

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus ~**

O most holy Heart of Jesus,  
fountain of every blessing,  
I adore you,  
I love you,  
and with a lively sorrow for my sins.  
I offer you this poor heart of mine.

Make me humble,  
patient,  
pure,  
and wholly obedient  
to your will.

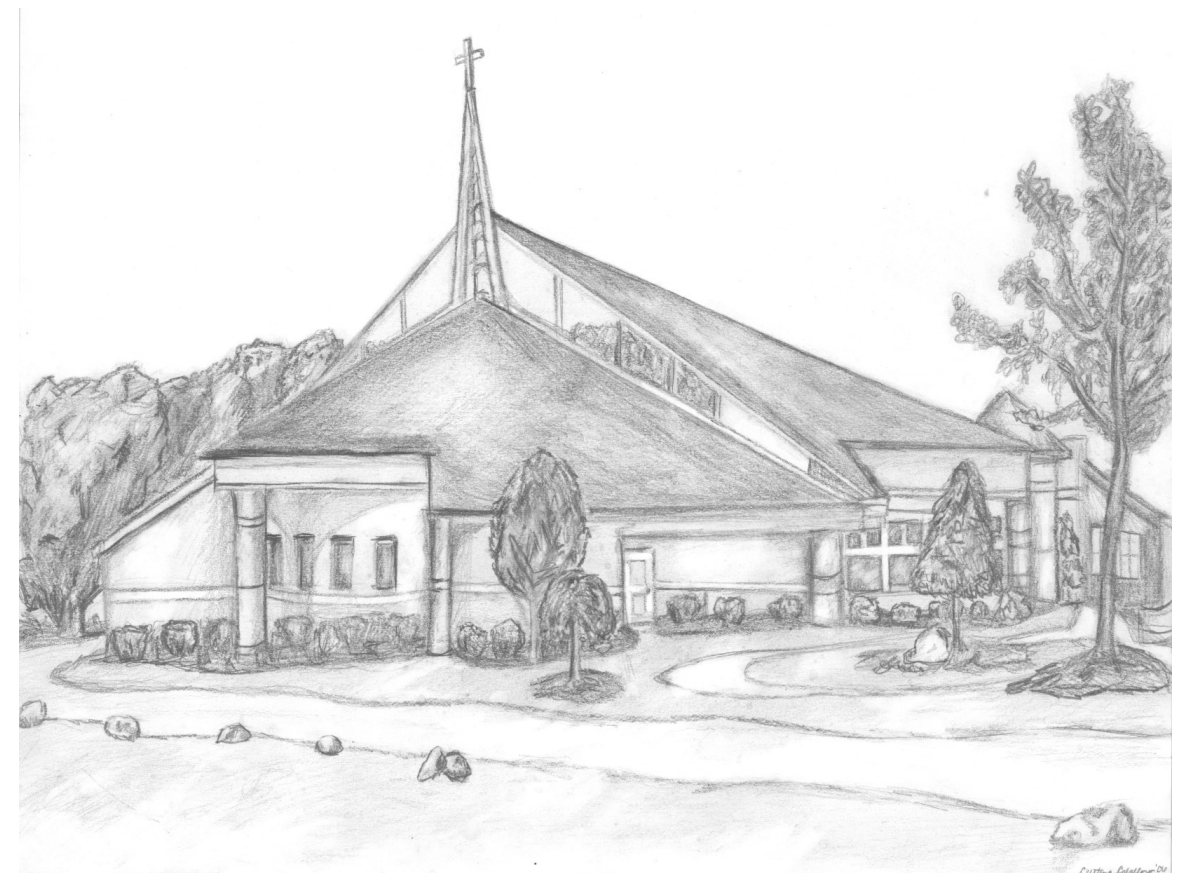
Grant, good Jesus,  
that I may live in you  
and for you.  
Protect me  
in the midst of danger;  
comfort me in my afflictions;  
give me health of body,  
assistance in my temporal needs,  
your blessings on all that I do,  
and the grace of a holy death.

Within your heart,  
I place my every care.  
In every need  
let me come to you  
with humble trust saying,  
Heart of Jesus,  
help me to be one with you.  
Amen.

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

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

# 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.*

**PLAY BALL!**

The tickets for Friday’s Captains game have arrived. Please bring payment when you pick up the tickets. **We do have a few extra tickets for the game and picnic. Cost is \$35.** Everything is included. The game is on **Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>** against the Fort Wayne Tin Caps. Game time is **7:00 PM** and that’s when our picnic dinner will be served.



**CHAPEL OUTDOOR PICNIC — JULY 14:**

**Put this date aside; mark your calendars! Our Chapel Outdoor Picnic is Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>.** Every year, the Chapel picnic has been a great event for the entire family. The picnic will be held rain or shine from **11:15 AM – 1:30 PM at the Lower School Patio & Dining Hall. Family Mass takes place at 10:00 AM** and the picnic begins right after Mass — what a wonderful way to continue our celebration of community. Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Pulled Chicken, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Ice-cream treats, Cookies, and beverages are provided. So here it comes once again. It will be a great event for the entire family. **Pot Luck (non-perishable) sides & desserts are welcome!** Come and enjoy family and friends. **Swiftly and a face-painter friend will join us, as will the Euclid Beach Rocket Car.** In order to properly prepare for our picnic, we ask that you please **RSVP by July 7<sup>th</sup> to Patty [440-473-3560]** in the chapel office, or simply **sign up on the Picnic Sign-Up Sheet on the easel located in the narthex of the Chapel.**



**FATHER’S DAY BLESSING NEXT WEEKEND:**

Father's Day is next Sunday. In the United States, is a holiday — third Sunday in June — to honor fathers, as well as all those who have shared the gift of fatherhood in our lives.. Credit for originating the holiday is generally given to Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, whose father, a Civil War veteran, raised her and her five siblings after their mother died in childbirth. She is said to have had the idea in 1909 while listening to a sermon on Mother’s Day, which at the time was becoming established as a holiday. Local religious leaders supported the idea, and the first Father’s Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910 — the month of the birthday of Dodd’s father. In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge gave his support to the observance, and in 1966 President Lyndon B. Johnson officially proclaimed it a national holiday. Observance on the third Sunday of June was decreed by law in 1972. Although it was originally largely a religious holiday, Father’s Day has been commercialized with the sending of greeting cards and the giving of gifts. So, bring your Dad, Grandfather, Godfather, or whoever in your life brings you the gift of fatherhood to receive a special blessing next weekend. Or, if you are a father, bring yourself! God bless you all.



**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.



**IMPORTANT TRUTH:**

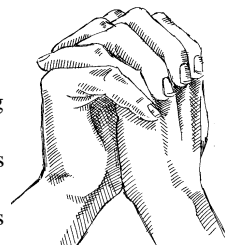
I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me. —Sojourner Truth

**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 seriously 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 is recovering from surgery.
- For Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian [‘09], Rosa [‘12] and Edwin [‘17] Heryak, who is seriously ill.
- 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 Debbie Langer, friend of Cindy Frimel, who was diagnosed with brain cancer.
- For Denise Marzano, who is battling liver cancer.
- For Joseph Michael, father of former Gilmour LS religion teacher, Colleen Michael, who is undergoing treatment for ALS.
- For Sister Colette Livingston, O.S.U., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nada Kucmanic, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Bob Lisowski, father of Father Robert Lisowski, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Jackie and Dale Rusnik, aunt and uncle of Jakub Bennish [‘30], who is undergoing treatment for various medical issues.
- For Crawford Mitchell, 3 year-old grandson of Debbie Moss Batt, who is preparing for a serious heart procedure.
- For Josephine Fernando, who is seriously ill.
- For Sean O’Toole, Gilmour Athletic Director, father of Owen [‘18], Connor [‘20], Kelsey [‘24], and former Gilmour student, Erin, who is recovering from surgery.



**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 [ 6/1/24] ----- \$ 486.00**  
**Total Offerings: Sunday [6/2/24] ----- \$ 167.00**

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For the victims of the landslide in Papua New Guinea, and their families
- 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 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 Bill Reagan, step-father of Lower School Director, Jay Fowler, step-father-in-law of Counseling Director, Meagan Fowler, and step-grandfather of James and Elouise [‘37] Fowler.
- For Barbara Hughes, wife of Thomas Hughes [‘56]
- For Paul Steiner [‘65]
- For Neal Lavelle [‘53], father of David Lavelle [‘89], and brother of Brian Lavelle [‘59]
- For Father Edward O’Connor, C.S.C.
- For Father John Murphy, former Cleveland Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools.
- For Father Larry Olszewski, C.S.C.
- For Sheila Fitzpatrick
- For Christine Kramer, aunt of Gavin Hawk [‘21]
- For Father Tom O’Donnell, pastor emeritus of Holy Name Parish
- For Kelly Tutulo, mother of Jonathan Walker [‘34]
- For John Roddy, son of Frank Roddy, brother of Tim Roddy [‘87], and brother of Gilmour Marketing associate, Mary Roddy Stretar, uncle of Katie [‘29] and Anne [‘30] Stretar, and cousin of Daniel [‘83], Mike [‘85], and Matt [‘86] Roddy.

**SOLITUDE — A PLACE OF CONVERSION:**

In order to understand the meaning of solitude, we must first unmask the ways in which the idea of solitude has been distorted by our world. We say to each other that we need some solitude in our lives. What we really are thinking of, however, is a time and place for ourselves in which we are not bothered by other people, can think our own thoughts, express our own complaints, and do our own thing, whatever it may be. For us, solitude most often means privacy. We have come to the dubious conviction that we all have a right to privacy. Solitude thus becomes like a spiritual property for which we can compete on the free market of spiritual goods.

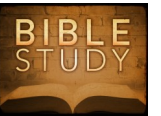
But there is more. We also think of solitude as a station where we can recharge our batteries, or as a corner of the boxing ring where our wounds are oiled, our muscles massaged, and our courage restored by fitting slogans. In short, we think of solitude as a place where we gather new strength to continue the ongoing competition of life.

But that is not the solitude of St. John the Baptist, of St. Anthony or St. Benedict, of Charles de Foucauld or the brothers of the Taizé Community. For them solitude is not a private therapeutic place. Rather, it is the place of conversion — the place where the old self dies and the new self is born, the place where the emergence of the new man and the new woman occurs.

—Henri Nouwen

**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12<sup>th</sup>:**

**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.** Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word.



**Our topic: Getting to know the little-known Disciples of Jesus**

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, June 9: <b>10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, June 10:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Tuesday, June 11: <b>St. Barnabas</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Wednesday, June 12:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Thursday, June 13: <b>St. Anthony of Padua</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Friday, June 14:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Saturday, June 15: <b>11<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b> In Person only
Sunday, June 16: <b>11<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — JUNE 15<sup>th</sup>:**

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. Please join us for a great experience.



**REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:**

Pope Francis has often noted that the first words of God to the human family are the words recorded in the Book of Genesis which occurs in our Scripture Readings for this 10th Week in Ordinary Time [Genesis 3:8-15]. God asks Adam: “Where are you?” That’s a very good question — and it’s probably a question that God is asking each of us today: “Where are you?” Where do we find ourselves today? What is the situation around us? What is our purpose? What is our relationship with others? What is it we are being called to be and to do?

God has provided us with all that we need to fulfill his plan for us. St. Paul, in his second letter to the Church at Corinth, reminds his Corinthian Church the resurrection of Jesus has already given us new life and “our inner self is being renewed day by day” [2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1]. We should never lose sight of this fact; it will keep us forging ahead, overcoming the obstacles of life. It is Christ’s promise that is our “Good News”; it is that gives us hope and courage. Our faith is what allows us to be bold and to live our lives for others without holding back.

The entire life of Jesus was lived in counter-cultural fashion; Jesus was constantly in conflict with religious authority, not because he was not a religious person, but precisely because he was. In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus is being accused of driving out demons because he’s in league with evil — an outrageous accusation, but nonetheless, one which shows the conflict [Mark 3:20-35].

Fear for his life, the relatives of Jesus come to be with him. But Jesus makes it clear that the deepest bond he has with his brothers and sisters is that we are faithful. Jesus is saying that Religious practice has to be all about relationship; it is the relationship that makes us holy — “And looking around at those seated in the circle, Jesus said: ‘Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.’” Real intimacy with Jesus is about communion with him, in fidelity, in following his example. Intimacy happens when our heart becomes more like his, and we are drawn to a fidelity to the Father and the Father’s way.

When Mary agreed to become the mother of Jesus, she probably didn’t know how hard her life would be. The same is true with all of us; everyone is included in this journey. That’s why Jesus reminds us that all people who try to do the will of God are his family, not just his blood relatives. It speaks to Jesus’ embrace of a universal vision of humanity that was quite at odds with the village society he grew up in. But in doing so, Jesus seems to disrespect his actual mother and relatives.

Have you ever wondered how Jesus’ words felt to Mary because she surely knew that she would suffer repercussions from them. Probably many people of Mary’s time were wondering if Mary raised a “crazy man” who wandered around telling people what to do, not having a job or raising a family. On the other hand, think about how Mary most certainly played an important role in shaping Jesus’ world view because that’s what mothers do. But too often Christians fail to give Mary the credit she deserves for shaping Jesus.

Mary is a strong woman of faith. She is far different from the syrupy, saccharine images of Mary that we were nurtured on. In the paintings of the Madonna’s, Mary never seems like a real person. Only Michelangelo’s Pieta gives us a sense of the strength of this long suffering woman. This Mary never wore silks or lived in a marble palace. She was a poor woman married to a man who worked with his hands. Her home and clothing must have been rudimentary. She knew how hard it was to raise a



They wrongfully took what was intended as gift. Our culture, which rewards aggressiveness and tells us that we are foolish not to take for ourselves the good things we want, too often invites us to do the same thing.

The story of Adam and Eve was written centuries after the Ten Commandments were given and is an attempt to summarize all of them in a single condition: “You may receive, but you may never take!” That’s also the lesson in Jesus’ gentle correction of the rich young man: The man had asked: “What must I do to possess eternal life?” [see Matthew 19]. Jesus’ answer: “If you would receive eternal life, you must, like the young African boy, stand before life with empty hands and wait until it is given you.”

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

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

<b>Monday:</b>	1 Kings 17:1-6, Matthew 5:1-12
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Acts 11:21-26; 13:1-3, Matthew 5:13-16
<b>Wednesday:</b>	1 Kings 18:20-39, Matthew 5:17-19
<b>Thursday:</b>	1 Kings 18:41-46, Matthew 5:20-26
<b>Friday:</b>	1 Kings 19:9-16, Matthew 5:27-32
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 Kings 19:19-21, Matthew 5:33-37

**11<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** Ezekiel 17:22-24, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, Mark 4:26-34

**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](http://lifeteen.com). There are numerous blogs and videos for you to connect with. The Life Teen national office continues to release many new programs. Please contact Father John for more information. And please join us each Sunday for our Mass at 10 AM — in person or live-streamed, and then come to our Life Teen/EDGE gathering after Mass. And above all, let us continue to join each other in prayer. Father John is available for you. Please contact him.

**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.

**THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:**

Confession is not about ourselves and our sins, but about God and his mercy.

—Pope Francis

**ON NOT COMMITTING THE ORIGINAL SIN:**

Theologian James Mackey once shared this story in a classroom. A man he knew was part of a hunting expedition in Africa. His group was camped in a jungle. One morning he left camp early, hiked a few miles into the bush by himself and shot two wild turkeys. Buckling these to his belt, he was walking back towards camp when he heard noises and realized he was being followed. Frightened, his hands tight on his rifle, he scanned the woods for movement.

His fear was quickly dispelled. What he saw stalking him was a young boy, about twelve years old, unclothed and hungry. He realized instantly that what the boy wanted was not him, but food. He stopped, opened his belt, let the turkeys fall to the ground, and backed away. The young boy ran up to the turkeys, but didn't pick them up; instead he looked towards the man and, in his own language, began asking him for something. Not understanding what the boy was asking, but sensing that he wanted permission to take the birds, the man began gesturing to him that it was okay. But the boy still was not at ease. He kept asking and gesturing for something.

Finally, in desperation, the boy took several steps back from the turkeys and stood silently with his hands out, open in front of him — waiting until the man came and placed the turkeys into his hands. Then he ran off into the jungle. He had, despite his hunger and need, refused to take the birds. He had waited until they were given to him.

This story, in essence, captures what makes for the opposite of original sin. This young boy did what Adam and Eve didn't do — he accepted that life had to be given him and that he could not take it all on his own, no matter how desperate he was. How is this so? To answer, we need to look at what constituted the original sin. What did Adam and Eve do that so badly violated God's plan? How is their action the opposite of this young boy's?

The story of the fall of Adam and Eve is colored throughout, especially at the end with sexual imagery — nakedness and shame. This sexual motif is a metaphor — an image of rape. Adam and Eve took, as by force, something which can only be received in love.

The condition that God gave Adam and Eve might be summarized this way: "I am giving you life. But you must receive it and never take it. As long as you receive it, it will always be more life-giving. But on the day you begin to take, rather than receive, your actions will begin to deal death, distrust, alienation, nakedness, and shame." That single commandment encapsulates all morality [see Genesis 3].

Sometimes we ask why God gave a commandment to Adam and Eve in the first place — why a condition? Why not paradise without conditions? The question is a valid one, but, in answering it, we must be careful to not see the commandment as a test, as some arbitrary thing that God might have asked or not asked. The condition here isn't arbitrary, it's something inherent within love itself. God made a love-contoured universe. In such an order of things, everything is gift. Nothing may be snatched, grabbed by force, or claimed by right.

Life can only be received as gift, respectfully, in its own time. It's the same with love. Something is only love and it can only give life when it is freely given and gratefully received. This condition is part of love's DNA. Love is not unconditional and never can be. There is a condition innate to love itself. To be love, something must be received as gift. Conversely, if love is snatched by force rather than respectfully received as gift, we have another word for that, we call it rape.

The original sin of Adam and Eve was an act of rape — not sexual rape, but a rape of humanity.



child, and the suffering that children put their parents through — like when Jesus stayed in Jerusalem to preach at the temple, scaring her to death [see Luke 2:48].

Jesus developed his devotion to the poor the way most of us develop our values — from watching our mothers model what's important to them. When Jesus tells us to feed the hungry and help the stranger, that didn't come from thin air. He surely spent years seeing his mom sharing with those who had less — including hungry strangers who wandered through Nazareth.

So rather than surprise, Mary's response to Jesus's comment about his "universal family" probably would have brought a smile to her face, for she herself was a living example of it as Jesus grew and matured. The Mary whom Jesus seems to thrust into the background also models the unconditional love that mothers have for their children, even when their "crazy" views and behavior make life more difficult for themselves. We, too, need to live more like Mary — "Make my heart like yours, dear Jesus."

—edited from the writings of Eileen Worth and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

**A PRAYER OF HEALING — THE JESUS PRAYER:**

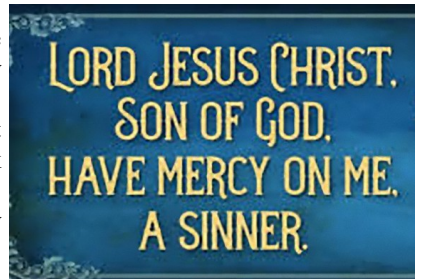
[This is a true story of a person whose life was transformed by praying the "Jesus Prayer"]

My name is Carmen Acevedo Butcher. It was the coldest winter of my entire life thus far. I was 22 and I was a student at Heidelberg University. I was at Heidelberg because I wanted to learn German, and was offered a scholarship. I was lonesome and homesick, and I was also suffering and recovering from an eating disorder. Into that mix came a 79-year-old woman named Frau Sophie Buschbeck. No one was better named, since her name was Sophie, which means wisdom. Sophie was a refugee in World War II, and her husband spent five years in a Russian prison camp. He was a Lutheran minister and contemporary of the theologian and Nazi resister Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Sophie's husband was writing her letters in Germany, while she was moving around the country with eight children fleeing the incoming Russian soldiers. One of my college professors and his wife sent clothing and shoes to Sophie and her eight children while they were refugees, and thus our friendship began.

I had suffered a traumatic childhood; the abuse in my family was ongoing, and by the time I landed in Germany, I felt that I was hemorrhaging inside. I was wondering, how am I going to make this? I was very tired of Christianity at that point. I could hardly read the Bible, and I certainly could not read it in English.

Sophie Buschbeck at that time was a widow living alone. She asked me to read the Bible to her in German. She didn't know my backstory, so I read the Bible to her. I was just suffering, and she must have seen it. She took me under her wing. One day, right before Christmas, she gave me a gift, and the gift was a book entitled *Das Jesusgebet* [The Jesus Prayer]. I still have the book. She said: "I think you would like this book," and that's when my love for the Jesus Prayer started.

I was walking all over Heidelberg during that very cold winter. I came over from Georgia in the U.S. with only polyester sweaters which just would not cut it, and Sophie had to give me a wool sweater. I began to pray: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner," and variations of the Jesus Prayer. I said it over and over and over all day long. At the end of that time, when I went back home, all my problems were still there. I still had my own internal struggles, and I was trying to navigate my ongoing breakdown. But the Jesus Prayer — this constant returning to the present awareness of love — had begun to heal me. I will always be grateful for Sophie, for giving me that nudge and for being able to repeat this prayer until I could feel my soul being knit together again.





**PAY ATTENTION:**

This week's Gospel incident happens right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, so as such, it has great importance [Mark 3:20-35]. Jesus hits the ground running. He calls his first disciples, crowds gather and begin to follow him, he cures people, and he drives out evil spirits. And in that very close-knit world of the Mediterranean, where family membership and loyalty were prime — and gave a person identity — Jesus does the unthinkable. He leaves his family and he takes to the road preaching. His life changed so much that his own family thought he went mad. And they wind up saying what we sometimes say about members of our own family when they begin to stray a little bit — “That guy must be nuts,” or “What's gotten into her?”

Jesus was preaching that God's kingdom was present right then on earth, and that God was acting through him. And he taught, claiming no authority but himself. Because of all that he infuriated the religious leaders of his day — “He's not official,” they said. “He lacks the proper credentials.” “Where does he get all this from?” “Who were his teachers?” “Who does he think he is?” But because he was doing good, curing people, driving out evil spirits, challenging the status quo — his opponents tried to discredit him. “Where is all this coming from?” they asked. “Where will it end?”

It is easy to discount and just demean and dismiss what we don't understand, or what may challenge us to change our way of thinking and acting. One approach in doing this is something like those religious leaders did — they attack the individual. “Sure, he drives out demons, so he must therefore be in league with Satan.” Jesus' response was to show them what a foolish statement that is. If he were in league with the devil, why would he be casting evil spirits out of people? When you think about it, Jesus has either brought God's presence in a special way in this world, or he was a madman.

The religious leaders of the time think he's on the side of evil. And his own family believes that he's lost his mind. They can't deal with this unusual charismatic and powerful prophet, and so they avoid a change of heart by denying the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus, and in doing so, they resist the possibilities of forgiveness. If you don't believe you can be forgiven, then you can't.

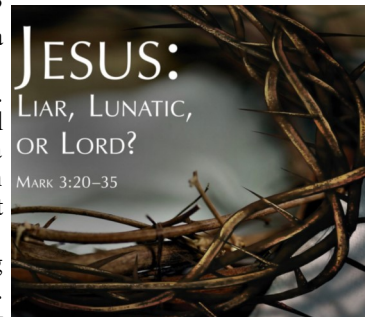
What really was unforgivable was seeing what Jesus was doing and then attributing it to evil. That's a trap. There's no way out of that. That's like if you went to see your doctor to perform a life-saving operation on you, and you see him as someone who's going to knife you — you wind up not allowing the surgery, and not allowing the healing that it could bring.

John the Baptist had predicted that one stronger than he was coming, and that he was not worthy to unfasten the sandals of that one [see Matthew 3]. Mark's Gospel for this 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time tells us that Jesus is the one that John had expected, and that God's kingdom has now entered into our lives. Jesus has the power over evil deeds and temptations that can defeat us.

Many people admire Jesus. They call him a holy man, a great ethical teacher, a model for peace. All of that's true, but there is a danger in titles like that. It can also be a way of putting Jesus off — keeping him at a distance. Admiring a great heroic person does not always involve committing ourselves to one. It's not all about admiration. For us, Jesus is so much more than that. He is the powerful one that God has sent to us. He is God's presence in our life every single day.

And so, at our Eucharist today and always, let's invite the powerful one of God into our lives so that he can help us deal with issues at home, or tie up the evil and negative influences that afflict us, and distract our children, help us to break the habits that we've not been able to break on our own, release our instincts to do good despite all of our fears, and put anxieties away — those that drain us of our life. That's how we embrace the call of Jesus our Savior. That's how we recognize that we are in God's kingdom right now.

—taken from the writings of Deacon Michael McDonald which appear on the internet

**WE LIVE IN THE HUMAN CONDITION:**

I can't emphasize enough the importance of the Book of Genesis reading for this 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time [Genesis 3:8-15]. One of the earliest writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, it not only sets the theme for many of the writings which follow. But more important for Christians, Jesus of Nazareth seems to have grounded his reform of Judaism in its theology. Though frequently referred to as God's punishments for original sin, these verses are simply the Yahwistic author's reflections on the “human condition” we're all forced to experience. We have to endure certain things simply because we're alive. We have no choice.

In the Book of Genesis, the author reflects on our quest to eradicate evil — personified by the serpent. Employing the metaphor of someone stomping a snake to death with one's bare feet, the author reminds us that only those willing to endure the pain that comes from being bit by the snake will eventually crush the snake. Our heel is never quicker than a snake's fangs. We will kill the snake, but we'll limp for a long time. The Genesis author certainly wants us to eradicate evil, but there is a process to be endured here — no one just snaps his or her finger and evil disappears. Before we tackle evil, we'd best check the height of our pain threshold. That's the main reason evil persists in our lives. There's not a lot of people willing to suffer through its eradication.

For Christians, here's where Jesus of Nazareth comes in. This first century CE Palestinian preacher was convinced the Yahwistic author had hit the nail on the head. There's no other way to make this world better. Unless someone is willing to suffer, evil remains. But Jesus takes this snake-killing thing one step further — if our evil-destroying stomping includes giving ourselves to others, we'll not only help rid the world of this scourge, but we'll also gain life for ourselves.

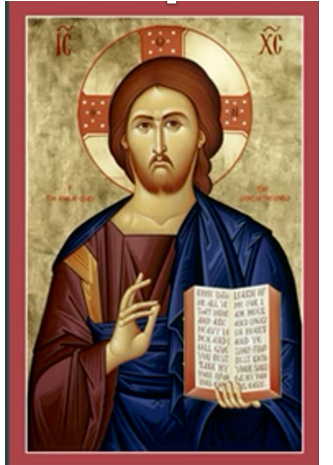
Our earliest Christian author, Paul, must constantly remind the people that he's brought into the faith to simply “hang in there.” We have no exact idea what motivates him to write this letter to the Corinthian Church, but we logically presume it has something to do with the struggle all Christians endure, simply keeping up the fight to get rid of the evil around us [2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1].

The first miracle Jesus worked in Mark's gospel was exorcising a demoniac [see Mark 1]. I mentioned when I commented on it several months ago that the first miracle in each gospel is very significant; it sets the theme for the whole gospel. It basically tells us what Jesus expects of his disciples. If, before anything else, Jesus exorcises a demon, he's telling his followers they, like he, are to get rid of evil, no matter what it costs, no matter how painfully we limp.

That seems to be one of the reasons Mark inserted this confrontation between the authorities and himself into his Gospel. How can we expect to avoid suffering if Jesus couldn't avoid suffering? In this case, the suffering that comes from being misunderstood by those closest to us [Mark 3:20-35]. We can understand why some of Jesus' enemies — the Jerusalem scribes — interpret his snake-killing actions as coming from the devil himself. But what's worse, even his relatives — later identified as his “mother and brothers and sisters” — are also convinced he's “out of his mind.” The preaching that brings life to so many tears his own family apart.

How many of us, for family peace and tranquility, frequently keep our mouths shut instead of speaking up when we discover evil? Why would we create greater evil by pointing out the evil that's already there? If we eventually leave this world in the same condition in which we found it, we, and those around us might experience a peaceful, painless existence, but we'll never do what God put us on earth to do.

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



hampered in one's choices. We are afraid of God because we fear that God may deprive us of happiness; but in reality we have done nothing, but fall into the abyss of the most complete confusion.

The second consequence of the decision to distance oneself from God in moral choices is the departure from our brothers and sisters. Adam accuses Eve; she blames the serpent, both reproach God of having created a wrong world. It was you — Adam insinuates — who put me next to a person who, instead of leading me to you, has distracted me from your plan. I trusted her because you had given her to me. This reaction is an attempt to put the blame of evil on a scapegoat — that could be the family in which one was born, society, upbringing and, ultimately, on God who has placed in our lives others who instead of building us up, drag us down.

The woman, questioned in turn, blamed the serpent. As the snake is just the other side of our humanity, her words constitute a new accusation against God: you have done evil things, creating man as he is, capable of performing follies and crimes. Why didn't you make him different, perfect? Why is this insidious "snake" that injects deadly poison in him?

After addressing the man and the woman, we would expect God to query the snake. But God does not because the snake is not a creature different from the man and the woman — the snake is the counterpart of each of us which is opposed to God.

Will the serpent rule unchallenged forever? From our point of view the human condition seems hopeless. Paul describes it in dramatic terms: "I cannot explain what is happening to me, because I do not do what I want to, but on the contrary the very things I hate. In this case, I am not the one striving toward evil, but it is sin, living in me. In fact I do not do the good I want, but the evil I hate. Alas for me! Who will free me from this being which is only death?" [see Romans 7:15-24].

Will the defeat of the human person be final? In the last part of the story, God responds to this disturbing question [see Genesis 3:14-15]. While the struggle between "the snake" and the human person will continue until the end of the world, the snake will not win because God will come to rescue the human person from his or her very self. The snake will have to crawl on the ground because that is what those who have been overcome do at the feet of their victors.

It is the promise of universal salvation — "Who will free me" from the slavery imposed by the "serpent" asked Paul. Jesus tells us that harmony will be restored in God where all have become members of one family [Mark 3:2-35].

—edited from the writings of Father Fernando Armellini, 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].

## COMMUNITY IS A QUALITY OF THE HEART:

The search for community is a deeply human search and I have felt that the ideal community remains mostly the object of my hopes and dreams. But I have also experienced that if I keep those hopes and dreams alive, true community will reveal itself in the most unexpected places and times. Somehow, community is first of all a quality of the heart, a quality that touches all those whom you meet in your life, not only your own family, but also the people you work and play with.

The source of all community, however, is your most intimate relationship with the Lord because the deeper you enter into communion with him, the more clearly you will find that all those whom you love are hidden in his heart. This truth does not solve all our pains and problems, but it certainly can set us free at times to travel on and to move forward even though our emotions can make us feel very lonely.

Keep close to the Bible and taste it to the full. There is a very deep hunger in many people for the life in the Spirit and many people need to be nurtured continuously by the Word of God.

—Henri Nouwen

## THE REIGN OF GOD IS AT HAND:

Eve and Adam — are any mythical characters better known than they? For centuries, Christians have blamed them for death and evil in the world. That theory leads directly to theologies that focus on sin as the decisive motive for the Incarnation — "O happy fault!"

For some, the story of Genesis might be best understood as a fable explaining the origins of evil. For some, the story has a simple moral — God's creation was perfect until humans messed it up. For others, the first couple's happy fault described an evolutionary leap from innocent indifference to the ability to distinguish and choose between right and wrong. Humans became capable of self-giving love, incredible progress, mistakes and intentional evil. Once started, there was no turning back. When they stepped into the precarious world of free choice, Eve and Adam — and all of us — exited the garden of blissful ignorance forever. Their new consciousness changed everything. Our species could not but continue to adapt and change, and to think critically.

Jesus' preaching and healing made him immensely popular with some and a threat to others [Mark 3:20-35]. Some believed he wanted to unseat them; others were jealous. Some deeply religious people feared that he was satanic. His own family worried that he was demented. Jesus' good news was too much, too new and different for many of his contemporaries. What unsettled both believers and doubters? Nothing more than his core message: "The reign of God is at hand" [Mark 1:14-15]. That might not sound so bad, but its implications were earth-shattering. When Jesus said: "Repent and believe the good news," he wasn't talking about sin and remorse — that's easy.

The Greek word for repent is "metanoia" — it conveys Jesus' invitation to see everything with new eyes, to discover God's reigning and to join in, to allow God to lead us into becoming more than we had ever imagined. Large crowds heard that and were electrified because Jesus taught with authority; he embodied the promise and effects of metanoia. Faith in this good news enabled disciples to begin to act like Jesus, going beyond old boundaries designed to keep them safe and pure — and exclusive.

Mark's story about Jesus and his mother, sisters, and brothers presents a parable in action to depict the radicality of metanoia. Jesus' family, those to whom he had belonged from birth, were looking for him because they couldn't comprehend what he was doing or how people were responding to him. When he heard that his family had arrived, his response was scandalous: "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." In Jesus' vision of God's reign, the measure of every action and relationship rests simply on how it fosters or impedes love and human thriving.

Today, many would agree with the family's opinion that Jesus had gone off the deep end. Although they probably would say it more politely with statements like: "That's just not practical," or "But in the real world ...". No matter what, the message remains the same.

To that, Jesus' replies uncompromisingly: "Those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness!" Being closed to metanoia, to new insights, to a frightening, but grace-filled and ever-growing relationship with God and others, impedes and denigrates the Holy Spirit. That stance remains unforgivable until a person decides to be open to the newness of grace.

Jesus' focus on metanoia's good news suggests that the Trinity's motive for the incarnation had less to do with sin than with God's deep desire that we continue to evolve, becoming mothers, brothers, and sisters with and in Christ.

As with Adam and Eve in the garden, our evolution and growth will undoubtedly include many falls, but participating in the emerging reign of God makes it worth the risk.

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





**THE BATTLE IS ON:**

Our Scripture Readings for this 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time opens with the famous story of Adam and Eve [Genesis 3]. Remember now God wasn't concerned about fruit; He was concerned that Adam and Eve not experience evil. But God had given them free will so they could choose. How else could they love? All love is a choice. You husbands and wives know this very well. You have to choose to love each other every day. The deep sadness is that Adam and Eve used their free will to choose themselves instead of choosing God. They chose selfishness and disobedience. Their pride led them to choose evil. They believed the serpent who told them that if they disobeyed God and ate from the tree they would be like gods themselves.

The scene we have today [Genesis 3:8-15] begins with God finding Adam and Eve hiding — embarrassed because they were naked. Their experience of evil had left them self-conscious and vulnerable. Then the blame game begins. Adam blames Eve for his state. She blames the serpent. This is so typical of evil. The person who does evil is always looking to implicate other people rather than accept his responsibility for the evil deed. In the Catholic Church, we teach our children to take responsibility for their misdeeds as soon as they are able to distinguish right from wrong.

Back to the Garden of Eden. As a result of Adam and Eve's actions, sin and death came into the world. The first battle of the war against evil was won by the devil. But God would achieve the final victory for humankind. He tells the devil about another woman — a new Eve — who would have a Son that would smash the serpent's head. Enmity, war would be waged between the serpent's followers and the women's son and His followers.

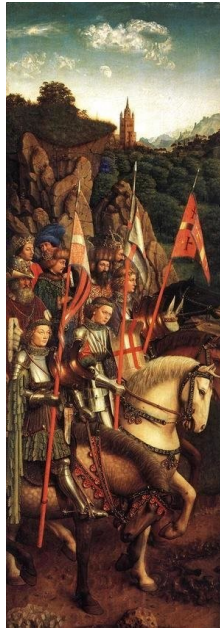
Jesus speaks about this war in Mark's Gospel. Jesus is accused of using the power of the devil — Beelzebul, the Lord of the Flies — to perform his healing. This is the blasphemy that can't be forgiven. That's why Jesus talks about sin against the Spirit [Mark 3:20-35]. For the followers of Jesus, the relationship with God is more important than anything the world. Jesus came to wage war against evil. His followers are to join Him in this battle for the Kingdom. That is what we are called to do. Religion is not just a matter of going to Church on Sundays; religion is about war, the war against evil — “Do not assume that I have come to bring peace to the world. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.” [Matthew 10:34].

The world of today is promoting crass selfishness. This way of life is contrary to the gospel of “living for others” that Jesus proclaims. We put the needs of others before our own wants, and, sometimes, even before our own needs. We trust in God to take care of us while we take care of those who reach out to us.

All that God has made is good, but good things can be used for evil purposes. Whenever we take a stand for morality, we are taking a stand against the perversion of good by evil. When we decide not to go to that party where we know that social drinking will quickly descend to drunkenness and to using drugs, we are taking a stand against evil. When we fight for the moral use of God's gift of sexuality, we are putting up a fight for that which is holy and good and against that which is perverted and evil.

The old catechism used the term “Church Militant” — those who were confirmed were told that they were soldiers for Christ. The reference was to enter into the war against evil, against the serpent and against all who fight for the devil. Be sure of this, there is a war which is being waged. And we, as followers of Christ, have no choice but to be involved. There will be skirmishes in every one of our lives. There will be times that we might think we are losing. But know that we are not losing. The outcome of the war is certain: in time — in God's time — the Son of God will crush the head of the serpent.

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

**HERE'S THE REAL STORY:**

To those who have a minimum of familiarity with the literary genres of the Bible, it may seem excessive to warn of the naive and simplistic interpretations of the beginnings of the Book of Genesis. However, it's worth it because the temptation to give it a historic value always returns. The story of Genesis is an account of something that happened at the beginning of the world. It is a text that, using the language of myth, gives an answer to the riddle of the presence of evil in the world. It explains not what some Adam and Eve would have done, but what we now are and do. It's not serious to imagine the human person, who, having eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, plays hide and seek with God [Genesis 3:8-15]. It is not serious to hold that snakes now crawl on the ground because, for no reason, God would have chastised them. They are not to blame if, in order to deceive the first humans, the devil assumed their appearance. The story of the so-called “original sin” is, in fact, the description of the origin of all our sins — and this touches us very closely.

In God's plan, all of creation has meaning and purpose — is part of a masterpiece. Plants, animals, work, rest, sexuality, joys, celebrations and even pain and misfortune have a special place and specific function in the equilibrium of the universe. When “God saw all that he had made and it was very good” [see Genesis 1:31], it did not refer to the absence of disease and death, but the fact that every creature made sense; all served perfectly to the realization of his project.

What should the human person do with this gift? We are all asked by God to study the creation, understand its meaning, discover the task we are called to perform and adapt our every action to God's will. If we would do this, then everything would be harmonious. There would be harmony between us and God. This harmony is represented in the book of Genesis with the sweet image of God strolling in the garden beside the human person, while the evening breeze caresses them [see Genesis 3:8]. There would be harmony between us and nature — the world would be loved, respected, and cared for like a garden. There would be harmony between everyone — no domination, no oppression, no selfish manipulation — just the joy of being God's gift to each other.

It is at this point instead that, from the beginning of the world, the serpent entered the scenario. It convinced the human person to go beyond the limits imposed by his condition as a creature, to set aside the plan of the Creator and to invent a new one — to follow his own whims and wiles, and inhibit him from obtaining his full realization and happiness.

Who is this snake? Nothing but the our own folly, who, in a delirium of omnipotence, claim to replace God. We declare ourselves independent in making decisions about what is good and what is bad. This thrill of self-sufficiency tempts us subtly and quietly, as the serpent does and causes us to make choices of death.

Sin causes the break of all the harmonies and the reading presents the tragic consequences that we all experience through the use of images. We had let ourselves be seduced by the “serpent” within us, and now we find ourselves “out of place”, and so we go and hide.

God seeks us and calls us: “Where are you?”, but He cannot find us, because we are not where we should be. As a father, the Lord is grieved of the evil that his children have done, and He is concerned. What God is really asking us is this: “to what have you reduced yourself; where are you? Where did you end up? What have you done with your life?”

Our response: “I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself” expresses the rejection of God's presence, no longer considered as a friend, but as an opponent to be avoided, as a tyrant who threatens the independence and freedom. Hiding oneself from God is to get away from prayer, reading the Bible, the life of the community, in order not to be questioned, not to be

