

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer to Christ the King ~

**Lord, Jesus Christ,
Our Sovereign King,
the beginning and end of all things,
You have made your Church
to be a people
that bears witness
to the goodness
and beauty of your kingdom.**

**By your Holy Spirit,
you have united us
as one body,
called to live
as one family of God.**

**Fill our hearts with your grace,
that we would be close to you
by being close
to the vulnerable
and marginalized.**

**Give us the patience
to share one another's burdens,
And give us the courage
to always be friends of the truth.
May we remain with you always.
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.

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.

**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. 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 szaniszlop@gilmour.org] if you and your family would like to participate in this program, or if you have any questions.**

**THE GIVING TREE:**

Our Lady of Fatima Community Center, the West Side Catholic Center and several Senior Health Care Agencies are in great need of items for their clients. Fatima Center needs hats, gloves, socks, underwear, sweaters, sweat shirts, hoodies, infant needs, books, toys and games for children, ages Newborn to 16 years. Senior Health Care facilities need fleece throws, footie socks, as well as hats & gloves. **We have posted a list of needed items next to our giving tree. Select what you would like to give and bring it UNWRAPPED and put it under the tree with a label showing the item needed.** These items would then be gathered and delivered to the various agencies. **Our goal would be to have all items assembled by December 17th, for pickup by the various agencies. Please call Patty at the Chapel Office [440-473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org] if you and your family would like to participate in this program, or if you have any questions.**

**FAITH EDUCATION — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3rd and 10th:**

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: December 3-10, and January 7-21-28.** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.

**BEAUTIFUL:**

Gratitude is a quality similar to electricity — it must be produced and discharged and used up in order to exist at all.”

—William Faulkner

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Rosie Torrence
- For Caroline Kirchner, grandmother of Daniel Kirchner ['17]
- For Denise Calabrese., mother of former Gilmour students, Rachele and Ricky Calabrese.
- For Ann Griggs, the mother of Father Gabe Griggs, CSC
- For Sister Marie Therese Courtad, C.S.J.
- For Sister Grace Corbett, S.N.D.
- For Ralph Gray, father-in-law of former long-time Gilmour teacher, Joy Gray.
- For James Hlavin ['52], grandfather of Lily Elseser ['22]

THE SACRAMENT OF THE PRESENT MOMENT:

“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about. Ideas, language, even the phrase “each other” doesn't make any sense” [Rumi]

Consciousness of the world of creation and the spiritual opens our hearts, minds, and bodies to actually experience God in the now. Ultimate Reality cannot be seen with any “split vision” of the mind, where we divide the field of the moment and eliminate anything mysterious, confusing, unfamiliar, or outside our comfort zone. Dualistic thinking is highly controlled and permits only limited seeing. It protects the status quo, and allows the ego to feel like it's in control. This way of filtering reality is the opposite of pure presence.

We learn the dualistic pattern of thinking at an early age, and it helps us survive and succeed in practical ways. But it can get us only so far. That's why all religions at the more mature levels have discovered another “software” for processing the really big questions like death, love, infinity, suffering, the mysterious nature of sexuality, and whoever God or the Divine is. Many of us call this access “contemplation” or simply “prayer.” It is a unitive way of living in the moment. Don't think — just look. This is contemplation.



Unitive knowing is learning how to live satisfied in the naked now — “the sacrament of the present moment” as Jean Pierre de Caussade called it. This consciousness will teach us how to actually experience our experiences — whether good, bad, or ugly — and how to let them transform us. Words by themselves divide and judge the moment; pure presence lets it be what it is, as it is. Words and thoughts are invariably dualistic — pure experience is always unitive.

As long as you can deal with life as a set of universal abstractions, you can pretend that the binary system is true. But once you deal with concrete reality — with yourself, with someone you love, with actual moments — you find that reality is a mixture of good and bad, dark and light, life and death. Reality requires more a both/and approach than either/or differentiation. The unitive mind is open to everything. It is capable of listening to the other, to the body, to the heart, to all the senses. It begins with a radical yes to each moment.

When you can be present in this way, you will know the Real Presence. I promise you this is true. You will still need and use your dualistic mind, but now it is in service to the greater whole rather than just the small self.

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

WHAT GOD REALLY WANTS:

Jesus does not demand great actions from us, but simply surrender and gratitude.

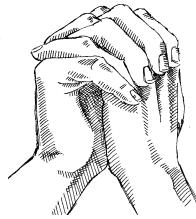
— St. Thérèse of Lisieux:

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 Elizabeth Benson, grandmother of Izzy DiPuccio ['25] who is recovering from a serious illness
- 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 Szaniszlo, 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 Maria Ruiz, mother of Elina Gurney, grandmother of Joseph and Christina Gurney, who is undergoing treatment for 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.
- For James Farmer, father of DEI director, JaiCynthia Farmer, who is recovering from a serious heart-related issue.
- For Bill Fesler, husband of former Upper School Director, Elizabeth Fesler, who is under hospice care.

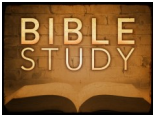


PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For an end to the war between Israel and Hamas.
- For an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine.
- For a couple experiencing difficulty in becoming pregnant
- For the victims of the earthquake in Nepal
- 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.

NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, November 29th 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: Advent waiting

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 26: Feast of Christ the King	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, November 27:	NO MASS
Tuesday, November 28:	NO MASS
Wednesday, November 29:	NO MASS
Thursday, November 30: St. Andrew	NO MASS
Friday, December 1:	NO MASS
Saturday, December 2: 1st Week in Advent	5:00 PM In Person only
Sunday, December 3: 1st Week in Advent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

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)



THE LOVE OF GOD:

Trust frees, fear paralyzes. Fear blocks, trust unblocks our abilities. And it gladdens the heart of the Father, who rejoices at seeing his children who do not fear him but who love him,

—Pope Francis

BISHOP MALESIC'S THANKSGIVING MESSAGE:

On Thanksgiving — a day rooted in the belief in our country that it is right to pause and give thanks to God for all good things, we recommit ourselves to living each day with gratitude in our hearts. Sacred Scripture reminds us over and over again to give thanks to God, including Psalm 118, which says: “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his mercy endures forever.”

We are all God's children, to whom he gave the greatest gift of all — his one and only Son, Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God for the gift of his Son and for the salvation he brings. We give thanks for the gifts of our lives, our faith, our families, our friends and all those we hold dear. We remember that all that we have has been provided through God's infinite love and mercy. And let us share our God-given blessings with others — especially the poor and those who are most in need, that they, too, may know the transformative power of God's love.

When so many of our brothers and sisters around the world are suffering in these times of war, unrest, and division, may we gather around our Thanksgiving tables in faith, peace, and unity. Then we can share with our loved ones a renewed sense of gratefulness for the gifts we have received from Almighty God, and work to glorify him with a generous spirit toward all.

It is with an abundance of joy and appreciation that I wish you and your families a most blessed and happy Thanksgiving. And know that I am thankful for each and every one of you and will keep you in my prayers of gratitude to God. May God bless you and those you love.

Your brother in Christ,
+Edward C. Malesic, Bishop of Cleveland

**FROM MANY, ONE:**

History books talk about kings and rulers, battles and treaties, but that's only the surface — the real story is God seeking the lost, the strayed and the injured [Matthew 25:31-46]. He does that above all by sending his Son. Jesus identifies himself with the lowly. Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel: “I assure you that as often as you did these things for one of the least of my brothers or sisters, you did them for me.”

From this judgment scene we get the corporal works of mercy — feed the hungry, visit the imprisoned, shelter the homeless. Along with the corporal works we have the spiritual works. People experience spiritual imprisonment, illness and alienation. People use all kinds of things to satisfy their spiritual hunger. None of them work. Only Jesus.

St. Teresa of Calcutta used to teach the “five-finger Gospel. Holding a person's hand, palm up, she would begin with the thumb and say: “You. Did. It. To. Me.” Mother Teresa emphasized that you don't need to go to “mission lands” to practice the five-finger Gospel. We have people near us who are hungry, imprisoned, and ill. The person who comes across angry and sullen often has the greatest need — you did it to me.

So what is the end game? St. Paul lays it out: “For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all” [1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28]. This does not mean God will absorb us. We will retain our individuality, but realize that perfect unity we all long for. Our national slogan says: “E pluribus unum” — “From many one.” The unity we achieve here below is fragile, to say the least. In the reign of Christ, we will realize perfect unity.

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

REFLECTION FOR THE WEEK:

This weekend, we complete this Liturgical Year of grace. Today is the day to hear his invitation regarding the state of the world, as well as in the gifts He has given each of us. We are called by Jesus to collaboration with Him in His saving work — bringing all humanity to freedom, peace, delight, and companionship at the banquet of God's glory and all of creation to its fullest purpose. As we look back on the past year, have we grown more into companionship with Jesus? As we look forward to the

A KING FOR THE POOR:

Our sacred authors have a unique problem: how do they conjure up images of God which accurately represent their experiences of God? They presume — no matter what picture they surface — it's not going to do total justice to the God they know. Some aspects of their images work; others fail horribly. The author of the Song of Songs, for instance, discovered a parallel challenge when he compared his lover's hair to “a flock of goats streaming down from Gilead,” and her nose to “the tower on Lebanon that looks toward Damascus” [Song of Songs 4:1]. I don't think she appreciated every aspect of either image.

In spite of the “limping metaphors,” our sacred authors present us with three distinct images of God in the Scripture Readings for this Feast of Christ the King — a shepherd, a new Adam, and a king.

Deeply affected by the Babylonian Exile, Ezekiel hopes for God to directly break into Israel's salvation history and shepherd his dispirited people. They've been aimlessly wandering around for far too long. They've got no other leader but the Lord — “I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered. I myself will pasture my sheep; I will give them rest, says the Lord God” [Ezekiel 34:11-17]. Unless the Lord steps in, they'll be left to a dog-eat-sheep world. God is their only hope.

Paul, on the other hand, reflects on the impact that the risen Jesus has had on his friends in Corinth. It's as though the Apostle has read about President Roosevelt's plans for a “new deal.” We're all starting from scratch. Just as Adam got us into the mess we're in by bringing death into the world, the risen Jesus — as the new Adam — has turned everything around by bringing life into our everyday experiences. What we once thought inevitable, the risen Jesus has destroyed. He has created a whole new “game” with a whole new deck of cards [1 Corinthians 15:20-28].

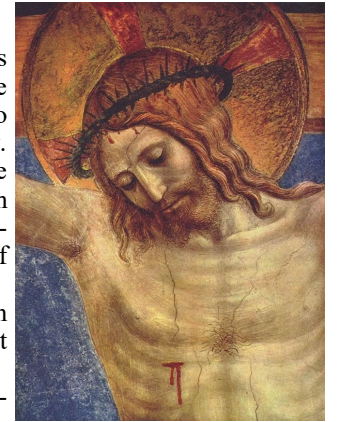
Yet, on this day of all days, the divine image on which we're most concentrating is that of king. Matthew's Gospel is one of our most frequently used passages of Scripture — especially employed during funeral liturgies [Matthew 25:31-46]. It's always comforting to reflect on how the deceased discovered the risen Jesus in his or her life by caring for the helpless in their midst. But on this Feast of Christ the King, it's also important to reflect on how the Jewish biblical image of king revolved around caring for the helpless.

Historians remind us that on their 12th century BCE entrance into the Promised Land, those former Jewish Egyptian slaves didn't immediately set up a monarchy. Instead, as the book of Judges narrates, the 12 tribes formed themselves into a loose-knit confederation. Only when that confederation no longer met their needs did they begin discussing the possibility of a king.

But it would be a unique king — quite unlike the kings reigning in the countries surrounding Israel. Those monarchies were created to protect the rights of the high and mighty. God's kings, on the contrary, came into existence to defend those who had no clout. The high and mighty could take care of themselves. In Israel three groups of people always had legal access to the king 24/7 — widows, orphans, and resident aliens. Given the customs of the ancient world, none of the three had anyone — except the Israelite king — to plead their cause.

That's why Matthew's Jesus — given the image of a Jewish king — identifies with the helpless in our midst — the poor, the refugees, and the imprisoned. He not only pleads their cause — he becomes one with them. Whenever we care for any on that well-known list we eventually discover we've been caring for the royal, risen Jesus. This is the most surprising discovery we'll experience at the pearly gates. We've actually become royalty ourselves by helping the helpless.

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



and as the people of the world.

These two events combine to exhort us to recognize that what is truly important in our day is the life of the flower carriers — all those people burdened in a world that loves what they provide, but rarely, barely remembers that they are the ever-present representatives of Christ the King. When we learn to treat them as such, we will be on the right side of history — all the way to the end.

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

LET US GIVE THANKS:

Gratitude is not only the posture of praise, but it is also the basic element of real belief in God. When we bow our heads in gratitude, we acknowledge that the works of God are good. We recognize that we cannot, of ourselves, save ourselves. We proclaim that our existence and all its goods come not from our own devices but are part of the works of God. Gratitude is the alleluia to existence — the praise that thunders through the universe as tribute to the ongoing presence of God with us even now.

Thank you for the new day. Thank you for this work. Thank you for this family. Thank you for our daily bread. Thank you for this storm and the moisture it brings to a parched earth. Thank you for the corrections that bring me to growth. Thank you for the bank of crown vetch that brings color to the hillside. Thank you for pets that bind us to nature. Thank you for the necessities that keep me aware of your bounty in my life.

Without doubt, unstinting gratitude saves us from the sense of self-sufficiency that leads to forgetfulness of God. Let us learn to come to prayer with an alleluia heart — “Praise to you, O God. Let all creation sing your praise” [see Wisdom 15].

—taken from the writings of Sister Joan Chittister, O.S.B., which appear on the internet



READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Daniel 1:1-20, Luke 21:1-4
Tuesday:	Daniel 2:31-42, Luke 21:5-11
Wednesday:	Daniel 3:62-37, Luke 21:12-19
Thursday:	Romans 10:9-18, Mark 4:18-22
Friday:	Daniel 7:2-14, Luke 21:29-32
Saturday:	Daniel 7:15-27, Luke 21:34-36

1st Week in Advent: Isaiah 63:17-64:7, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:33-37

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.



coming weeks and months do we want that companionship to expand and grow? This is all part of the process of our live with God.

The Scripture Readings for this Feast of Christ the King are not filled with parables which are open to various interpretations, but rather with a very direct summation of Jesus’ whole life, mission, and teachings. We need not ask for understanding, but rather for courage to face their invitations. We can pray for the desire to be unselective in our caring, curing, visiting, welcoming, clothing, feeding, and reach out beyond the false sense of self entitlement. There are straightforward expectations here. We need to find the presence of Jesus in the presence of the poor and needy.

The Liturgy of the Word begins with the prophet Ezekiel speaking the word of the Lord to the kings and leaders of Israel. They have fattened themselves on the finest lambs, but have neglected the hunger of the Lord’s flock. They have found themselves rich and comfortable while the flock has strayed [Ezekiel 34:11-17]. Enough is enough, and the Lord declares that he himself will be the shepherd and send them a leader who will guide and care for all the people of Israel. Those who belong to the Lord will find rest by being found, and those judged to be not of the flock will be separated.

Matthew’s Gospel is often referred to as “The Last Judgement” {Matthew 25:31-46}. The Shepherd-King sits in his glory and is pictured as a judge. His glory is found not so much in his ability to wield power — to separate sheep from goats — but that he is embodied in the lives of those in jail, in the hospitals, on the streets of the homeless, and in the straits of need.

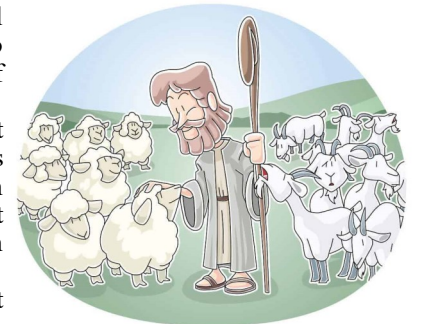
The scene is not so much about the “final judgment”, but rather it is about the mystery of the incarnation. Jesus began the rising action with his simple entrance into human flesh in the secrecy of poverty. Interest is sustained as he more and more identifies himself with the sick, the needy, and the unpretentious. Jesus has been creating scenes of conflict with those who were the “shepherds” of God’s holy people. He has confronted their inattentiveness to those “little ones.” There are two messages here: [1] Jesus dwells in the blessedness of the poor, and [2] those who are true followers of Jesus care for Jesus in their caring for the poor.

The Incarnation is more than Jesus’ having taken human flesh once in a historical moment; God continues to take flesh in each of us — especially the thirsty, hungry, homeless, imprisoned and lost. For Matthew, the glory of God is not as judge, but as a real presence in the unsuspected, unexpected, unattractive presences of others. Kings parade with great publicity; Jesus picks his way through hospital wards, prison walls, and in the journey of ordinary persons. He knocks on doors to see if anybody can recognize him and tend him.

There is in Christian spirituality a certain privacy or self-perfectionism which revolves around keeping the Ten Commandments, and doing those little things which make us feel good about ourselves — self-involvement we might call it. The lambs who enter the kingdom in Matthew’s Gospel are not so lily-white, unblemished, and bouncy. They have the nicks and dents of human interaction. They have the dirt and smell of the streets as well as the stains of trying and not succeeding.

The goats have cared well for themselves. They see Jesus now for the first time — as a judge only. The King became poorer than was acceptable. The drama has had several surprises. Jesus was born in a most un-kingly manner. How he remains is equally surprising because he chooses the unlikely people to take for his kingdom. For us who want to also be of his kingdom on earth, for us who want to be “in that number” when the lambs go marching in, we have to have a deeper sight-in. If we celebrate Jesus’ presence in the Word and in the Eucharist, then we also are invited to see him where he has taken up his throne “among the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost.”

—Edited from the writings of Father Tom Stegman, S.J., and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet 5



WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

Parables are teaching devices used by rabbis for instructional purposes. The wonderful thing about a parable is that we can identify ourselves with one or more of the characters in the story. Read one or hear one, and it's sort of life seeing yourself reflected back — perhaps as in a mirror — with some fuzziness, not with a whole lot of precision, but the general image is there — “This one's about me” is the usual reaction.

We have just heard on of the most famous of all of the parables used by Jesus. There are those on the right, and those on the left; there are the sheep and the goats, the saved and the damned. But everyone in each group is surprised! When, they ask, did we treat you, or not treat you, in these ways? And Jesus then tells them.

What about you? Where do you see yourself in the story? Do you belong to those that care — the ones on the right — or those who simply didn't have enough time to be bothered — those on the left? I daresay that you, like me, find yourself in both camps. We've given our time, our treasure, and our talent — and we've withheld them, depending upon a number of factors — some of which we'd be ashamed to identify.

But there's another group that we overlook. The parable's message is so simple that we fail to see its big point. There were those who helped, those who couldn't be bothered, and there were those who need help!

Let me ask you this question — and it's a big one. Perhaps your salvation hangs on its answer. When have you seen yourself as one who needed help? The answer is awfully important because Jesus identified Himself as one of those. And, then He didn't identify Himself as one of those! He identified Himself as existing in them, as living in them. He was born poor and helpless, born in need and died in need. He lived and moved and had His being in need. And on the Day of Judgment, the surprised will discover him there.

Have you discovered your being in His? Have you admitted that you exist in need, that you're not self-sufficient, that you're on spiritual welfare, and that you and Jesus find each other in need? That's the big point of this parable — and it's always missed! At the last Judgment, Jesus will be found in those who were in need. These are mine, and I am theirs, and they are in me, and I live in them [see John 17:25-26]. Jesus did not speak of them in the third person — He spoke of them in the first person.

And let's be honest with each other here. Isn't it true that in most of the major instances in our life, when we have refused to admit that we don't have the answers, when we've refused to admit that we might be wrong, when we've refused to admit that we need our wife or husband's help — and yes, even our children's help — we've gotten into a whole lot of trouble? Isn't it precisely true that a whole lot of trouble, pain, hurt, and estrangement have come to us when we've been arrogant, stubborn, and have refused to admit that we need help?

The great poet, John Donne, wrote a famous poem that I'm sure you've all read. It is called *No Man is an Island*. No one of us is self-sufficient. No one of us is a god or a goddess — in spite of our own interior opinion of ourselves. You need my help, and I need your help. You need your spouses' help, and even your children's help, and they need yours.

Hell on earth enters the scene when either you or one of the characters in your life refuses to admit that simple, basic truth, and refuses to care. Whenever you encounter that, you get a taste of damnation.

So which group do you belong to in the parable? Just how do you identify yourself in it? And could it be true that you just might have to change how you identify yourself not only in the parable, but in real life? In your relationship with those around you? Perhaps this is a moment of grace for you. Perhaps you and I are being touched again by God here in this place — this “house” in the Presence of God, His Christ, and His Holy Spirit.

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

SEEING THROUGH A DIFFERENT LENS:

Shortly before convening the synod on synodality — arguably the most important Catholic Church gathering since Vatican II — Pope Francis visited Mongolia. Mongolia? Situated precariously between Russia and China, the ancient home of Genghis Khan boasts a total of some 1,450 Catholics midst a population of 3 million.

Why on earth would an aging pope who would be welcome in many powerful nations with huge Catholic populations bother the hardship traveling to such an insignificant spot? Could he have found a smaller Catholic population anywhere in the world?

Unlikely as it seems, Mongolia, with a national population less than half that of Mexico City, has a cardinal — Giorgio Marengo — the church's youngest and a member of the synod on synodality. What was the point? It seems that this was one more opportunity for Francis to demonstrate what he thinks it means to be a shepherd.

This weekend, we celebrate the “Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.” That's a mouthful! Pope Pius XI established the feast in 1925 to recall that Christ should reign in the hearts and will of humankind. The Scripture Readings for this Feast describe the celebration better than its grandiose title. The centerpiece is Matthew's scene of the judgment between sheep and goats — an unfortunate disparagement of the poor old goats who are generally smarter, albeit feistier, than sheep. Michelangelo gave us a vivid image of this scene in which Christ's arm is raised in judgment, the saints are rising and the damned are pitifully drifting into the abyss. Such works vividly depict a fearsome last day.

Jesus' parable offers a different interpretation of the end. In Jesus' parable, the end is ever-present. The coming of Christ is not some future event, but an everyday occurrence and not at all like the Sistine Chapel. If we want artistic renditions of Matthew's depiction of judgment, we might better read Charles Dickens or study the photography of Dorothea Lange.

Rather than talk about an apocalyptic end, Jesus claimed that the king appears in the guise of every needy person and that we judge ourselves in our response to them. Along these lines, Diego Rivera's painting *El Cargador de Flores* probably reflects this parable more truly than Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*. Rivera depicts a peasant on his hands and knees. His wife struggles to help him stand up under the weight of an enormous basket of flowers to take to market. The message for anyone who has eyes to see is that some people's luxurious decor comes at the expense of the poor who cannot even see the beauty of what they bear on their backs.



This is where the vocation of the shepherd comes in. In a universe in which we have been given the ability to choose whether to advance the reign of God or to frustrate it, every follower of Jesus is called to be a shepherd. Every person has the ability to see what Dickens, Lange, and Rivera point out, thus every one of us has a responsibility to respond. Francis went to one of the smallest and least important churches in the world to help the rest of the world see through a different lens.

Francis' missionary journey to Mongolia interprets the 3,000-year-old Psalm 23 with 21st century symbolism. Francis refreshed the souls of people insignificant in the eyes of the world. That proclaimed one message to people who feel insignificant and another to those who don't notice them. By making the Mongolians — and all whom they represent — more visible, Francis highlighted their right to enjoy the verdant pastures of our Earth. In the full sight of all those who disparage the small, he spread a lavish table and celebrated the Eucharist with almost every Catholic in the country.

We celebrate this Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, on the heels of the first session of the synod on synodality. The synod is calling us to learn how to journey together as church

A HALLOW KINGDOM:

In his encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis writes: “The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships — with God, with our neighbor, and with the earth itself.” In other words, we are designed by God to keep these fundamental relationships in proper perspective and order. The Liturgy of the Word for this Feast of Christ the King brings these primary relationships some much needed reflection. Also, assessing these relationships is a wonderful way to end one liturgical year and begin another.

When a sculptor gives form to a work of art, he or she leaves a part of themselves in their work — their own particular imprint. Once the clay is formed and manipulated as desired, the sculptor is able to leave the work and admire it at a distance. When God creates, it is different. God never leaves his creation. When God designs someone or something, he remains intimately a part of what he creates and leaves himself there. It is precisely his presence within whom or what has been made that allows life to be sustained. It is no wonder then, that Jesus was so adamant about keeping these relationships in proper order — “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me” [Matthew 25:31-46].

This is why when God sees anyone or thing he has created — especially the poor — God sees himself. When we see God’s creation, we see God. Giving due service to God, others and creation then, is not an option. Pope Francis continues in his encyclical by saying that “according to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin.” When we distort these things and put other things in place of God, we run into trouble.

Many of us feel so helpless in the face of poverty. Where do we really begin? It is common this time of year to be more attentive to the needs of the poor. We collect food, have coat drives, gather money for worthy organizations, and do all we can to lighten loads and lift the burdens others carry. Yet we know this is not nearly enough.

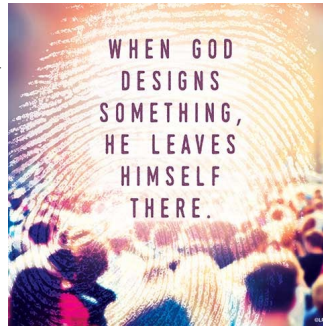
The sad truth is we have allowed ourselves to be carried down a dangerous road. The level of unhappiness, unsettledness, anger, apathy, disconnection, fear, and general angst many people feel is symptomatic that something is blatantly wrong. Suicide rates, across the board, are on the rise, and this is not due purely to individual circumstances. Something outside of us is at play.

Poverty is not simply a material condition. People are also spiritually poor. If you take a moment and look at humanity, there is so much emptiness and helplessness. You can see it on people’s faces as they lack true joy. People are clearly missing something. If we listen carefully to Jesus, — and to Pope Francis — it undoubtedly has to do with these relationships — God, others and creation. Could it be that we are witnessing right before our eyes the evolution of what T.S. Eliot describes in his poem *Hollow Men*?

Jesus did not give us the Gospel as an alternate option for living. It is THE only option for living if we are to live as God designed. We are meant to live in this world in peace, tending to the needs of our brothers and sisters, serving God and experiencing joy. This is the Kingdom of God over which Christ is King. It is the kingdom we created that is currently causing so much distress and further leading to the plight of the least among us.

At the end of the day, what kingdom do we serve and who is our king? It seems to me that if our answer is the Kingdom of God with Christ our King, then we have to do all in our power to work toward some significant systemic changes that will insure greater justice. The way we currently conduct the business of our lives, from the economy through technology, while familiar and convenient, will not bring us where we need to be.

—taken from the writings of Father Mark Suslenko, which appear on the internet.



CAN YOU TELL THEM APART?

We have reached the final weekend of the Liturgical Year which celebrates the Feast of Christ the King, and in Matthew’s Gospel [25:31-46] we are presented with the account of the Final Judgment. This is appropriate since that final great day will be the culmination of the whole of history; it will be what we have all been waiting and praying and working towards.

I was talking to a priest the other day who had just returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He told me that at one point they had come across a Bedouin who was tending his flock. The flock was comprised of both sheep and goats, but he said that it was impossible for him to determine which was a sheep and which was a goat. After a while he began to realize that the goats had more well-formed horns than the sheep, but to him that was about the only discernible difference. Here in the United States, with our rather different breeds of sheep and goats, the two animals are quite distinct and easy to tell apart, but not in the Holy Land. The point is that this little insight helps us to understand why the separation of the sheep and the goats mentioned in Matthew’s Gospel is so relevant when considering the Last Judgment.

Superficially it is hard to know the difference between sheep and goats. This corresponds to the reality we experience each day — it is hard to know who will be saved and who will be condemned. We all look alike, and from the outside it is not possible to discern which of us would ultimately be classified as sheep and which as goats in the vision of the Last Judgment given to us in St Matthew’s Gospel.

We have to conclude that it is virtually impossible to tell where a particular person will end up, because in order to do so we would have to look into the human heart. The only person who can do this is the Lord himself. It is only him who is qualified to be our judge since it is only he who can discern our motives and see into the secrets of our hearts.

This is just as well, because we human beings are not very accurate in the judgments we make. Even in such an advanced country as the United States, our justice system is quite imperfect, and we are all aware how easy it has been over the years for serious miscarriages of justice to arise. Clearly our merely human judgment is not to be relied upon, and the only one we can depend upon to make the right judgments is the Lord of Life himself.

Justice needs to be tempered with mercy, but in order to be able to dispense mercy one needs to be fully aware of all the facts and know the motivations of the individual, the kinds of pressures they are under, and how they are able to cope with them. No human being could ever fully understand another person or know precisely what makes them tick. This is something that only God can do — which is why he is the only one who is qualified or even capable of judging our actions.

The important thing to realize about the words of Jesus is that he tells us precisely on what grounds we are going to be judged. However, he does not list the Ten Commandments or give us any other list of rules. No, what he says is that we are going to be judged on how merciful we have been. It is the depth of our compassion that is going to be under scrutiny on that day.

This is most fitting because on that great Day of Days, we are — all of us — going to be desperately seeking God’s mercy. And Jesus is telling us that the amount of mercy we will be granted is going to be in direct proportion to the amount of mercy we have shown others. The words that Jesus uses are very explicit: “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.” This then is the basis of the Divine Judgment — how we have treated the hungry and the thirsty, whether we have welcomed the stranger, whether we have clothed the naked or visited the sick or those in prison.

Of course, in today’s world, it is very difficult to visit someone who is in prison unless they send you a visitor’s pass, but the reality is that all these things are utterly practical. They involve us doing very



simple and straightforward things such as visiting the sick and clothing the naked and feeding the hungry.

There are probably also many other useful things that we could include under these broad headings such as befriending the elderly, inviting a lonely person to lunch at Christmas, serving food in a shelter, or doing other voluntary work in the community such as listening to a child read in school, or bringing patients down to Mass in the Hospital.

You will notice that the Lord is not telling us that the Final Judgment is going to be based on how we feel — or even on whether we have said our prayers — important though that is. No, this judgment is solely going to be based on our practical actions and in particular how we have helped our neighbor.

Christ when he was asked which was the greatest commandment actually stated that there were two similar commandments: Love God and love your neighbor. Here we are being told that the judgment of our lives will be about whether we have loved our neighbor.

These two commandments are so closely related we are being told that by loving our neighbor we are actually loving God. It might be on this basis that many atheists might get into heaven well before some believing Christians.

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

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — DECEMBER 16th:

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.

THY WILL BE DONE:

This weekend, we conclude our liturgical year with the Feast of Christ the King. Of course, this feast is about Christ. But it's not simply about who Christ is; it's also about what Christ does. We believe that through Christ, God brings about God's Kingdom. So this feast is not simply about the King; it's also about the Kingdom.

What is the Kingdom? What is the Kingdom of God? The Kingdom of God describes that time when God's power and God's will extend to everything — when, as Paul says in his letter to the Church at Corinth: “God is all in all” [1 Corinthians 15:20-26,28]. When the Kingdom comes, everything that is will be as God wants it to be. Everything will be good and just and perfect. That is the Kingdom of God.

There are two things to remember about the Kingdom of God. The first is this: the Kingdom of God is not the same as heaven. We believe in heaven. We believe that our beloved dead are with Christ in heaven. We believe that when we die we will join them in heaven. But the Kingdom of God is not the same as heaven. The Kingdom of God is a step beyond heaven. We believe that when the Kingdom of God comes, the perfection of heaven will extend to this world. We believe that when the Kingdom of God comes, God's will, which is perfectly followed in heaven, will be perfectly followed on earth. When Christ comes on that last day, all of creation — all that is, including our physical body — will share in the glory of God. So, it is very important for us not to spiritualize the Kingdom — not to imagine that it only pertains to spiritual things. The precise meaning of the Kingdom is that when God's Kingdom comes, all that exists — both spiritual and material, both our souls and our bodies — will be caught up in the

will be living lives of sacrificial love — the love of Jesus Christ. Out of love for Christ, we will have no choice but to reach out to the suffering of the world. In this way, we will recognize the Presence of God in those who might not even recognize His Presence in themselves. But if we are wrapped up in selfishness — if our lives are about “taking care of number one” — then we will miss our opportunity to serve God in others.

We are either part of the solution, or we are part of the problem. The true members of the Kingdom live their Christianity in a way that restores the world to the Lord. Those who are wrapped up in themselves, not only miss the opportunity to care for others, but they live their lives in a way that adds to the plight of the suffering.

Are we members of the Kingdom of not? Are we part of the solution or part of the problem? Acts of charity are not just nice things to do. They are not add-ons to our faith. Our charity to others is fundamental to our faith.

During the last twelve months we have followed the life of Jesus from the prophecies of last Advent, through his birth, mission, death and resurrection. We have prayed over the message of His life as well as His teachings. Now, at the conclusion to the year we beg Him to help us recognize Him in our world and to acknowledge His presence in others. We seek the mercy of His continual grace drawing us out of ourselves. We humbly seek to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Christ is our King. May we be true members of his Kingdom.

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

THE MANY FACETS OF CHRIST:

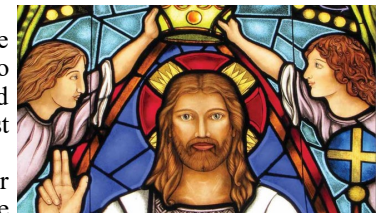
On this feast of Christ the King — the last Sunday of the Church Year — the Paul's Letter to the Church at Corinth highlights the resurrection of Christ as the core of the Gospel — the fundamental conviction of Christian faith, and the basis for our hope in the final triumph of good over evil [1 Corinthians 15:20-28]. Paul begins his teaching with a brief statement of this belief — “Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” He then suggests an analogy — “for just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life.” Finally, the Apostle describes an ordered process — Christ, “the first fruits”, delivers the kingdom to his Father after subjecting all his enemies — including death, “the last enemy” — so that “od may be all in all.”

Throughout his letter, Paul uses language that suggests the kingship of Christ. He is the one who saves “those who belong to him,” who “must reign,” “who hands over the kingdom to his God and Father,” and who has everything “subjected to him”. The risen Christ is the universal King, the cosmic Lord, and the Savior of all.

Christians find diverse ways of making Christ the king of their lives. His kingdom is multidimensional — taking many legitimate forms. There are various degrees of commitment to the crucified and risen Lord. Some believers can express their belief in Christ the King with great ease and precision; while others are more reticent and less articulate. The Christian Community is enriched by all those who are willing to share something of the way Christ reigns in their lives. A truck driver, who uses his long hours on the road for periods of prayerful reflection, speaks openly with his wife and best friend about his daily efforts to let Christ rule his life. A lawyer faced with complex ethical questions has trained herself to reflect on what Jesus would do in those situations. A marine made it through his rigorous training by imagining Jesus on the cross speaking words of encouragement to him. A grandmother who often attends Mass during the week thinks of her “Amen” when receiving communion as saying yes to sharing in the mission of Christ to extend God's reign in the world.

In what concrete ways does Christ actually function as Lord of your life?

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



ARE WE PART OF THE PROBLEM, OR PART OF THE SOLUTION?

We come to Church every weekend to find some relief from the troubles of our lives — as well as those of the world. And even if we are keeping an eye on children, or distracted by those around us, we still have those precious moments of peace when we are with our Lord. This weekend we have a very special celebration — the Feast of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe. You might think: “That’s nice, but really what does this have to do with me?”

What does the celebration of Christ the King mean? It means everything. It means that there is a solution to the problems of the world. The feast calls us to be part of the solution. It warns us that if we are not part of the solution to the world’s deepest needs, we will be part of the world’s problems.

Today’s feast concludes the Church year by reflecting on the fundamental truths of Christianity. Those truths are that Jesus Christ came to restore spiritual life to humankind and form mankind into a Kingdom for God the Father. This is made explicit in St. Paul’s letter to the Church at Corinth [1 Corinthians 15:20-28]. The resurrection of Jesus has restored the life that was lost by humankind. All who belong to Christ will be handed over to God the Father at the end of time.

The Feast of Christ the King is not just about salvation history — it is not just about events that happened in the past, nor is it about people in other places. The Feast of Christ the King is about us — right here, right now. If we do not have God in our lives, then our lives are futile, meaningless, and dead. Without God we go through the motions secretly asking ourselves: “Why bother? Why bother with raising children? Why bother with caring for others? Why bother with being good? Why bother with anything?” If we do not have God in our lives, we will easily overlook His Presence reaching out to us in the hungry, the thirsty, the strangers, the naked — and all those Jesus mentions in Matthew’s Gospel [25:31-46]. If we do not have God in our lives, we are part of the problem of the world.

The Presence of God protects us from going through the motions of life. The Presence of God gives us the ability to live each moment as an opportunity to grow closer to Him. The Presence of God within each of us leads us to be the solution to the world’s needs. Last Thursday was Thanksgiving. Santa’s float was the last one in the *Macy Thanksgiving Day Parade*. The holidays are upon us. Without God, Thanksgiving was just a day for a big meal. Without God, Christmas will be nothing more than a celebration of materialism. Decorations will be taken out of their storage boxes and the proper sentiments will be mustered up, but without God, Christmas will merely be a day of empty sentiments. But with God in our lives, Christmas becomes an opportunity for us to draw into a deeper union with the Presence that gives value to all life.

St. Paul writes that those who belong to Christ will be formed into a kingdom that will be handed over to his God and Father. Every sovereignty, every authority, and every power in the world will be destroyed. There will be no presidents, no prime ministers, no ayatollahs nor any form of prince. The only King who is eternal is Jesus Christ. The only kingdom that will remain is that of God the Father. And we are members of that Kingdom.

Or, are we?

That is the question put before us in the teaching on the sheep and the goats. Both sheep and goats were surprised to learn that the Son of Man appearing to them in His Glory, with majestic, bright lights, with angels all over the place, and with trumpets booming out like thunder, this same Son of Man, the Judge of the Living and the Dead, was present to them in the suffering of the world. The sheep did not need to be told what to do. They cared for others. They did what the deep presence of the Lord within them led them to do — they reached out to those who needed them. They cared for Christ. The goats could not be concerned with anyone but themselves. They ignored the plight of others and missed the Presence of God.

If we are serious about our Christianity — if we are committed to the Kingdom of God — then we



perfection of God. Now this truth is at the center of what we believe, but we often forget it. Yet we pray for it every day. We pray in the Lord’s Prayer: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Each time we say this prayer, we pray that the perfection of heaven would come to earth — that God’s reign and God’s glory would now characterize all of creation. That is why I say that the Kingdom is a step beyond heaven. We believe that heaven will eventually come to earth. That is the first thing to remember about the Kingdom.

The second is this: the Kingdom is already but not yet. The Kingdom of God is already begun but not yet complete. We believe that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God has already begun to establish the Kingdom in our world. But we also admit that that work of establishing the Kingdom is not yet complete. It will not be complete until Christ returns in glory. So, the Kingdom is already begun, but not yet completed.

It is important for us to claim both of these truths. Every time something good happens in our world, we believe that it is a sign of God already at work to establish the Kingdom. Every time that science conquers a new disease, every time nations move towards peace, every time hope emerges out of chaos, or reconciliation happens in our families, or our children take a step toward maturity and wisdom, we as believers do not simply imagine these are some random good things happening. We believe that these good things are part of God’s action through Christ the King, to move history towards that day when heaven comes to earth, when God’s Kingdom will be established. We believe that already God is working in our world in that way, but we also admit that that work of establishing the Kingdom is not yet complete. We admit how much of our world still stands in rebellion against God’s will, how much of our world is still characterized by violence and greed, prejudice and injustice. We know that these evils that are present among us are not a sign that God has forgotten us, but the simple truth that the Kingdom of God is not yet finished. God’s kingdom remains incomplete.

That incompleteness is our calling — our invitation. For if we follow Christ the King, we are called to participate in building God’s Kingdom, to work against the incompleteness of God’s will in our midst. Following Jesus involves working to see that peace and justice occur in our world. This is our calling, and this is what it means to follow Christ.

The Feast of Christ the King is about the Kingdom of God and about the King who brings that kingdom to us. The Kingdom is not the same as heaven. The Kingdom extends the perfection of heaven to the world in which we live. We claim that that work of Christ has already begun in every good event that occurs in our midst. We are not discouraged when we still see evil remaining because we know that we are not alone. We know that Christ our King is working in us and through us to bring us to that day when God is all in all.

This is a startling vision — a revelation of what God is about. But people of faith are not afraid to claim it. We, as believers, continue to pray for that time when God’s will, will characterize all that is — “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

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



EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

We are currently discerning a new group of Eucharistic Ministers who would undergo training within the next month. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be a Senior in High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are in need of ministers for both our Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. **Contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you feel called to this ministry.** We are always in need of Eucharistic Ministers.



IF YOU'RE BROKEN, YOU BELONG:

"The Church is not a museum of saints, but a hospital for sinners." This quote is one I return to a lot when I'm struggling to remember my place in the Church — when I'm falling back into old sins, when I'm finding myself unworthy of God's grace, when I feel like I don't belong in a holy place around holy people. It's the quote that I had in mind as I stood in line for Confession, knowing that I'd have to confess that one sin I'd told my confessor so many times before. I was totally ashamed and frustrated by my weakness.

But still, amidst all that shame and frustration, I knew I needed healing, and I knew I couldn't go anywhere else for the particular healing I needed. After naming my sin and owning my brokenness, through tears and with frustration in my heart, the priest did not hesitate to say those most liberating words: "I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." I was healed of my sin and made new. I'm wildly undeserving of that gift, but still, Jesus, through the priest, was so eager to give it to me because He longs for me to be made whole by being united to Him.

This idea of the Church being a hospital for sinners is one that resonates deeply with me because I've struggled a lot with reconciling my sinfulness with God's perfect love. I've struggled with this because — NEWS FLASH: I literally cannot reconcile my sinfulness with God's perfect love. That's the amazingness of His love — it's given by Him, and there's nothing I can do by my own power to be worthy of it.

The Church is this incredible hospital where the divine Doctor calls the sickest of the sick so that He can perform miraculous heart transplants on them — exchanging their hearts for His, pouring His very life into their death. I can say this honestly because I'm a recipient of His care — I'm one of those perpetually sick patients that no other doctor can heal. I'm a sinner — broken and ashamed — that Jesus is continually loving and forgiving back into wholeness.



What breaks my heart, though — having been a recipient of this healing mercy — is that, somewhere between the pews and the streets, this message of Jesus' desire to make the broken whole has been twisted. The world seems to believe that the Church exists to make good people feel better and bad people feel worse — that Jesus didn't come to heal our brokenness, but just to make us feel guilty for having it, as if He's the divine Doctor that only wants to see healthy patients. But Jesus addressed this misunderstanding quite explicitly during His earthly ministry:

While dining in the home of Levi — a well-known tax collector — AKA bad Jew, unholy, not good — Jesus and His disciples were challenged by the religious elite of the time, who were asking: "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus replied to this foolish question: "Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners" [Luke 5:27-32].

Jesus tells us directly that His work of salvation isn't for those who don't think they need saving. It's for those of us who can see our own brokenness, and reach out to Him — like a sick person on a hospital bed — and beg to be healed. His love and mercy offered through the Church is for those of us who still need healing — not for those who have figured it out on their own. Still, though, despite this direct statement, many have been deceived to believe that the Church is where you go when you have it all together — not when you're a work in progress.

If that's you — if any part of you believes you need to become perfect, holy or pure to approach Jesus in the Church — I need you to trust me when I tell you these two things:

1. Jesus doesn't want you to put on an act for Him. Jesus isn't interested in an artificial relationship with you. He doesn't want you to come to Him looking like what your idea of a good

Christian is, because that's not a relationship with who you really are — that's a relationship with an artificial idea. He's desperate for relationship with you and everything that comes along with that.

2. Jesus wants all the mess of you as you are right now. You can't be saved by a Savior if you've already "saved" yourself — just like you can't be healed by a doctor if you've already bandaged up your wound and are telling yourself that it isn't there. Jesus doesn't want to wait around for you to make yourself perfect, clean, and whole before you approach Him. He wants you to come to Him right now, in whatever brokenness you find yourself in, be it difficult circumstances, shame from a serious sin, regret from a lost relationship, or any other type of brokenness — because He wants to make you new.

If you think you won't fit in among the "church people," let me remind you that "church people" are only different from the greatest sinners in that they recognize their need for a Savior. You only won't fit in if you come to Jesus acting as if you don't need Him — as if He's some pious add-on to your already righteous life.

If you think your past is too complicated, you belong. If you think your family is too messed up, you belong. If you think your faith is too small, you belong. If you think your sin is too great, you belong. If you're broken, you belong. The broken belong to the Church because Jesus didn't come to make the whole more whole. He came for the broken. —taken from the writings of Leah Murphy, a young adult.

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].**

**ATTENDANCE:**

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a form [name, address, phone number, children, etc.] indicating this fact, if you have not already done so. Such information not only helps us to know who is attending Our Lady Chapel; it also is of great assistance to us in record keeping [for our friend, the IRS] of any contributions which you may make.

ENVELOPES:

- When you need a **new supply** of envelopes, please feel free to take a supply of them from the table in the vestibule, or call Father John at the Campus Ministry Office [473-3560].
- When you **use** your envelope, please make sure that **your number** is on it. If you need to know your number, please call the Campus Ministry Office. Thanks.

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.**

