call no one my father,” we need to look at it in its context in scripture.

Matthew’s Jesus is focusing on the Pharisees — they exalt themselves by looking for new ways to demand that people respect them. They wear headbands with pieces of cloth hanging on them called “phylacteries.” On the phylacteries they write words of scripture so that every time they turn their heads the Word of God will be before their eyes — keeping with what Proverbs 4:20-21 says: “My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart.”

The trouble was that the Pharisees were seeing God’s words but were not keeping God’s words. They were just putting on a show of holiness so that others could be enlightened as to what wonderful people they were. Jesus’ point was that the Pharisees were making religion about themselves, not about God.

The Catholic priest is ordained to continue the loving work of the Father. His fatherhood comes from God and must point to God. I am called “Father” because the mandate of the Sacrament of Holy Orders is to make the Father’s love real for His people. When I don’t do that, then I don’t deserve to be called “Father”.

It is easy for a priest to use his position in the Church to point to himself instead of to God. When that happens, priesthood is replaced by a sort of demagoguery. The priest acts as though he is the source of wisdom for all. People then look to him as their guide instead of to God. Sadly, there are many people who are so concerned with following a particular priest that they feel abandoned when that priest no longer holds a position of authority in the Church. They made too much of the individual and not enough of the One the individual was pointing towards. St. Paul ran into this difficulty after he left Corinth. The people there divided into groups. One group said that they belonged to Paul, who brought them the faith. A second group said that they belonged to Apollos — a Christian missionary who came after Paul and who nurtured their faith. Paul wrote the Corinthians that we all belong to God — not to this or that individual — “I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plant, but it was God who gave the growth” [1 Corinthians 3:6].

Throughout history, the Church has suffered from human beings making a big deal out of themselves and thus serving their egos instead of serving God. They seem to have forgotten the last words



sorry. I’m sorry that I hurt you. I’m sorry that I did not meet your expectations or needs.” How much easier it could be to forgive someone, to heal a broken relationship, if we could say: “I am not perfect. I too am a sinner. I have in my own way contributed to the estrangement that exists between us.” How much more freedom could we have if we could admit our shortcomings and work to correct them; but at the same time continue to believe that people love us not because we are perfect, but because we can be genuine and honest in admitting our faults and our need to grow.

We do have value. But our value comes from the fact that God has made us and loves us. Not from the illusion that we are without fault. This is why we can be honest, why we can humbly admit that we are not perfect. This is why those who are humbled can be exalted. Because admitting the truth about ourselves releases power, the power to take the poison out, the power to bring something that was dead back to life.

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

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — NOVEMBER 18th:

Our Savior Lutheran Church, across the street from Gilmour, has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on the **third Saturday of each month**. They welcome volunteers. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help setting up items for distribution and preparing for the food pantry to open. It serves around 150 clients each time. 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 us know in the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you would like more information or if you would like to help. This is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

CAMP GILMOUR IS BACK FOR WINTER CAMP 2023:

Camp Gilmour is hosting three one-day camps for campers ages 5-12 during winter break. Campers can return to campus and renew old friendships, make new ones and have a great time! Winter Camp has something for everyone! Join us for seasonal games and crafts, swimming, ice skating, field trips and more.

Camp is in session from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. [bring your own lunch] on the following dates: Wednesday, December 27, Thursday, December 28 and Friday, December 29. Each day is a separate camp. **Cost is \$60 per day per camper.** Deadline to register is December 11th. Sign up today for one or all three days at [gilmour.org/wintercamp!](http://gilmour.org/wintercamp)

**QUESTION MARK?**

The scope of every life is indeed defined by the questions we choose live into, and if we are blessed to live long enough, we will inevitably end up shaped like a question mark. Since quest is also the start of every question, it is questions, not answers, that are the surest guideposts for any journey of faith — which necessarily means moving into the unknowable. Always trust the open, heartfelt question that lays bare the soul to unknowing. Since all answers are partial and preliminary, be wary of them; the more definitive, the more dangerous. Whether they are simplistic or sophisticated, handle answers with care, for they often reflect and display, for all the world to see, the broad sweep of our ignorance. Perhaps, for this reason, wisdom teachers use stories, ballads, parables, or poems. Such lyrical musings open spaces for fresh appreciations and diverse perspectives. They foster fascination and expose imagination to wider fields of understanding, laced with mystery, which always leads us down and out to face yet another, more penetrating question.

—Joseph Grant

WHY ARE YOU WAITING TO ASK GOD FOR A MIRACLE?

While in college, I was blessed to go on a major pilgrimage through Athens Greece. It was an amazing experience — one that I look back on fondly — and not only because I got to see some amazing sites from throughout the Church’s history. What I remember most of all was how God showed me His awesome power and love.

Arriving a day earlier than my pilgrimage group, I needed to figure out a place to stay and how to meet up with them. After providentially finding the only English speaking Catholic priest in Athens, I was able to stay in a dining hall at St. Dionysius Catholic Church. I had their arrival gate and time, and I knew where they were going once they arrived.

Arriving to the airport later than I expected, I was nervous about missing my group. I walked and prayed through the arrival/departure section looking for the bus that would bring us to the port. I found it and sat on the bus, which waited till a certain time to leave.

Anxiousness began to creep up on me the longer it took for my group to arrive. In a final moment of desperation, I asked someone if I could borrow his cell phone to call my group director who had a cell phone to be used only in case of emergency and nightly calls to his family. He declined, but, in broken English, he informed me that I could use the public pay phones just inside the doors to which he pointed.

I stepped down off of the bus and walked hurriedly to the automatic doors of the airport. I took a deep breath as I nervously moved toward the opening doors. Then, in a moment that can be described like the final bell of a school day, I looked up to see a few members of my group standing there, right in front of me.

It was incredible! They all greeted me, and we waited for the rest of the group to catch up. Once everyone was there and I was greeted by all, we then walked out, past the bus I was on, to a private bus to take us to the port where a boat would take us to our next stop.

God truly took care of me throughout those few days and the rest of the trip. In fact He has done the same throughout my whole life. He cares about us and wants to guide us. Because of this truth, St. Paul teaches us to “have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God” [Philippians 4:6]. No anxiety. Absolutely none. God has us in His hands!

We all have a God who cares and loves us so much — He tells us not to worry about anything. He will “bring good out of all things for those who love Him” [Romans 8:28]. That means that God can bring good out of anything that happens to us —, even the worst events are under His watchful eye. And we can completely trust that He is always bringing good out of the suffering in our lives. We can trust Him to handle all of the little things that fill our lives. And we can trust Him with the big things too.

God wants to do big things in our lives. Even more, God wants us to ask Him to do big things. It is by trusting in God and His desire to bring good for us and from us, that we can allow Him to work in our lives and bring them about. He is not going to force His will upon us — we must choose to let Him work.

God is always seeking what is best for us. He wants us to guide us to our full potential — just like he did for many of the saints that came before us. We need to be humble and trust in His goodness and providence. In sacred Scripture, Moses learned this exact lesson. When God called Moses at the burning bush [see Exodus 3], Moses was not sure God had chosen the right guy. He made excuses, and even asked God to send someone else. However, knowing Moses’ heart, God wanted Moses to lead His people and ask big things of Him. Moses said “yes”, and God used him to free the Israelites.

After they left their slavery in Egypt, the Israelites found themselves standing on the shores of the Red Sea trapped with the Egyptian army clamoring behind them to drag the Israelites back into slavery. Instead of panicking, Moses turned to the people — about 2 million them — and told them: “You only



need to be still; the Lord will fight for you” [Exodus 14:14]. A profound message for even us today.

Then Moses went to God in prayer, and asked Him for help. God answered in a big way, splitting the sea to save His people. The Israelites were blessed to experience God’s awesome power and love — the same power and love that He shows us today. And they were able to experience this because Moses knew of His Heavenly Father and His loving care for His people.

God’s Loving care for His people was similarly shown by Jesus to a blind man [Mark 10:46-52]. The blind man — named Bartimaeus — knew of Jesus’ power and with great faith called out to Him as He was passing by. Many others tried to get the man to be quiet, but he did not want to miss his chance and called out all the more. Jesus heard him. He then called for the man to come and asked Bartimaeus what he needed. Bartimaeus’ bold response was: “Master, I want to see.” Jesus heard his prayer and healed him.

To be healed of blindness is a big request, but God saw Bartimaeus’ faith and granted his request. Boldly asking big things of God shows our profound Faith in Him. Moses showed this same great faith and we can too. Just like Moses and Bartimaeus we can trust in God’s loving care and power, put our hope in Him, and ask big things of Him. Part of this confidence in God means that we grow in humility, recognizing our own limitations and dependence upon Him. Humble Confidence shows the Lord that we Recognize and Honor His Godliness.

When we recognize our own limits and acknowledge God’s limitless power and love, His power and love are shown to us all the more. He wants us to show our faith in Him. He wants us to humbly ask and expect big things of Him. Things that are good for us and those around us.

And we can do this by simply asking these big things of God silently in prayer. A few ways we can do request the big things of God are by:

- Asking in the silence of your heart.
- Presenting the request to Him during the Consecration of the Eucharist at Mass.
- Praying a Novena.

Remember that God is interested in your life. He put you here for a reason, and He wants to help you discover it and carry it out. Therefore, you no longer need to be afraid. Go to God with Confidence, trusting that He will take care of you no matter how big your request of Him may be.

—taken from the writings of Thomas Clements, a Life Teen Musician.

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 Chapel. 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

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].

