

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for the 3rd Week in Lent ~

On my knees
before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses,
I offer myself —
soul and body to You,
Eternal Spirit of God.
I adore the brightness of Your purity,
the unerring keenness of Your justice
and the might of your love.
You are the Strength and Light of my soul.
In You I live, and move, and am.
I desire never to grieve You
by unfaithfulness to grace,
and I pray with all my heart
to be kept from the smallest sin against You.
Mercifully guard my every thought
and grant that I may always watch for Your light
and listen to Your voice
and follow Your gracious inspiration.
I cling to You
and give myself to you
and ask You by Your compassion
to watch over me in my weakness.
Holding the pierced Feet of Jesus
and looking at His Five Wounds
and trusting in His Precious Blood
and adoring His opened Side
and stricken Heart,
I implore You, Adorable Spirit,
Helper of my infirmity,
so to keep me in Your grace
that I may never sin against You.
Give me grace,
O Holy spirit,
Spirit of the Father
and the Son
to say to You always
and everywhere:
"Speak Lord,
for Your servant listens."
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.

FAITH EDUCATION:

Our Faith Education classes meet on **Sundays from 8:45—9:45 AM**. This is followed by **Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 10 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: Mar. 3-10**. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.



LENTEN NOTES:

The season of Lent has begun. During this sacred time, each of us is called to spiritual growth — particularly through a turning away from sin. Lent is a time for “new beginnings” — a time to grow in our relationship with God and each other. There are 3 major spiritual practices during Lent to which Scripture calls us: **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving**.

—LENTEN DEVOTIONALS:

On the table in the Narthex of the Chapel are 3 Lenten Devotionals for you. **The Little Purple Book** is a Young Person’s devotional. **The Little Black Book** is for High School and Adults. Finally, **The Word Among Us** is a Scripture centered devotional based on the daily scripture readings.



—LENTEN REGULATIONS:

Good Friday is a day of **fast** for all between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine. Fasting means that one full meal for the day is allowed, along with two light meals [snacks]. No eating between meals. Those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to take upon themselves some aspects of the fast, whenever possible.

All Fridays during Lent are days of **abstinence** from meat, for those who are fourteen and older. Again, those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to participate whenever possible.

MEN’S RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:

Thursday, April 25th, from 6:00—8:30 PM will be our annual **Spring Men’s Retreat**. All men of Our Lady Chapel and the Gilmour Academy Men’s Club and their guests are invited to join us. We will begin with **Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 6:00 PM, and then move to the Center for Performing Arts for a light supper, and our evening of discussion, led by Fr. John**. We are requesting a free will offering for the evening. If you cannot make it for Mass or for dinner, you are still welcome to attend the evening of spiritual conversation — come when you are able! Mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord! **Sign up on the retreat sheet located on the easel in the narthex of Our Lady Chapel or contact Patty in the Chapel Office (440) 473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org**



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.



EMBRACING THE UNKNOWN:

2 The unknown is where possibility glitters. —Michelle Obama

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For an end to the war between Israel and Hamas.
- For an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine.
- 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.

PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Madeleine Popp, mother of Gilmour CFO, Kathy Popp
- For John Lennon, [’55], father of John [’78] and James [’80] Lennon, grandfather of Jimmy [’30], Casey [’30], & Katelyn [’32].
- For Robert Sandberg, father of Father Kevin Sandberg, C.S.C.
- For Max Littlejohn, father-in-law of Gilmour Math Teacher, Terri Littlejohn, grandfather of Kaitlyn Littlejohn [’19]
- For Patrick Wheeler, father of Gilmour teacher, Sean Wheeler.
- For Geraldine Joecken
- For Sister Jessica Karlinger, S.N.D.
- For Frank Urankar, former Gilmour teacher, father of Thomas [’78], and uncle of Stanley [’69], Paul [’75], Anthony [’79].
- For Betsy Lee Lator, grandmother of Katie Winovich Chapman [’13]
- For Father Jim Blantz, C.S.C.

ATTENDANCE:

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a Registration 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.

WEEKLY OFFERING:

Baskets are located on the pillars just inside the center door when you enter the chapel. Please place your offering in the basket. Baskets will not be passed during the offertory time. Your offering will help offset chapel daily operating expenses. When you choose to use the envelopes, you can request a printout of your offerings for the year to submit to the IRS. God bless you.

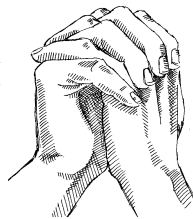
Total Offerings: Saturday [2/24/24] ----- \$ 725.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [2/25/24] ----- \$ 390.00

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For John Zippay, family friend of Bernadette and Stephen Ritley, who is critically ill.
- For Jill Thompson, who is undergoing treatment for mental health issues.
- 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 Chuck Campanella, father of Anthony Campanella, who continues in rehab.
- 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 Josephine Fernando, mother of Melvin [*83] and Raymond [*88] Fernando, mother-in-law of Imelda Deogracias Fernando [*88], who is ill.
- For Pam Spicer, wife of former Gilmour coach, Bob Spicer, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Richard DeBacco, father of Michelle Chiacchiari [*96], father-in-law of Mark Chiacchiari [*94], grandfather of Aurelia [*28] and Olivia [*30] Chiacchiari, who is undergoing treatment for lymphoma
- For Marc Williams who is critically ill with ALS
- For Shobir Corraya, brother of Brother Victor Corraya, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for a brain hemorrhage.
- For Frances Meyers who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Michael Nestor [*98], who is under the care of hospice.
- For Janie Brooks, mother of Trustee, Sherri Beedles, grandmother of Alexander Beedles [*22], who is ill.
- For Jean Ann Liott, who is undergoing treatment for heart issues.
- For Tom Ward, uncle-in-law of Housekeeping associate, Natasha, who is undergoing treatment and surgery for a serious infection.
- For Debbie Langer, friend of Cindy Frimel, who was diagnosed with brain cancer.
- For Denise Mardano, who is battling liver cancer.
- For Sheila Fitzpatrick, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Joseph Michael, father of former Gilmour LS religion teacher, Colleen Michael, who is undergoing treatment for ALS.
- For Joseph Szejewski, who is undergoing treatment for Lymphoma.
- For Fathers Dick Laurick, C.S.C., Don Dilg, C.S.C., and Ken Molinaro, C.S.C., who are all under the care of hospice.



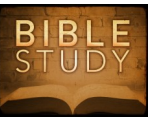
THE TABLE IS THE PLACE OF INTIMACY:

The table is the place of intimacy. Around the table, we discover each other. It’s the place where we pray. It’s the place where we ask: “How was your day?” It’s the place where we eat and drink together and say: “Come on, take some more!” It is the place of old and new stories. It is the place of smiles and tears. The table, too, is the place where distance is most painfully felt. It is the place where the children feel the tension between the parents, where brothers and sisters express their anger and jealousies, where accusations are made, and where plates and cups become instruments of violence. Around the table, we know whether there is friendship and community or hatred and division. Precisely because the table is the place of intimacy for us all.

—Henri Nouwen

NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, February 28th 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: Lenten Penance

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, March 3: 3 rd Week in Lent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream
Monday, March 4:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 5:	NO MASS
Wednesday, March 6:	NO MASS
Thursday, March 7:	NO MASS
Friday, March 8:	NO MASS
Saturday, March 9: 4 th Week in Lent	5:00 PM In Person only
Sunday, March 10: 4 th Week in Lent	10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream

WOMEN’S EVENING OF RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:

Tuesday, May 7th from 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM will be our annual Women’s Spring Retreat. All women of Our Lady Chapel and the Gilmour Academy Women’s Club and their guests are invited to join us. We will begin with Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 6:00 PM, and then move to the Center for Performing Arts for a light supper, and our evening of discussion, led by Fr. John. We are requesting a free will offering for the evening. If you cannot make it for Mass or for dinner, you are still welcome to attend the evening of spiritual conversation — come when you are able! Mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord! **Sign up on the retreat sheet located on the easel in the narthex of Our Lady Chapel or contact Patty in the Chapel Office (440) 473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org**



BEAUTY:

Love is the most beautiful sentiment the Lord has put into the human soul.

—St. Gianna Molla

REFLECTION FOR THE WEEK:

Picture this scene as you enter your parish church this weekend. Immediately inside the main doors, you notice something new. To the right are the familiar Golden Arches of McDonalds with all its accompanying odors. To the left are pushcarts with popcorn, ice cream bars, and even yogurt for the more health-conscious. The smiley Pastor is speaking excitedly about the financial stability that this new way of caring for his parishioners will bring to the congregation.

You walk into the main body of the church and people are chatting while consuming their new communion. You might be thinking to yourself that if you could only find a broom you would sweep all this out into the street. Would you be angry, hurt, insulted, disappointed, or just fed up?

The cleansing of the Temple is what these weeks of Lent need to be about. We are God's holy Temple, and, because we are so human and so surrounded and penetrated by the "things" of this world, we become distracted by, and attracted to, the inappropriate. Lent is a time for us to acquire zeal for the "holy" within and around us. This "holiness" is to be found within the "appropriate" relationships, involvements, and attractions which lead from and back to God. It is also found within the Ten Commandments as well as the instructions to the "holy" which we receive from our church leaders. Lent is a time for us to open ourselves to the grace of Jesus which frees our souls from the greed of needing more and more. Lent is a "coming-to-life" in the church and in our lives. As we open our doors to the "holy," what kind of golden arches and pushcarts get in the way of our experiencing the presence of God within our personal temples?

The opening declaration of God to the Jewish people, in the book of Exodus is a profound — yet simple: "I am the God Who saved you from the slavery of Egypt." "You, Israel, are the nation and people saved by My love for you" [Exodus 20:1-17]. The commandments are guides by which they will avoid chaos by doing or not-doing things when and if they forget who they are in God's eyes. If they could keep the memories alive, they would not need to be justified by their completion of their identity by what they have to do or avoid doing.

In listening to or reading the very exact laws, each of us can give ourselves a letter-grade in how we have been doing lately. But will this lead us to where we need to be? Yes, Lent can be a forty-day examination of just how bad, unfaithful, inconsistent we each have been. So, we can make a promise to stop or begin. I would suggest a good Lenten practice might be giving up self-criticism. Not one of us feels as if we have lived up to our baptismal initiation.

In listening to the recital of the Ten Commandments, God promises a covenant with Moses and the people of Israel. Taken by themselves, this listing of law-like injunctions seems cold and severe. God has reminded Moses and the people of Israel just how good God has been to them in their past. They were created out of the chaos of slavery in Egypt and purified in the wilderness. This covenant is a pledge by God to be their one God, and they are invited into sharing God's holiness by being in this relationship of a covenant. The "Ten Commandments" and all the rest of the "laws" are various ways to express being a people in that relationship. To execute the laws without the relationship of reverence and remembering would be sham and hypocrisy.

So what we hear in the First Reading is not so much a list of laws; rather we are receiving an invitation to remember the holy lives to which we are called. In the days of old, the various leadership groups made sure their prime interests were represented in the entire display of God's laws. They had their expressions and expectations of just what was holiness. Relationship with God, with family and with members of the community comprise this covenantal holiness.

**WHERE DOES THE COVENANT LIE?**

I once asked a rabbi friend what he thought of the commotion over public displays of the Ten Commandments. He just smiled and answered as I thought he would: "Those commandments are our responsibilities," he said, "not yours. But we Jews appreciate all the free publicity we're getting."

The commandments contained in the Book of Exodus [20:1-17] are part of the 613 covenant regulations the ancient Israelites agreed to on Mt. Sinai. If you're Jewish, these laws are some of the responsibilities your ancestors swore to keep because of their relationship with God. Should you decide to be part of that 2,300 year old covenant, these 613 commandments are also your responsibilities — even today. One of the biggest questions facing earliest Christians revolved around whether a non-Jewish convert to Jesus's faith had to follow the Sinai covenant before he or she could be another Christ. In other words, did they have to be Jews before they could be Christians?

Paul of Tarsus answered "No!" to that question. He reminded his readers that Abraham — in Genesis 15:6 — had made a covenant with God at least 400 years before Moses entered into that more famous one on Mt. Sinai. That original covenant mentioned nothing about 613 regulations. It simply committed Abraham to "put his faith" in God — something Gentiles could do without actually becoming Jews. As long as they concurred with Abraham's commitment, they were children of Abraham. The church could demand nothing more of them.

But as compelling as Paul's argument, the question never went away during his lifetime. We need only read his letter to the Church at Galatia in which he not only tells his "Judaizing" adversaries to be the first to be circumcised but also "prays the knife slips!" And, according to some scholars — like Garry Wills — his "liberal" answer to the Jew/Gentile question eventually leads to his martyrdom [see Galatians 6:15].

The Apostle is convinced that the faith of Jesus adds something to Judaism — if not his death and resurrection is meaningless. Jesus' earthly ministry would have simply revolved around keeping those 613 laws — no more. That's why Paul mentions his insight into the general Jewish rejection of the covenant Jesus lived and taught. As he reminds the Corinthians, it's a "stumbling block" to many of the Chosen People [1 Corinthians 1:22-26]. Jesus' dying for others isn't a sign of his strength. On the contrary, for them it's a sign of his weakness. Yet in Paul's experience, those willing to become weak by engaging in such self-giving will eventually achieve a life the Sinai participants could never attain by just keeping the Ten Commandments.

By the time John writes his gospel in the mid-90's, the split between Christianity and Judaism has become a huge gulf. The theme song running throughout the fourth gospel is: "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better." The "You" refers to Jews; the "I" to Christians. The evangelist's first miracle — the changing of water into wine [John 2:1-12] — initially demonstrates how the wine of Christianity replaces the water of Judaism.

But now John's Jesus takes it a step further — Jesus proclaims that he's replacing that great Jewish institution — the Jerusalem temple — with himself. Throughout the passage he speaks about "the temple of his body."

John and Paul would have been amazed that the classic double-tablet symbol of Israel's covenant — the Ten Commandments — is so frequently displayed in Christian settings — even in churches. As my rabbi friend stated: "That's not your covenant."

Yet few Christians have any idea in what our covenant with Jesus consists — nor can we click off our responsibilities. Almost never have I seen symbols of that particular agreement.

Best we "hang in there" until Holy Thursday. Our covenant — and the outward symbol of it — will be front and center during that specific celebration. We need lots of publicity for it, because it's anything but free.

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



But Israel's Sabbath was unique. Imitating their God, Israelites consecrated one of every seven days for worship, family celebrations and leisure. The Sabbath affirmed that people are more important than work, that strong relationships with God and others outvalue any accomplishment and that everyone needs time for re-creation, for re-centering themselves in relation to everything else.

Sabbath became an approach to life sacramentalizing the people's time and leisure. The Sabbath enhanced the people's relationship with God and also intensified their shared identity. The attitude of Sabbath honed Israel's appreciation of the sacredness that surrounded them and highlighted places and practices that sharpened their awareness of the presence of God and the meaning of their life.

While the God of Israel could appear anywhere, the temple functioned as a focal point for prayer and other expressions of the peoples' relationship with God. It was a holy place. The day Jesus entered the temple, he observed not faith, but sacrilege. This place of worship — the religious center for all God's people, looked like a bazaar — one in which distinctions between male and female, clergy and laity, wealthy and poor were on display and reinforced.

Rather than being an inducement to prayer, sacrifice had become a business, supporting the money changers and merchants who made fortunes by selling supposed access to God. Operating as the opposite of what it was intended to be, the temple could impede people's experience of a merciful, loving God. In Jesus' eyes, the temple had become a blasphemy, the anti-reign of God.

After evicting the religious retailers, Jesus made the famous statement: "Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up again". John explains that "this temple" referred to Jesus himself — not an architectural wonder [John 2:13-25]. As in his conversation with a woman at a well, that phrase taught that God's presence cannot be captured in structures — be they buildings, tabernacles or even particular practices. We discover God's presence like Moses did — he experienced a mystery that called him to an impossible vocation, a vocation that came to fruition through the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus claimed that he definitively replaced the temple and sacrifice. He sacramentalized the presence of God through his loving relationships and all that flowed from them.

When we say that God is love, we assert that God's presence is mediated in relationships. Institutions may facilitate our awareness of God's presence, but we encounter God in prayer and in the love among us that makes God's own love palpable in our world.

When we say that we are Christians, we claim with St. Paul that we believe that God's greatest self-revelation came to us in Christ whose cross revealed that the foolish vulnerability of divine love expresses the greatest power in creation. The power of divine love is neither controlling nor coercive. God's love attracts and woos us [1 Corinthians 1:22-26].

Jesus' vehemence in the temple sprang from the fact that people had distorted their faith and desecrated God's house. They offered a counterfeit relationship with God based on sacrifice over love. If the desecrators of the temple had been asked what their religion was, one honest answer would have been "profit," and another would have been "power." The most cynical and honest might have said: "none."

Contemplating Jesus' fury in the temple calls us to take account of ourselves. What religion do we proclaim in our worship and our daily actions? Do we take advantage of holy times for re-creation that can permeate our week or have our Sabbaths slipped away, taking second or third place to work, profit, sports or any other activity that distracts us from taking the time to create ever-deeper relationships with God and neighbor?

This third week of Lent calls us to reevaluate our religious identity. If we ask not what we call our denomination, but what our behavior reveals about our real beliefs, what's the honest answer? How do we want to answer?

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



The cleansing in the temple in the three other Gospels takes place rather close to Jesus' arrest and condemnation to death. In John, it takes place in the second chapter right after the changing of the water into wine. The very and absolute mission for Jesus is, by His life, death and resurrection to re-identify God as the saving-loving God, and us as the very created-people of God. He has changed water, a symbol of chaos, into wine, the symbol of life. Jesus moves, in this second chapter, to His mission of re-creating God's loved family, nation, people.

John's Gospel has some echoes of the Book of Genesis. Both begin with the words: "In the beginning." God is seen driving Adam and Eve out of the holy garden. Their behavior was a sacrilege to the holiness of God and God's design. There was a misuse of the sacred and punishment was the divine response.

Corresponding to this, we hear Jesus purifying the holy place of God's presence [John 2:13-25]. There were the sacrifices of purification appropriate for the salvific relationship between the Jews and God. The "Divine Economy" was replaced by human commerce, and the ritual was becoming adulterated by the monetary exchanges. Jesus is seen, not so much as angry, as consumed with the holiness of God in this holy temple.

This event becomes a backdrop for the revelation that John threads through his Gospel — that Jesus is the solution to the question which faced the Jewish community after the Roman army destroyed the rebuilt-temple that took forty-six years to restore. The question for them was what will be our holy place now and who are we if we do not have a place for the presence of God? Here John begins to present Jesus as the fullness of the answer. Holiness resides in the presence of God in Jesus as the Temple.

Back in the 60's, Transactional Analysis was popular, and books by the names of *Games People Play* and *What Do You Say after You Say Hello* arranged human relationships according to specific patterns. People acted differently according to their "scripts." One such pattern or "game" is "ritual." It was seen as a "Defensive Time-Structure." Games are what we do between and among ourselves so we don't have to interact intimately. "Ritual" is a certain doing this action and that behavior together while making sure we remain distinct and separate. Family gatherings, community gatherings, even meetings between two people can celebrate ritually, but not relationally. God invites us to a relationship of intimacy, but because we are not so sure how to receive that relationship, we can default to heart-absent execution. Rituals are important for relationships, but the relationship has to be central. The relationship can express itself through rituals, but the God-initiated relationship is the "why" and the rituals can be the "how."

Jesus came into the temple not so much in anger, but saying: "The game is over." No more "scripty" behavior, that is, no more performing just for the sake of doing something. The Ten Commandments themselves can become ritualistic. They were offered as ways for the people of Israel to live in "response" rather than "reaction." We are invited during this "joyful season of Lent" to celebrate the rituals of fasting, praying, works of charity, liturgy and other devotions, not as games the people of God play, but as relational responses to the God who has called all of us out of slavery.

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

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.



O, SWEET JESUS:

If you have a picture in your head of “Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild”, then John’s Gospel ought to make you get rid of it quickly. If you think of Jesus as some sort of namby-pamby figure, then I suggest you think again. Where this widespread idea comes from, I do not know, but it certainly is not in accord with what the scriptures tell us about Jesus. It is most likely a 19th Century invention and probably comes from the sort of edifying pictures that the Victorians thought were appropriate to childhood nurseries in middle class households.

But this kind of image of a sweet and saccharine Jesus is really very subversive and does true religion no good whatever. What it does is turn our Divine Savior into a weak-minded do-gooder. It strips him of his divinity and turns him into a kind of inoffensive romantic individual with a nice sideline in miracles.

This is not Jesus; this is not the Christ of the Gospels; this is not the Savior who died for us on Calvary. And this is certainly not the Christ who drove the money changers out of the Temple [John 2:13-25].

Catholic doctrine has from the earliest times taught us that Jesus Christ is true God and true man. And if he is true man, then he is a full person with all the emotions and all the moods and all the feelings that constitute a real and authentic human being. So, we should immediately put out of our heads the meek and mild individual of the holy pictures in the nursery. We need to recall what the disciples recalled about this incident years later — “zeal for your house will consume me.” To be consumed with zeal implies someone who is firing on all cylinders. It implies someone who puts every ounce of energy into their emotions and desires.



As always, we can learn from Our Lord. And the lesson today surely is that we should not be afraid of our emotions, and that we should feel free to give them appropriate expression.

One emotion most people are afraid of is anger. We don’t like to be in the company of angry people, and we like it even less when we ourselves are overwhelmed by what we perceive as the most destructive of the emotions. What we see today in John’s Gospel is anger appropriately and justifiably expressed by Jesus.

The scene described by John misses out on some important background information that might help us to understand the reason for Jesus’ anger. Because of the rules for ritual purity, the people could only make their offering to the Temple in Jewish currency — and not in the money in ordinary circulation. Hence the need for moneychangers who, of course, charged a hefty commission. And, no doubt, licenses to offer money changing in the Temple precincts cost a pretty penny which was payable, of course, to the Temple authorities. Jesus was right; his Father’s house had been turned into a den of thieves. And anger was the appropriate response.

The key to Jesus’ anger is to be found in the Ten Commandments: “I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me.” This is the first and most important of the Ten Commandments. It forbids belief in false Gods — or the worship of idols. Now in those days this was understood in a very literal manner, and it became institutionalized in the sacrifices offered in the Temple.

But Jesus is not content with mere outward conformity to the Law of God — what he wants is interior obedience — obedience of the heart. These merchants are clearly serving not God, but themselves. Their aim is not true worship of the unseen God, but the accumulation of money. And worse of all, this involves the exploitation of the poor and devout.

much common ground in our public dialogues. The dialogue that’s needed isn’t easily come by — certainly we haven’t come by it yet. Many groups are trying for it, but without much success. Generally what happens is that the even most-well intended dialogue quickly degenerates into an attempt to by each side to score its own ideological points rather than in genuinely trying to understand each other. Where does that leave us?

The real answer, I believe, lies in an understanding of how the cross and death of Jesus brings about reconciliation. The author of the Letter to the Church at Ephesus tells us that Jesus broke down the barrier of hostility that existed between communities by creating one person where formerly there had been two — and he did it this “by reconciling both sides in one body through his cross, which put that enmity to death” [Ephesians 2:16].

How does the cross of Christ put enmity to death? Not through some kind of magic. Jesus didn’t break down the divisions between us by mystically paying off some debt for our sins through his suffering — as if God needed to be appeased by blood to forgive us and open the gates of heaven. That image is simply the metaphor behind our icons and language about being washed clean of sin and saved by the blood of Christ. What happened in the cross and death of Jesus is something that asks for our imitation — not simply our admiration. What happened in the cross and death of Jesus is an example for us to imitate. What are we to imitate?

What Jesus did in his passion and death was to transform bitterness and division rather than to retransmit them and give them back in kind. In the love which he showed in his passion and death Jesus did this — He took in hatred, held it inside himself, transformed it, and gave back love. He took in bitterness, held it, transformed it, and gave back graciousness. He took in curses, held them, transformed them, and gave back blessing. He took in paranoia, held it, transformed it, and gave back big-heartedness. He took in murder, held it, transformed it, and gave back forgiveness. And he took in enmity, bitter division, held it, transformed it, and through that revealed to us the deep secret for forming community — namely, we need to take away the hatred that divides us by absorbing and holding it within ourselves and thereby transforming it. Like a water purifier which holds within itself the toxins and the poisons and gives back only pure water, we must hold within ourselves the toxins that poison community and give back only graciousness and openness to everyone. That’s the only key to overcome division.

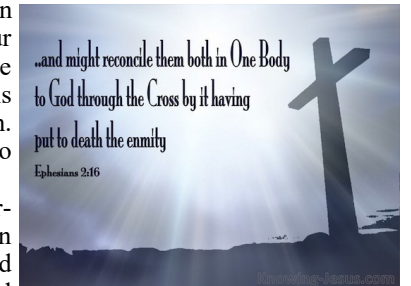
We live in bitterly divisive times, paralyzed in terms of meeting amicably on virtually every sensitive issue of politics, economics, morality, and religion. That stalemate will remain until one by one, we each transform rather than enflame and retransmit the hatred that divides us.

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

REEVALUATING OUR RELIGIOUS IDENTITY:

When you ask someone what their religion is, the chance that they will say “none” has increased dramatically in the past few decades. Religiosity used to be a defining characteristic of U.S. culture. Protestants were known for the word and avoiding statues; Catholics attended Sunday Mass and abstained from meat on Fridays; Jewish people were notable for their faithful observance of the Sabbath.

Today, Exodus recounts God’s self-description: “I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt” [Exodus 20:1-17]. Here God reminds the Israelites — and us — that God gets involved in human history by calling on people like Moses to carry out divine plans. Then we hear God’s commandments, which were not really very extraordinary; most mirrored the ethics of civilizations of their time: No society condoned lying, stealing or abandoning the elderly.



violation of a vow made to God and to a husband and/or a wife.

Everybody wants religion to be easy. The Jews wanted signs so they would not have to take steps of faith. Many people today travel throughout the world looking for miracles to be the basis of their faith. The gentiles and the Greek philosophers wanted neat theories on who God is and who Jesus is. Many people today get caught up in rationalizing their way out of faith and morality. In his letter to the Church at Corinth, Paul writes: “we offer something that is not based on rationalization, nor on wonders. We preach Christ crucified” [1 Corinthians 1:22-26]. The crucifix both reminds us of Christ’s sacrifice and the call to join Him in sacrificing ourselves for Him and for His father’s kingdom. This is not easy. This is, though, the way of the Lord.

The Ten Commandments call us to a way of life that is out of tune with much of society. Honesty, respect for parents, fidelity, respect for property, putting God before all else, giving Him a day a week, are all ways that we are distinct from others. To be distinct, to be separate for the Lord, is what we mean when we say: “We are called to be holy.” We live these commandments so that ultimately, we might not be wrapped up in ourselves. We live these commandments in response to God’s preference of us as his chosen people.

The Ten Commandments are a covenant made by Moses with God for us — the People of God. They should not be reduce to a minimum. They should be embraced as our way of responding to the covenant to be God’s people. —taken from the writings of Monsignor Joseph Pellegrini, which appear on the internet

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].

OVERCOMING THE DIVISIONS THAT DIVIDE US:

We live in a world of deep divisions. Everywhere we see polarization — people bitterly divided from each other by ideology, politics, economic theory, moral beliefs, and theology. We tend to use oversimplistic categories within which to understand these divisions — the left and the right opposing each other, liberals and conservatives at odds, pro-life vying with pro-choice.

Virtually every social and moral issue is a war-zone — the status of women, climate change, gender roles, sexuality, marriage and family as institutions, the role of government, how the LGBTQ community is to be understood, among other issues. And our churches aren’t exempt; too often we cannot agree on anything. Civility has disappeared from public discourse even within our churches where there is now as much division and hostility within each denomination as there is between them. More and more, we cannot discuss openly any sensitive matter — even within our own families. Instead we discuss politics, religion, and values only within our own ideological circles; and there, rather than challenging each other, we mostly end up feeding each other in our biases and indignations thus becoming even more intolerant, bitter, and judgmental.

Scripture calls this enmity and hatred — and indeed that’s its proper name. We are becoming hate-filled people who both fuel and justify our hatred on religious and moral grounds. We need only to watch the news on any night to see this. How’s this to be overcome?

At the more macro level in politics and religion, it’s hard to see how these bitter divides will ever be bridged — especially when so much of our public discourse is feeding and widening the division. What’s needed is nothing short of religious conversion — a religious change of heart — and that’s contingent on the individual. The collective heart will change only when individual hearts first do. We help save the sanity of the world by first safeguarding our own sanity, but that’s no easy task.

It’s not as simple as everyone simply agreeing to think nicer thoughts. Nor, it seems, will we find

This is what makes Jesus angry, and what leads him to clear them from the Temple. But the direct consequence of the Cleansing of the Temple was A Christ’s arrest and death on the Cross. His remarks about destroying the Temple, and it being raised up in three days, makes it very clear that Jesus is fully aware of the consequences.

It was this intervention into what they regarded as their territory that upset the Temple authorities. From that moment they were determined to do away with this “usurper”. It was not Jesus’ anger that was inappropriate; rather, it was the anger of the Temple authorities that was totally out of place. These people were supposed to be guarding the faith of Israel against the worship of false gods — and yet they end up killing the very Son of God. If this is not the greatest irony of all time then I don’t know what is!

Just going back to our own anger and how to deal with it; as we have said anger or any other emotion can never be sinful in itself. It is the thoughts and actions that flow from our emotions that can be destructive and therefore sinful. If we experience anger or jealousy or any other strong and potentially destructive emotion we need to find appropriate ways to express it without falling into sin. We need to release the emotion without making things worse and this is not easily done. Often when we experience strong emotions, our judgement becomes clouded, and we are then unable to distinguish rights from wrongs.

The key to all of this is not what we do when we are angry, but what we do when we are calm. That is not what we do in those few moments when we are filled with strong emotions, but what we do all the rest of the time when we are in a normal and steady frame of mind. If we normally take the trouble to see the other person’s point of view, if over a long period we try to develop an inclination towards tranquility, if we consistently try to follow the teachings of the Beatitudes in our ordinary lives, then when we do fly off the handle our anger will be short lived and we will be unlikely to do anything rash.

As John says in the concluding lines of this story — “he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.” From this we understand that Jesus knows all there is to know about human nature. Perhaps it is us who still have a lot to learn.

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

GREAT EXPECTATIONS:

Jesus’ reaction to sellers and money-changers is so dramatic that it cannot escape attention [John 2:13-25]. Every business-minded person would certainly seek a place where sales and good patronage of products would yield maximum profit. It was therefore logical that sellers of pigeons and oxen and money-changers would find the Temple an appropriate place to do business — particularly on a day of celebration.

However, their action incurred the wrath of Jesus. Jesus was not particularly opposed to them selling and making a profit. Jesus’ reaction was aimed at the motive to capitalize on and exploit the moment to their advantage. The choice of the Temple to sell goods and to transact business in money changing devalued the place of worship showed irreverence and disrespect to a holy place, and also made a mockery of the intended purpose of the celebration.

How often does your behavior, rooted in misplaced and misguided intentions, provoke an angry reaction — be it subtle or dramatic in your community — because it demeaned, devalued, and showed disrespect to others? How did you react when your behavior was met with a strong reaction? Did the anger and the strong reaction of others to your behavior reveal to you something about your inner self that is manifesting in actions that others find devaluing and disrespecting them? Have you delved into your inner self to search for the root cause of that behavior? Or have you only sought to point fingers at others?

Perhaps this season of Lent invites us — in an atmosphere of silence and reflection — to ponder our own imperfections, actions and inactions, that seem out of place and that severely and negatively impact others. Let us allow this season of Grace to usher us into deep prayer and lead us into that sacred space where we meet God and listen to God’s voice so that we shall find the strength and the courage to face our true selves, feel remorse, and begin anew — begin a process of transformation that will bring a change in our attitude and behavior. In so doing, the Grace of God will manifest itself in us and help us to transform our lives and not permit agitations of our hearts to manifest themselves in behaviors that would only warrant a dramatic, humiliating, and embarrassing response from others.

—Brother Bertrand Nee Wayoe, C.S.C.

THE ANGER THAT IS GOOD:

Aristotle has written: “It is easy to become angry. Anyone can do it. But to become angry at the right moment, to the right degree, for the right purpose, in the right manner, that is difficult. Only the wise person can accomplish it.” What is implied in Aristotle’s words is the realization that there are different kinds of anger. There is a destructive anger, which is unfocused, irrational and wasteful. But there is also a constructive anger that is precise, appropriate and useful. Aristotle believed that constructive anger is valuable. So did Jesus.

In John’s gospel, we see Jesus using constructive anger to motivate himself in the dramatic action in the temple [John 2:13-25]. Now we are not completely sure what Jesus was angry at. He was not angry at the temple itself — for as a good Jew, the temple was the center of his religious life, and he prayed in the temple often. He could not be angry at the fact that people were selling animals, because animals were required by Jewish law for sacrifice. Perhaps he was angry at where the animals were being sold or how they were being sold. Perhaps they were sold in an unfair way that discriminated against the poor. Whatever the reason was, it is clear that Jesus perceived in the action of selling some injustice, and his response to that injustice was anger. Anger motivated Jesus to act against what he believed was wrong.

The example of Jesus reminds us that, as children of God, we are required to do more than pray quietly and promote a peaceful inner disposition. We are also required to act on behalf of what is right, to oppose every evil, oppression, and discrimination. We do these things because we believe that they are contrary to God’s kingdom. In this action against evil, there is a kind of anger that is very useful. Constructive anger is a virtue when it is exercised on behalf of the kingdom. Now this can surprise us, because some of us were taught that anger is a sin. But only destructive anger is sinful. Constructive anger is a positive and valuable part of human life.

Look at your own life over the past year. If you cannot think of any time when you were angry, that is not necessarily a good thing. Never being angry does not make us holy; in fact, it might indicate that we are indifferent — indifferent to the injustice and evils that are a part of our world. If, on the other hand, you look over the past year and realize that you are always angry, that is not a good thing either. When we suddenly burst into rage at the slightest comment, when we explode without any reason, when we discover that we are living constantly with an internal tension, that is an indication that there are unresolved issues in our life that need to be faced. That is a sign that destructive anger controls us. And destructive anger needs to be eliminated.

But contrary to never being angry or always being angry, constructive anger is healthy. It helps us identify what is wrong, and it motivates us to work against it. If you recognize in your life a growing tendency toward self-indulgence and self-centeredness, constructive anger can motivate you to act, to turn things around. If you realize that you are experiencing abuse or manipulation in a relationship, constructive anger can force you to demand a change or to abandon the relationship altogether. If you recognize that the policies of your job, of your church, or of our society discriminate against the poor or oppress the weak, constructive anger can cause you to speak out, to organize, to work for doing what is right.

There is no doubt that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. But he is also the Lord of Justice. Jesus did not sit meekly by when he saw evil being imposed on others. Jesus was not afraid of constructive anger. He used it to build the kingdom. So should we.

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

THINK ABOUT THIS:

If we’re honest, culture forms us much more than the gospel. It seems we have kept the basic storyline of human history in place rather than allow the gospel to reframe and redirect the story. —Richard Rohr

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:**

Today we look at the Covenant of the Ten Commandments. Now, it is rather natural — certainly human — for us to want to do everything as easily as possible. This includes the very actions we were created for — to know, love and serve the Lord. We tend to cheapen our following of God. We tend to cheapen the foundation law of God’s covenant with us — the Ten Commandments. Today I would like to offer a bit deeper look at a few of the commandments.

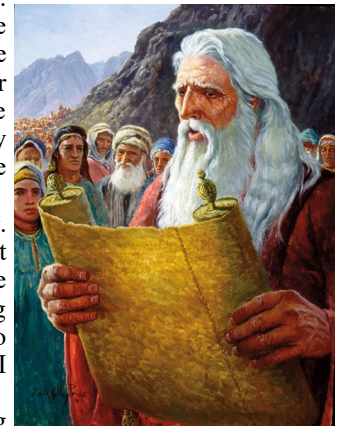
The first commandment tells us not to practice idolatry. We cheapen the first commandment into avoiding offering incense to a statue in our homes. But the commandment is much more than this. It is a commandment about not putting anything before God. The materialist is an idol worshiper. His god is his money — his stuff. A person caught up in promiscuity is an idol worshiper — his god is his body. The selfish narcissistic individual is an idol worshiper — his god is himself. The Jewish Temple priests of John’s Gospel were more concerned with the money they were making in the Temple than worshiping God in the Temple. Jesus accused them of making money their god, violating the first commandment. He threw them out of the Temple [John 2:13-25].

Look at the third commandment. We talk about keeping holy the Sabbath Day and note the obligation we have to celebrate the Lord’s Supper each and every weekend. But the question arises, is the focus of our church attendance on the Eucharist, or is it on “going to Mass”. I hope that for most of us, the obligation to attend Mass and receive the sacraments is secondary to our deep need to experience the Real Presence of the Lord in His Word, at the Last Supper, on the Cross, and in the Eucharist. And today, how many people see “going to Church” as even being important, let alone see it as the presence of Jesus.

Consider the fourth commandment — Honor your father and mother. We tend to push this commandment down the throats of our children, but we often don’t realize that the commandment does not have a particular age limit on the parents who are to be honored. When I go into the nursing homes and see so many elderly people who have no one there, but who do have children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren somewhere else, I have to wonder what those people think of the fourth commandment.

In recent years, there has been sad discussions on euthanasia, saying that people have a right to demand their own death when they are sick. Aside from the question of violating the fifth commandment — You shall not kill — I find horrible immorality in the fact that many of the elderly would be pressured to allow their lives to end so their savings would not be used up on medical care. Believe me, this is not far-fetched. One time I was asked to speak to a woman in a local hospital about having a tracheotomy performed so she could survive pneumonia. Her daughter had called me up and asked me to speak to her Mom. I went to the hospital and reasoned with her — the doctors feel confident that you will live and that the tube will be able to be removed once you are cured. Then, the daughter came in. She was furious with me. She told me that I had no idea how much money her mother was spending on her health, and that she hoped I’d tell her to just leave well enough alone. She wanted her mother to pass away so that Mom’s money would be available for other members of the family. You might want to consider this true story the next time you feel that euthanasia should be allowed. Obviously, the daughter didn’t think she was violating the fifth commandment by trying to kill her mother by convincing her not to have the procedure. I’m also sure that the daughter would claim that throughout her life she followed the fourth commandment and the fifth commandment. I am not so sure that she had a clue of what those commandments demand.

Consider the sixth commandment — you shall not commit adultery. Adultery is not just about sex — it is about putting others and things before the one we are committed to in life. Essentially it is a



THE RECOVERY OF SACRED THINGS:

“When is the last time you were alone — really alone — and how did it feel?” I asked a room full of teenagers. They discussed the answer amongst themselves. I crouched down into a conversation between a few boys and repeated the question. “I don’t actually know,” one of them said. “I can’t remember.” Teenagers reportedly fill nine hours a day with various forms of media. They’re not alone in their priorities. *Neflix* released their 2023 viewing statistics, and 109 million members across 190 countries stream 140 million hours a day.

For me personally, the trouble lies with scrolling through the popular photo app: *Instagram*. Even there — where content provides no more than a quick visual hit — users average 24 to 32 minutes a day, depending on their age demographic. Are we captured in awe and wonder by beauty and good story telling? Or are we addicted to the physiological high that media consumption gives? The story is much more complex, of course. But recent media studies and statistics reveal our priorities — allocating a large amount of time to passive entertainment through our screens.

In many ways, the Scripture Readings for this 3rd Week in Lent are all about priorities. The Book of Exodus talks about Moses receiving the Ten Commandments [Exodus 20:1-17]. Unlike most catechism quizzes and courthouse statues, Moses didn’t receive these entirely as a nice, neat list. God adds quite a bit of commentary — especially when it comes to discussing the relationship that the Israelites have with him. God reminds the Israelites of their deliverance from Egypt, warns them about the construction of idols, appeals to the Genesis narrative of creation, gives very specific details for the keeping of the Sabbath, and promises “mercy to the thousandth generation on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.” It is clear that — more than a specific list of do’s and don’ts — God is first concerned with keeping sacred things sacred.

This emphasis is driven home in John’s Gospel [2:13-25]. The temple in Jerusalem provided the chance to turn a profit by selling sacrificial animals to pilgrims. The local merchants took advantage of it — setting up shop in the temple itself. Jesus immediately recognizes the misplaced priorities. Rather than honoring the sacredness of the temple as an opportunity to better one’s relationship with God, it had become an opportunity to better their financial situation.

As Catholic Christians, we recognize that the present moment is an opportunity for an encounter with God. As St. Thérèse of Lisieux put it: “everything is grace.” In stewardship spirituality, we see our daily moments and personal talents as gifts from God. We can hoard them selfishly, or we can surrender them back to God, allowing His grace to be alive in us.

There’s nothing wrong with time spent on media. Artistic TV and film can draw us into sacred truths about the human experience. Beautiful images or compelling stories can inspire us to travel some place new, pick up a different hobby, or cook a meal we never thought of before. These elements, however, have something in common — they draw us out of ourselves. Obsessive consumption of anything does the opposite — it pulls us inward.

If we’re not looking up and out, we might miss something. In Paul’s letter to the Church at Corinth, he emphasizes that the movement of God is unexpected — “Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified” [1 Corinthians 1:22-26]. This Lenten season, we consider our own spiritual habits. Have we become desensitized to the sacred? Do we treat the passion and death of Jesus as one more re-run in our “watch list”? Does it retain the awe and wonder it once had?

When the moneychangers had been scattered, once the braying alarm of the loosened cattle had settled down, we can imagine the temple might have been oddly silent. The next visitors had the benefit of a sacred place restored. It was likely much easier to remember the first commandment — that God is God.

By virtue of our baptism, our lives are sacred things. You, too, are a sacred place. Your time, your interactions, your silent moments — these are all sacred opportunities. So this week, put down the screen. Turn off the streaming platform. Put your phone on airplane mode the hour or two before bed, and don’t switch it back immediately in the morning. Replace that time with a little silence. Open your Bible to the Scriptures. Take a walk. Attend a weekday Mass and linger in prayer afterwards. Remember the gift of wonder. Let yourself be surprised by the sacred.

—taken from the writings of Anna Carter, which appears on the internet.

EMBRACING THE CROSS:

In His letter to the Church at Corinth, Paul presents the essence of his preaching — “We proclaim Christ crucified” [1 Corinthians 1:22-26]. After his previous attempt to use a clever argument with the Athenians — about their unknown god [see Acts 17:23] — had produced only ridicule, the Apostle resolved to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. This approach, however, had its own challenges. Paul’s Jewish audience — with a long tradition of connecting God’s presence with marvelous signs, as in the Exodus event — was looking for some kind of evidence to support Paul’s preaching on the crucified Christ. His Gentile audience, on the other hand, expected rational philosophical arguments to support truth claims and ethical demands. As Paul put it, his message was “a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.” Paul went on to insist that for believers, the rejected and despised Christ is truly in “the power of God and the wisdom of God.” This means that “the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.” God’s ways are not our ways.

The fundamental Christian message has a paradoxical character. The death of Jesus on the cross — which appears to spell defeat for his mission — is actually a victory over the dark forces — including death itself. Crucifixion, which the Romans used to control conquered people, became the instrument of salvation and liberation for all human beings. The cross — so widely displayed and deeply revered by Christian people — symbolizes the essential truth of the gospel which challenges worldly wisdom and naïve religious assumptions. God is not a harsh judge to be feared, but a compassionate Father who lavishes unconditional love on all people. The God who did not intervene to save Jesus from the cross does not intervene in human affairs, but does offer us the strength to bear the crosses of life. Jesus, who exemplified self-sacrificing love throughout his whole life, was not a utopian dreamer, but was the wise teacher who guides us on the path to full human development and fruitful engagement with the world. To embrace the cross is to reject the use of coercive power, while committing ourselves to a life of self-sacrificing love, which attends to our neighbors in need. No one completely embraces the cross. All of us can do a better job of appropriating Paul’s message.

A wife who uses subtle coercion to dominate her husband could start to treat him with greater love and respect. A father who still exercises too much influence over his married daughter could let go and give her space to live her own life. A mother who is angry at God because her prayers for her wayward daughter have gone unanswered could come to trust that God loves her daughter even more than she does. A community organizer who sometimes allows his desire for acclaim to get in the way of his work could purify his motives and serve the marginalized with greater self-giving love.

In what concrete way can you embrace the cross more fully?

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



SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — MARCH 16th:

Our Savior Lutheran Church — across the street from the Chapel — 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 unloading the trailers and setting up items for distribution and preparing for the food pantry to open. It serves around 150 clients each time. The food pantry serves clients 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.

DON'T EVERY SETTLE:

I could feel it. It was one of those moments when you can actually feel the internal struggle as it's happening. I knew it was wrong. I knew it was a sin. But still, those tempting little thoughts wouldn't leave me alone — just this once; it's not a big deal; I can always go to confession tomorrow...

But then one question disrupted the whole thing — is this really what you want?

I wasn't expecting it, but as soon as that question came to mind, I couldn't ignore it. Is this really what you want? I wanted to insist that: "yes, of course it is!" But I knew that wasn't true. I silenced the battle in my mind, and asked myself one simple question: What is it that I really want?

The question that I asked was a simple one — but also a dangerous one. When I allow myself to know and feel the deepest desires of my heart, I also have to acknowledge my fear that they won't be fulfilled — that I'll be left longing for them forever. So, instead of letting myself want those things, I settle.

And all around me I see my brothers and sisters doing the same. We want to be fully known and loved, but we settle for seeking compliments, or looking sexy. We want to live courageously, but we settle for what's easy. We want to love, but we settle for tolerance.

Deciding to want something controllable and predictable — instead of what we truly long for — requires very little risk, so I try to trick my heart into being satisfied with this consolation prize. But, if I'm being honest, my heart desires not just what's great, but the greatest — God Himself. And yours does too.

What do you really want? Have you ever really thought about it? What do you really want when you give in to that sin over and over again? What do you really want when you change yourself to make others happy? What do you really want when you're alone in silence?

A couple of years ago, Pope Francis tweeted this: "Dear young people, do not bury your talents — the gifts that God has given you! Do not be afraid to dream of great things!"

When I sit alone before the Blessed Sacrament, I know what I want — I want to belong to Him. How could I be willing to settle for less? Adoration is the one place where my heart can dream fearlessly because I am safe with my Savior, whose dreams for me are endless. Sitting in the presence of my Lord, how could I do anything less than dream of infinite love?

When you sit alone with God, don't hesitate to tell Him your dreams. It's true that our plans do not always match God's plans, but I can guarantee you one thing — God will never ask you to dream of less; He will only ever ask you to dream of more.

It's not always easy to talk to God about my dreams and desires. When I'm tempted to stop dreaming and settle for something easy — something I can control — I often think of this verse from Scripture: "If I say: 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,' there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in; I cannot" [Jeremiah 20:9].

I was not made to settle. I was made to desire God Himself. I can try to bury that desire and settle for something easier, but I know this will never fulfil me. Whether it's school, relationships, or our spiritual lives, we all experience the temptation not to try because trying means to risk failing, being rejected, or being disappointed. But that desire for greatness — that desire to dream of more — is a gift from God, and He is longing to fulfill it. He is longing for us to come to Him, to dream with Him, so that He can welcome us into the plan of His love.

What areas of your life leave you disappointed? What do you settle for? What dreams are you afraid to bring to God? Bring them to Him, confident in His love for you. Or, as St. Catherine of Sienna put it: "Start being brave about everything." —taken from the writings of Sophia Swinford, a College Student.

**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].**

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

Monday:	2 Kings 5:1-15, Luke 4:24-30
Tuesday:	Daniel 3:25-43, Matthew 18:21-35
Wednesday:	Deuteronomy 4:1-9, Matthew 5:17-19
Thursday:	Jeremiah 7:23-28, Luke 11:14-23
Friday:	Hosea 14:2-10, Mark 12:28-34
Saturday:	Hosea 6:1-6, Luke 18:9-14
4th Week in Lent:	2 Chronicles 36:14-23, Ephesians 2:4-10, John 3:14-21

THERE'S A WIDENESS:

"Two wrongs don't make a right!" I can still hear the taunting tones of my mother, who would hurl this phrase at me. Indeed, "to understand the human thirst for revenge," as a witty researcher noted, "it is only necessary to have had a sibling." Forgiveness is hard; we are wired to distrust those who hurt us, to strike back. Nursing a grudge, we retreat into righteous indignation; withholding our forgiveness, we seek to reclaim power in the relationship.

But whether uttered as a taunt or not, the aphorism holds: "getting even doesn't contribute to the sum of good in the world." As Father Jacques Philippe, a French priest and spiritual director, wrote: "When we refuse to forgive someone for harm done to us, we are increasing the quantity of evil in the world, which has quite enough as it is. Let us not join in the propagation of evil." As the psalmist reminds us: "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us" [Psalm 103:11-12].

We are called to forgive, wholeheartedly, as God does. There can be no better example of this than story of the prodigal son [see Luke 15]. The wronged father could have turned his back on his returning child; instead, absorbing the hurt he has suffered, he opens his arms to embrace the wayward boy with a love that can only be called extravagant. So it is with God, whose loving forgiveness of all his prodigal children — including you and me — extends as high as the highest height and ranges as wide as the widest width. If God can offer us such vast mercy, so much more are we called to offer a broad and expansive forgiveness to those who have hurt us.

—taken from the writings of Betsy Cahill which appear on the internet.