

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ Prayer of a Servant & Neighbor ~**

Loving Father,  
we come as servant  
and neighbor  
to support men and women of goodwill  
in their efforts to form communities  
of the coming kingdom.

Clasp us more firmly to yourself  
and use our hands  
and minds  
And hearts  
to do the work  
only you can do.

Bless all those  
you have entrusted to our care.  
Help them to recognize  
and discover their own gifts,  
and to place them  
at the service of your kingdom.  
Help them to discover  
the deepest longing  
in their lives  
and to know you alone  
as their fulfillment.

Help them to experience  
at each and every moment  
the depth of your love  
in the gift of your Son  
and the Holy Spirit,  
so that they may have life  
and have it abundantly!  
**Amen.**

—the Holy Cross Devotional Prayer Book

# Our Lady Chapel



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

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

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

**FAITH EDUCATION REGISTRATION FOR FALL BEGINS:**

All children who will be part of our Faith Education program need to register [even if you were a part of the program last year]. Our Sessions go from 8:45—9:45 AM, on Sunday mornings, with the hope that our children would then participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass. Register your family by contacting Patty in the Chapel Office [440-473-3560]. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.

**THE FEST:**

The **FEST** is **TODAY!** This year's diocesan family FESTival takes place on the grounds of the **Center for Pastoral Leadership, 28700 Euclid Ave**, Wickliffe, OH 44092. It's the perfect family day and an amazing one-take trip. Come and hear the best Christian artists [*Casting Crowns, We the Kingdom, Cochren & Co.*, and *Caleb and John*] for FREE. There are activities, events, and fun for the entire family. The day also includes opportunities for prayer, Confession, and more. **Bishop Malesic** and **Bishop Woost** will bring the FEST day to a close with a beautiful outdoor Mass at 8 PM. This will be followed by an incredible American Fireworks display. This highlight of the summer — the perfect day of faith, family and fun — is all for FREE.

**O.C.I.A [Order of Christian Initiation for Adults]:**

We are beginning to plan for our OCIA program [formerly known as RCIA] which will begin shortly. Why the name change? OCIA refers to the entire journey of faith discernment, whereas RCIA refers only to the Ritual aspects of the journey.



If you know someone who has been away from the Catholic Church for a while, or who is interested in learning more about the Catholic faith, or who presently is not a Catholic but would like to pursue this avenue of faith, or investigate it; if you know someone who is not fully initiated [Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation] in their Catholic faith — then consider having them join our OCIA program. **Please contact Father John [440-473-3560] for more information.**

**AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE:**

The world has suffered much from the various forms of Christian colonialism. Yet the reign of God is an alternative to domination systems and all “isms.” Jesus teaches that right relationship — love — is the ultimate and daily criterion. If a social order allows and encourages strong connectedness between people and creation, people and each other, people and God, then we have a truly sacred culture: the reign of God. It wouldn't be a world without pain or mystery, but simply a world where we are connected and in communion with all things.

God's reign is about union and communion, which means that it's also about mercy, forgiveness, nonviolence, letting go, solidarity, service, and lives of love, patience, and simplicity. Who can doubt that this is the sum and substance of Jesus' teaching? In the reign of God, the very motives for rivalry, greed, and violence have been destroyed. We know we're all part of God's beloved community.

Every description Jesus offers of God's reign — of love, relationship, non-judgment, and forgiveness, where the last shall be first and the first shall be last — shows that any imposition on God's side is an impossibility! Wherever we've tried to force Christianity on people, the long-term results have been disastrous. The gospel flourishes in the realm of true freedom.

But it's a freedom we must choose for ourselves. It is almost impossible to turn away from what seems like the only game in town — political, economic, or religious — unless we have glimpsed a more attractive alternative. And that's the alternative that is Jesus.

—Taken from the writings of Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

**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 political polarization.
- 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.

**SEEKING THE IDOLS OF DAILY LIFE:**

Paul's letter to the Church at Ephesus was probably written to Gentile Christian converts near the end of the first century. The author writes: “I declare and testify in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. You should put away the old self of your former way of life corrupted through deceitful desires, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth” [Ephesians 4:17-24]. The passage draws a sharp contrast between two ways of walking through life — the foolish way of futility and deceitful desires, and the wise way of righteousness and holiness guided by the truth of Jesus Christ. Those who walk the foolish and deceitful path worship false gods, while those who walk the wise and truthful path worship the One True God revealed by Christ. Wise Christians put away the old self corrupted by futile and deceitful desires, and put on the new self, empowered by the truth of Christ.

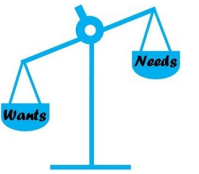
Circumstances change throughout history, but the problem of futile desires remains constant in human existence. We all have a deep desire for happiness. We seek a knowledge that is satisfying and long for a love that is imperishable. From childhood on, we tend to want what others have. Achievements are never totally satisfying, and often serve as a springboard for new quests.

Our innate desires can easily get out of control — becoming futile and deceitful. There is the temptation to create idols, and to turn legitimate preliminary concerns into false absolutes. As human beings blessed with freedom, we can make a fundamental decision to pursue selfish desires and evil deeds. More commonly, our idol making demonstrates greater subtlety — for instance, failing to keep our priorities in proper order and making ethical decisions based on expediency rather than moral principles. Human creativity can make an idol out of most any finite reality. In our culture today, prime candidates include: consumerism that puts too much emphasis on accumulating goods and having material possessions; sexual gratification that treats others as impersonal objects; partisan politics that makes party loyalty more important than serving the common good; and social media that impedes genuine conversation. Paul's letter encourages all of us not only to face our idol making tendencies but also to rely on Christ to lead us to the truth.

We can think of people who have created idols and could benefit from reflection on what Paul has to say. A hard working sales manager who spends extra time on the job and much of his free time managing his stock portfolio — much to the consternation of his wife — could learn to put less emphasis on financial matters and more on family relationships. A grad student who spends excessive time on his phone every day to the detriment of his personal relationships could limit his phone time and put more emphasis on face to face encounters with his family and friends.

How can you counter your own idol making tendencies?

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

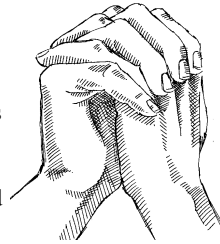


**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For 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 Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian [\*09], Rosa [\*12] and Edwin [\*17] Heryak, who is seriously ill.
- For Debbie Langer, friend of Cindy Frimel, who was diagnosed with brain cancer.
- For Denise Marzano, who is battling liver cancer.
- For Nada Kucmanic, who is seriously ill from cancer.
- 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.
- For Mary Vislosky, who is seriously ill as a result of bone cancer.
- For Brother Joseph LeBon, C.S.C., who is under the care of hospice.
- For Cathy Force, mother of Erika DiCello Lacroix [\*90], Grandmother of Andre [\*23] and AJ [\*25] Lacroix, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Lawrence Wynn, Gilmour Strength and Conditioning Coach, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Brother Thomas Cunningham, C.S.C., who is seriously ill with various health issues.
- For Agnes Mirando, grandmother of David [\*12], Agnes [\*14], and Matthew [\*25] Mirando, who is terminally ill.
- For Bob Willey, brother-in-law of Father John, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Chuck Campanella, father of AVI associate, Anthony Campanella, who is in rehab following medical treatment.
- For Father James Rebeta, C.S.C., who is recovering from serious head injury
- For Barb Zachary, sister of Father Rick Gribble, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

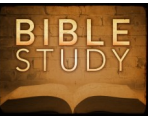


**PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For Father Thomas McDermott, C.S.C.
- For Sara Coyle, mother of Ellen Stanton [\*83] and Frank Coyle [\*84].
- For George Gabanic, uncle of Jeffrey [\*84], James [\*86] Toth, and Jennifer Papczun [\*94], great-uncle of Tim [\*24] and Kate [\*27] Papczun
- For Brother Carl Smith, C.S.C.
- For Brother Edward Dailey, C.S.C.
- For Sandra Mugavin, aunt of Denise Shade.
- For Dale Slavin, former Gilmour Art Teacher
- For Nathan Mitchell
- For Carl Titgemeier, father of John [\*81], grandfather of Brigid Kozlowski [\*08]
- For Ben Zimmerman.
- For Lawrence Kaiser, father of Larry [\*79] and Terry [\*83] Kaiser
- For Helen and Steve Parisi. Helen is a former state-fund co-ordinator at Gilmour.

**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, August 21<sup>st</sup>:**

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</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: Praying with Scripture**

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, August 4: 18 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, August 5:	NO MASS
Tuesday, August 6: Transfiguration of Jesus	NO MASS
Wednesday, August 7:	NO MASS
Thursday, August 8: St. Dominic	NO MASS
Friday, August 9: St. Benedicta of the Cross [Edith Stein]	NO MASS
Saturday, August 10: 19 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM In Person only
Sunday, August 11: 19 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — AUGUST 17<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.

**Please let us know in the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you would like more information or if you would like to help.** This is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.



**REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:**

What does it mean to live in the futility of our own minds? It means being left to our own devices based on untruths and too little or unclear information about the circumstances in our lives. We are best served when we gain the humility to recognize that we do not have all the answers all the time. That is a good first step to wisdom. But we are better served when we turn to how we hear of Christ and were taught by Jesus to figure out the truth of any situation.

There is nothing we can personally do to make God love us more — nor less. We all know and have heard many times that “God is love” [1 John 4:8,16], but what we don’t comprehend or understand is the magnitude and limitlessness of God’s love. Our human loving is limited — it has a beginning and ending. God’s love is not given because of anything we do — God’s love depends on Who God is! This is a form of “Poverty of Spirit”, but our “richness of spirit” is our being open and receptive, and not merely according to our specifications. When we forget this, we get into trouble.

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, things were very often difficult for him and these oppressed people. Even in the very early moments of their forty-year journey of faith, the people grumbled about their being thirsty, and when they found water, it was bitter. Moses prayed to God, and so the water was made potable. And even when they stopped along the way, the people were oftentimes unhappy. And so, they complain some more.

They do the whole “poor me” as a community. Things were terrible back in the bad old days when they were in Egypt, but at least they did have “fleshpots” from which to gain nourishment! They blame Moses — God’s prophet — but this time Moses does not have to make any requests. God comes to their rescue, but with an instruction which they must follow. God is teaching them ever so slowly to listen and obey for their own good [Exodus 16:2-15]. God’s response to the grumbling and regret was to rain down bread and meat. Their journey is going to be a long one, and with God’s continuing to be faithful, they will grow in their being faithful in response.

John’s Gospel for this 18<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time is a continuation of what we began to read last week. The word of the large crowd spreads throughout the countryside, and though Jesus and his shipmates have sailed to the other side of the sea, those who had eaten their fill follow him [John 6:24-35]. This can sound wonderful — Jesus is gaining new followers. When they meet up with Jesus, he offers them their truth — they were following, but not in the same sense, as he desired. They came to see if he were handing out more bread — or doing something else for their enjoyment! They failed to see the bread as “Sign” — they only saw a crusty “thing”.



Paul reminds us of the truth that Jesus is not just a list of answers to our questions. He is much more than that. Jesus is truth; he is life; he is the answer to all our needs [Ephesians 4:17-24]. Far too often we like to use short cuts so we do not have to work too hard; we want easy answers — answers that do not lead us to eternal life. We close our minds and hearts to the truth Christ would have us seek. Paul reminds us that to think that way is indeed futile. Rather, truth is an ongoing process of openness and renewal of the mind. That can be demanding work. But it is indeed worth it if we seek to live an authentic life of faith.

Life is meant to be a process of renewal in the spirit — it is meant to be transformative. To be a Christian means to be renewed to the extent that we become a new self, “created in God’s way in righteousness and holiness of truth.” And we must be open to that happening repeatedly. This message

**FOOD FOR THE LONG HAUL:**

Our faith comprises more than just the unique moment in which we make a conscious decision to imitate Jesus’ dying and rising — we actually have to carry through on that choice for the rest of our lives. The disciple of Paul who is responsible for the letter to the Church at Ephesus certainly understood the day by day consequences of becoming other Christs — “You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. That is not how you learned Christ” [Ephesians 4:17-24].

Those who are committed to learning Christ are expected to “put away their old selves and former ways of life.” Each day they must “be renewed in the spirit of their minds, and put on the new self, created in God’s way in righteousness and holiness of truth.” Obviously everyone in Paul’s community accomplished such a turnabout the day they gave themselves over to Christ and were baptized. But how do they follow through on this commitment every day for the rest of their natural lives?

And that’s where John’s Gospel [6:24-35] comes in. John’s Jesus expects us — among other things — to fall back on the Eucharist. He presumes that to maintain life, we must eat. But when we’re talking about the kind of life that helps us “accomplish the works of God,” natural food isn’t enough. That’s why his Jesus returns us to the event that the people were quoting in their conversation with Jesus [Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15].

Scripture scholars immediately point out that whenever we surface a “grumbling or griping” narrative in any part of the wandering in the wilderness experience of the recently freed Israelites, it’s from the “Yahwistic source.” This particular oral tradition was written down during the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE “glory days” of ancient Israel — most probably while Solomon was on the throne.



Though everything seemed to be going along fine for the majority of Jews during that period, this particular author consistently pointed out that, just below the surface, things weren’t as terrific as people imagined. For instance, it’s the Yahwistic author who, back in Genesis, brought up the clothes issue. If we’re living in a perfect world — as some of God’s people thought — then why do we wear clothes [see Genesis 2]? Obviously, something’s disordered — otherwise we’d have no problem going around naked.

In a parallel way, some 10<sup>th</sup> century Israelites began to idealize their history — especially the Exodus. They presumed all the enslaved Hebrews immediately responded to God’s call to leave Egypt, marched resolutely through two walls of sea water and entered the Sinai wilderness with great faith in God’s care and protection. This inspired author saw salvation history from a different perspective. The author was convinced that if God’s Chosen People had griped and grumbled about the Lord’s care and protection, then their ancestors must have given into the same temptation of mistrust. In other words, there’s no ideal history. Our relationships with God and one another have pretty much been the same through the centuries.

Just as the Exodus Israelites needed the manna and quail as signs and helps of Yahweh’s protection, so late first century Christians needed the risen Jesus’ “true bread from heaven” as a sign and help to achieve the life to which they were committed. Nineteen centuries later, we’re still in this faith thing for the long haul. We long for that day when we’ll never again hunger or thirst. But, in the meantime, in the midst of our grumbling and griping over the demands of that faith, we’d better take full advantage of the Eucharistic food the risen Jesus offers us right here and now, else we might fall by the wayside.

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

**CHOOSE:**

You can choose to see the curse or the gift. And this one choice will determine if your life is a success story or one big soap opera.

followed those teachings which most characterize Jesus — we haven’t turned the other cheek. We haven’t forgiven our enemies. We haven’t purified our thoughts. We haven’t seen God in the poor. We haven’t kept our hearts pure and free from the things of this world. But we have been faithful in one very important way — we have kept the Eucharist going.” The last thing Jesus asked us to do before he died was to keep celebrating the Eucharist. And that we’ve done — despite the fact that we have never really grasped rationally what in fact we are doing. But we’ve been faithful in doing it because we grasped the wisdom in what Christian de Cherge’s mother to her son: “You don’t have to understand this; you just have to do it.”  
 —taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which appear on the internet

**FREEDOM TO FLY:**

There are times when hope seems to get lost in the midst of chaos. We feel inadequate and unable to change. Scripture says we will soar like an eagle, and we will not tire [see Isaiah 40]. While our hearts long to fly, it would seem sometimes it is all we can do to walk. It is at those very times that we need to empty ourselves and allow God to fill our hearts and minds with His truth — the truth of who we are in Christ. There once was an eagle which was chained to a perch for many years. One day a man came by and saw the eagle chained; his heart broke because he knew the eagle was created to fly and soar across the mountaintops. So the man purchased the eagle at a great price and took it home, releasing it from the chains that had it bound. To his surprise the eagle remained on its perch — it did not realize or understand that it had been set free. Too often, we are just like the eagle. We have grown accustomed to our chains. We need to understand that in our own strength, we will fail, but if we will begin to view ourselves through the eyes and the ability of Christ, we will see that we are free to fly off the perch.

**O God, you are faithful; I trust in you. I do not want to be content to sit on my perch — I long to fly above the mountaintops. Help me to see myself through your eyes and in your grace. Remind me that I have been purchased at a great price — my chains are gone, and I am free to fly. Amen.**

**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 [ 7/27/24] ----- \$ 500.60**  
**Total Offerings: Sunday [ 7/28/24] ----- \$ 226.00**

**HOW TRUE:**

“Every problem has a gift for you in its hands.”

—Richard Bach

is liberating — it gives us hope that new and complicated situations can be less threatening.

After Jesus reminds the crowd that they have come for the wrong reasons, he begins a long discussion centering around the double-meaning of “bread”. The Jewish people have in their religious memory how Moses brought about the miracle of bread in the desert. Here, they are talking to Jesus in terms of a continuation of bread being served for their eating. Jesus knows this, and turns the word “bread” into a meaning for “himself”. Jesus is not playing with the minds of the Jews, but leading them to a faith-leap in him, who like bread, gives life to those who eat.

“Eating” for Jesus means taking in the whole “loaf” — the entirety of him as the one “sent” and “sealed” by his Father who is at this very moment giving Jesus as “bread” for eternal life. Believing is “eating” for Jesus; and “eating” means more than saying: “Yes, I believe”. It means living out the life which “The Bread of Life” came to give.

Jesus is the bread of God that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. This is how we learn of Christ. This is how he teaches us. We are to be renewed by the bread of life, which is the truth in Jesus. That still does not give us any clear answers for complicated questions, but it gives us clear directions about how to ask them and to be open to being transformed by the answers. “Our daily bread” contains many grains of nourishment. It is about doing God’s will by receiving what God is giving us at any one moment. Sometimes it can seem like crumbs, or crust, or quite stale.

We too ask God many times about where we will eat after we eat next. “Our daily bread” is God’s love, shared through the Eucharist, but eating more of the life of grace — the life of God’s love — after we eat the Eucharist next time. That Holy Bread — containing in Him all “sweetness” — is God’s pledge that we will not be abandoned or left to go our own way grumbling that we did not get enough.

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

**OUR TECHNICOLOR WORLD:**

What a great summer day! An extraordinarily clear and deep blue sky, backlit with blindingly bright sunshine — the perfect combo to get some great shots. Everywhere we turned color blazed — intense fuchsia, scarlet, and varied hues of green and gold so gorgeous. I couldn’t help but think that color is such a wonderful gift. When God made the world and all things in it, He gave us an extra special present in technicolor. Instead of fruits and veggies in a jillion shades of gray, they come in a breathtaking array of colors. The Lord created luscious red tomatoes, forest green broccoli, buttercup yellow lemons, purple cabbages, neon oranges. We have gorgeous wildflowers; even most weeds are pretty. We have towering trees of every shade of green. If you have ever been to Ireland, you will know the truth of “forty shades of green.” These are tangible examples of color. Does love have a color and a substance? Can you see it the way we can see the color of flowers, grass, a blue sky? How about small, pudgy fingers holding up a freshly picked bouquet? Or tears you wipe away as you put a bandage on a fresh wound? What about a husband of sixty years reaching for his wife’s rickety hand to steady her? And how about a puppy wagging its tail off when you come home or open the door? How about a cross? Surely there is substance and color to love. We are totally surrounded with it. It gives me pause to think about who our God is, and not just what He does. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of our technicolor world.

**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.



**GIVE US BREAD FOR ETERNAL LIFE:**

At many points in our lives, we all must face and deal with change — change that requires us to abandon old familiar patterns in which we live and move into new and unfamiliar ways of living. We seem at times to want change and when it occurs, we don't like it, don't want it. Presidents in the past promised us change, and we found ourselves in the midst of changes. Recent changes in our banking institutions has brought with it changes that are causing us a whole lot of stress. Obviously, our former spending based on credit is undergoing enormous change giving us new patterns of spending and habits of saving money. Fear, loss, anxiety, worry abound within us and around us as we face worker shortages is on the rise.

In times of change, our emotions must cope with fear of the unknown. The loss of our sense of security forces us to muster up the courage and strength to enter into what changes bring to us in the way we think, feel, and act. Fear plays upon us, causing us to resist change; and because change always brings loss with it, the loss of our former securities and patterns of living, we both want to change and don't want to change. Deep within our hearts and souls, insecurity conflicts with security in a war between each other. We experience an internal war between two states of being — passivity and change.

The Scripture readings for this 18<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time are all about change. The Israelites were held in bondage under the Pharaohs of Egypt. Crying out to God for deliverance He sent them Moses who led them out of Egypt into the Sinai desert. Now we find them complaining about the very deliverance they wanted while they were slaves in Egypt [Exodus 16:2-15]. In the desert, the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them: "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."

When you stop and reflect on what transpired it is quite astonishing to hear them wanting to go back into slavery — especially when they had just experienced God's tremendous care for them. Couldn't they trust God to provide food for them? But because of the prayers, the trust, and the faith of Moses God sent them food in the form of manna bread from heaven. Later they complained about that also!

In Paul's letter to the Church at Ephesus, we see the consequences of change once again. Paul calls them — and us with them — to change their ways from living as unbelievers to begin living as Christ taught them: "You were taught that you must set aside your former way of life; you must put off your old self, which deteriorates through illusions and deceitful desires. Instead, you must acquire a fresh, spiritual way of thinking. You must put on that new self, created in God's image, and filled with a righteousness and holiness born of truth."

And, if that weren't enough, the biggest change of all comes to us in John's Gospel account. It presents us with the central reason why you and I are Catholics — namely the Eucharist. Jesus declares: "This is the work of God — that you believe in the one he sent" [John 6:24-35]. So they asked him further: "So that we can believe in you, what miraculous sign are you going to perform for us to see? What is the 'work' that you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the desert; for it is written in the Scriptures: 'He gave them bread from heavens to eat.'" Jesus said to them: "I tell you the truth, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the real heavenly bread. For God's bread comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

Jesus was asking His listeners to change their hearts and minds in order to see God in a new light. Instead of asking for bread for their stomachs as their ancestors did when Moses led them out of Egypt

**A PRIMAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE EUCHARIST:**

Christian de Cherge, the Trappist Abbott who was martyred in Algeria in 1996, tells this story of his first communion. He grew up in a Roman Catholic family in France, and on the day of his first communion he said to his mother: "I don't understand what I'm doing." She answered simply: "It's okay, you don't have to understand it now; later you will understand."

Jesus, no doubt, must have given his disciples the exact same advice at the Last Supper — at their first communion. When he offered them bread and said: "This is my body," and then offered them wine and said: "This is my blood," they would not have understood. There would have been considerable confusion and bewilderment. How are we supposed to understand this? What does it mean to eat someone's body and drink someone's blood? As Jesus looked at them — at their non-understanding — like Christian de Cherge's mother, Jesus would have also said: "You don't have to understand it now; later you will understand."

Indeed in instituting the Eucharist at Last Supper, Jesus didn't ask his disciples to understand what they were doing — he only asked them to faithfully celebrate it until he returned. Their understanding of what they were doing in celebrating the Eucharist only developed as they grew in their faith. But initially, Jesus didn't ask for much of an understanding, nor did he give them much of an explanation for what he was celebrating with them. He simply asked them to eat his body and drink his blood.

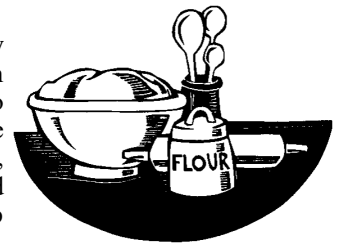
Jesus didn't give a theological discourse on the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He simply gave us a ritual and asked us to celebrate it regularly — irrespective of our intellectual understanding of it. One of his more-explicit explanations of the meaning of the Eucharist was his symbolic action of washing his disciples' feet.

Little has changed. We, too, aren't asked to fully or even adequately understand the Eucharist. Our faith only asks that we are faithful in participating in it. In fact, as is the case for all deep mysteries, there is no satisfactory, rational explanation of the Eucharist. Nobody — not a single theologian in the world — can adequately lay out the phenomenology, psychology, or even spirituality of eating someone else's body and drinking his blood. How is this to be understood? The mind comes up short. We need instead to rely upon metaphors and icons and an inchoate, intuitive understanding. We can truly know this mystery, even as we can't fully understand it.

During my seminary and academic training, I took three major courses on the Eucharist. After all those lectures and books on the Eucharist, I concluded that I didn't understand the Eucharist and that I was happy enough with that because what those courses did teach me was how important it is that I celebrate and participate in the Eucharist. For all the intellectuality in those courses, their true value was that they ultimately said to me what Christian de Cherge's mother said to him on the day of his first communion: "You don't have to understand now; later you will understand." Contained in that, of course, is the fact that there is something profound here that is worth understanding, but that it's too deep to be fully grasped right now.

Perhaps this can be helpful in our search for what to say to some of our own children and young people who no longer go to church, and who tell us that the reason they don't go is that they don't find the Eucharist meaningful. We hear that lament all the time today — why should go to church, it doesn't mean anything to me?" That objection is simply another way of saying what young Christian de Cherge said to his mother at his first communion: "I don't understand this." Perhaps our answer then could be along the lines of the response of his mother: "You don't have to understand now; later you will understand."

The British theologian, Ronald Knox, speaking about the Eucharist, submits this: "We have never, as Christians, been truly faithful to Jesus, no matter our denomination. In the end, none of us have truly





**HUNGER FOR THE BREAD OF LIFE:**

The fox said to the Little Prince: “It is only with one’s heart that one can see clearly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.” That one simple line from *The Little Prince* is one possible introduction to the Gospel of John. We can understand much of John’s Gospel as variations on that theme. As John leads his readers through meditations on Jesus, he repeatedly highlights people who interpret Jesus’ message very literally — only for Jesus to lead them into something much deeper.

On this 18<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, we continue our journey through Chapter 6 of John’s Gospel. We begin with the story of God’s gift of manna in the desert. Moses’ frightened and hungry people told him they wished he had left them to die in Egypt. The journey toward freedom was too hard. Oh, how humans can varnish memories of the past, gilding it while they whine about the present!

The desert wanderers longed for the good food that they remembered — whether or not they really had it. Still, they felt real hunger until God provided them with all they needed to survive. Although the name “manna” — which literally means: “What is this?” — they later called that mysterious desert food the “bread of angels” [see Psalm 78].

As we pick up on John’s meditation about the bread of life, we hear echoes of the beginning of his Gospel. The people who had eaten with Jesus one day, sought him the next. They asked: “When did you get here?” That question echoes the question of Jesus’ first two followers, who asked: “Where are you staying?” Jesus’ response was: “Come and see” [see John 1:37-40]. Aware that his popularity came more from food rather than his message, Jesus invited those looking for him to get beyond their fixation about eating well, so that they could feel and feed their deeper hunger.

Thinking that maybe they should toil harder or differently, the group asked Jesus: “How can we do the works of God?” [John 6:24-35]. Trying to move them beyond a shallow world of meaning, Jesus responded that it’s not a matter of tasks, but a new way of understanding life: “Believe in the one [God] sent.”

That response not only told them there was more to life than good food, but it also undermined any idea that they could make themselves worthy of God. Like he did with Andrew and his companion, Jesus invited them to seek to understand who he was and why he was among them. That was the invitation to belief.

Jesus tells them that, like their ancestors in the desert, God is offering Jesus to them as the bread that gives life to the world. When they say: “Give us this bread always,” they have no idea what they are asking for, but the request opens them to what Jesus wants to offer. The people who chased after Jesus saw him as a wonder-working supplier of bread and fish, but he wanted them to hunger for more from him. In a country like ours, most people don’t look to Jesus for their basic needs. Our world offers an overabundance of things and experiences to distract us from our real hungers.

We can be mesmerized by outright lies or the manipulative promises of advertising. Shallow entertainment and owning the best clothes or car feeds our spirit on the equivalent of junk food. Things that offer superficial purpose and a shallow sense of security disconnect us from the deep need for meaning and the mystery of life, the needs unique to us as humans.

A major problem we share with the Israelites in the desert is that the road to freedom from trivialities seems too hard and costly. The manna they and their descendants remembered with such nostalgia hardly seemed a feast at the time. Their desert time was a hard pilgrimage and time of fasting, not so much from food as from their illusions about what mattered most. For us, the journey to the heart, to allow ourselves to feel our deepest hungers is frightening because we know there’s no quick fix to the vulnerability we discover on that road.

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



they should ask for the Bread of Life — the Bread Jesus was going to give them, His Body and Blood.

Recall that Jesus had previously taught His followers to pray what we now call The Lord’s Prayer — that prayer in which we ask our Father in heaven to give us each day our daily bread. When we ask God to give us our daily bread, we need to pay attention to that for which we are praying — not bread for our bodies but for the food that nourishes our hearts and souls, the Bread that strengthens our spirits, the Bread with which we nourish each other’s hearts and souls with the presence of God living within us.

What is the core conversion, the biggest change of all, that our Blessed Lord is seeking within us? Nothing less than to accept the God who wants to live within us. The God of the ancient Israelites was the God who lived above us in His remote and distant heaven — the God we obeyed through observance of His laws and commands. Christ, however, is the Son of God who comes from His Father in heaven to live within us. That’s the astounding point — a huge change! God wants to live and love within you and me, asking us to receive Him in His Body and Blood. He came seeking not only our obedience, but desiring to be up close and personal with us — seeking to live within us. The infinite God who lives far above us comes to us now inside our finite humanity, in our time, on our earth. Astounding!

This was radical, to say the least. This was revolutionary, requiring a complete change in our hearts, requiring that we recognize our real hunger, our hunger for the Source of all love, a relationship deeper than simply giving God our observance of His laws. This is the Bread come down from heaven, Jesus declared, not the manna that left your forefathers still hungry. My Father, Jesus declared, how gives you the true Bread come down from heaven — Bread that gives life to your world, Bread that fills your hearts and souls with the life and love of God Himself.

Change is another word for conversion — and conversion means adopting a new version in living, a new way in which we see others and treat others, a new way in which we relate to each other and relate to God.

There are those whom we know who are hungering for respect, longing for friendship, starving for love, and who live lives feeding on nothing but spiritual junk food. There are those who are seeking the God whose presence they have not yet experienced. Are we sharing our “Daily Bread” with them — the Bread of Life? Give us this day, O Lord, our daily bread that we may share its substance in the spiritually starving world around us.

Give us your love, your life, and your Holy Spirit in this Bread from heaven, O Lord, that we are about to receive in order that we may bring your loving Presence into the world around us — a world that desperately needs you. Help us to reveal your kingdom, your love, to those who need you so very much. End our hunger and fill us with your very presence and love that we may bring you to others and others to you.

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

**THE WAVE OF GOD’S LOVE:**

A young man, who had been bodysurfing for more than an hour, has just ridden a big wave all the way into shore. He runs to tell his mother who had been watching him from the beach: “You know what I love about the ocean, Mom?” he says, shaking saltwater off his face. “The waves keep coming. If you miss one, you just have to wait. There’s always another one.” The young man’s innocent assessment is like the last piece of the puzzle of life. The ebb and flow of the waves is an echo of God’s voice calling each of us back to Him. Take for example the times when we hold on to anger and resentment. Holding on to those destructive feelings separates us from God, and in our stubbornness we pass up opportunities to be forgiven. Yet like the gentle pull of the tide, we feel the call of God bidding us to return to Him. As we gaze at God’s great ocean, understand its power to comfort you. The steady flow of the sea is a reminder that while in our weakness we may miss many chances, God offers us opportunities time and time again to come back to Him. He always has another wave of love and grace to carry us into shore.



**A GIFT ONLY GOD CAN GIVE:**

A man wanted to take out a rather large loan, and he was willing to offer a tract of land in Louisiana which had been in his family's possession for years as collateral. The bank, of course, wanted him to ascertain that he had clear title to the land, so he did an extensive title search. He was able to verify that this land had been in his family's possession since 1803. The bank was not satisfied. It wanted him to trace the title before 1803. This was not easy. After months of frustrating search, he finally had his lawyer send his bank this letter.

"In 1803, the United States bought Louisiana from the French who had title to it because they received it from Spain through victory in war. Spain had title to Louisiana through the exploration of Christopher Columbus who discovered the New World. Christopher Columbus had title to the land because it was supported by Queen Isabella of Spain who underwrote his voyages and proclaimed that anything derived from their discoveries would be in honor of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Universe. Jesus Christ, as you know, is the Son of God. God, by common agreement, is the Creator of all things including the territory of Louisiana. This proves clear title to the land from 1803 till the time of creation. If you require verification before creation, that is something only God can provide."

There are some things that only God can provide. Faith in God is one of them. I wish that I would be able to prove to you that God exists, that God cares for humanity, that God has a plan for our lives. But none of these beliefs can be scientifically verified. I cannot show you God's love like I can show you that the sun is shining or that water is wet. Because the love of God is something that cannot be proven, many people in our world conclude that faith in God is not necessary or reasonable. We see Jesus dealing with issues of faith in John's Gospel. He has just performed the tremendous miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, and yet the crowds that saw that miracle will not accept in faith that he is the Son of God. They keep saying to him: "What signs are you going to perform so that we might see them and believe?" [John 6:24-35]. They want proof. But proof cannot be given. Even Jesus cannot perform a sign that would force them to believe.

Faith, then, is a mystery. It is a gift that only God can give. You and I are here today because we have faith. But, we have faith because God has given us the gift to believe. God has given us the grace to see those things that cannot be proven. We do not have faith because we are smarter than other people or better than other people. We are simply the people that God has chosen to receive the gift of faith so that we can believe in what has been offered to us. Now this truth about faith is both a comfort and a hope. It is a comfort because I know that there are many people in church today who have people who you love and who do not believe. It might be a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a close friend. When there are people in our lives who do not believe, it is natural for us to ask whether some-how we are responsible. Should I have been a different parent? A different sibling? A different friend? Is there something I should have said or done that would have made them believe? We want to take our faith and simply give it to the people we love. But faith is not ours to give. So there is a certain comfort in us realizing that we are not responsible when those we love do not believe. That must remain between them and God. But there is also hope. Because in faith, we know the God in whom we believe. We know that God is a God that cares for all creation and all people. We know that God is the one who searches out the lost and struggling. Therefore, we have hope that God loves the people in our lives even more than we love them and that God will continue to care for them, even if they do not believe.

Faith cannot be proven. It is a gift only God can give. But, we can be confident that God wants to give it. Often when we think about people we love who do not believe, we say: "It is my hope and prayer that some-day, they will find God". The good news is that this is not necessary. The people we love do not need to find God, because we have a God who can find them.

—taken from the writings of Douglas Sousa, which appears on the internet.



more of Him. It is the part that wants to wake up in His Presence, go about our daily routine in His Presence, and sleep in His Presence. St. Ignatius of Antioch once wrote: "A Christian is not his own master. His time is God's." There is a part of us that knows in the core of our being that this is true. It is the part of us that cries out with the people in the Gospel: "Lord, give us this bread always."

And He does. And we come to a deeper understanding that there is nothing we can gain in life that has value except that which comes from Jesus and returns to Him. And so we receive communion. We have to eat. We need Jesus. He is the Bread of Life.

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

**TO BE A MORAL FORCE IN THE WORLD:**

There are three obstacles to our development that would make us a moral force in the world.

1. **Fear of loss of status** has done more to chill character than history will ever know. We do not curry favor with kings by pointing out that the emperor has no clothes. We do not gain promotions by countering the beloved viewpoints of the chair of the board or the bishop of the diocese. We do not figure in the neighborhood barbecues if we embarrass the Pentagon employees in the gathering by a public commitment to demilitarization. It is hard time — this choice of destiny between public conscience and social acceptability. Then we tell ourselves that nothing is to be gained by upsetting people. And sure enough, nothing is.
2. **Personal comfort** is a factor, too, in the decision to let other people bear responsibility for the tenor of our times. It takes a great deal of effort to turn my attention beyond the confines of where I work and where I live and what my children do. It lies in registering interest in something beyond my small, small world and perhaps taking part in group discussions or lectures. It requires turning my mind to substance beyond sitcoms and the sports channel and the local weekly. It means not allowing myself to go brain-dead before the age of forty. But these things that cost comfort are exactly the things that will, ultimately, make life better for my work and my children.
3. **Fear of criticism** is no small part, surely, of this unwillingness to be born into the world for which I have been born. To differ from the mainstream of humanity, to take a position that is not popular tests the tenor of the best debaters, the strongest thinkers, the most skilled of speakers. To do that at the family table or in the office takes the utmost in courage, the ultimate in love, the keenest communication skills. And who of us have them?

The process of human discourse is a risky one. Other people speak more clearly or convincingly than we do. Other people have better academic backgrounds than we do. Other people have authority and robes and buttons and titles that we do not now and ever will have, and to confront those things takes nerve of a special gauge. I may lose. I may make a perfect fool out of myself. But everybody has to be perfect about something. What else can be more worth it than giving the gift of the perfect question in a world uncomfortable with the answers but too frightened or too complacent or too ambitious to raise these

**WHAT DO YOU WANT?**

Using people for one's own gain: this is bad. And a society that puts interests instead of people at its center is a society that does not generate life. The Gospel's invitation is this: rather than being concerned only with the material bread that feeds us, let us welcome Jesus as the bread of life and, starting out from our friendship with Him, learn to love each other. Freely and without calculation. Love given freely and without calculation, without using people, freely, with generosity, with magnanimity.

—Pope Francis



**YA GOTTA EAT:**

A while ago, a hamburger chain used to advertise that you should go to one of their stores because, after all, “Ya Gotta, Eat.” I’ve always thought that they are saying that no matter how bad their food may be, still it’s food, and you have to have food — “Ya Gotta, Eat.”

John’s Gospel [6:24-35] — the second of our five weekends on the sixth chapter of John — takes place the day after Jesus had fed the five thousand people with five barley loaves and two fish. Some people sought the Lord out, not because they wanted to hear His teaching, but only because they could get some more free food. Jesus used their desire to eat to raise their need to an infinitely higher level. He told them that they seek food that perishes, but that he could give them food that never perishes. They spoke about the manna that God provided in the days of the Exodus, and Jesus told them about the bread the Father gives that is greater than manna. This bread doesn’t just satisfy physical hunger, but gives life to the world. They asked for this bread, and Jesus said that he is the bread of life — “Whoever comes to me will never hunger, whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

We have to eat. If we don’t eat, we’ll starve to death. We have to eat to maintain our physical lives. We have to eat to maintain our spiritual lives. Jesus himself is the food we need — He is the Bread of Life. We need Him. We need our union with the Lord. We need to let Him guide our ways. We are restless in life. We hunger for more than this life can offer. He gives us what we need. He gives us God. He is God.

Jesus gives us the Eucharist. We need to receive communion. The Eucharist is not just one of the many pious practices of our faith — it is the heart of our faith. The Eucharist is our union with Jesus offering Himself to the Father for us. We need the Eucharist as our spiritual food. The Eucharist is the very Body of Christ.

When we receive the Bread of Life, the life offered is certainly not life as we usually use the term. It is not referring to physical life. We eat the Bread of Life and die from cancer, heart attacks, accidents, etc. The Life offered is the Life of Christ. It is the spiritual life that we receive at our Baptism and which remains after our physical death. The Bread Jesus gives nourishes this life, helps us grow stronger spiritually, and makes us powerful in the battle for the Kingdom of God. So we come before the Lord today and every day, and we say to the Lord: “Feed me.”

But do we really want to be fed? The food that God gives demands a total commitment to Him. When we go to communion, we are bound by the Presence within us to live His Life in a way that gives evidence of His Life in the world. You see for us committed Catholics, religion is not a sometimes affair — not a once a week happening. For us religion means being bound to Christ. The very word religion comes from the Latin word “ligare” which means to be bound. Our faith is who we are. We are people bound to Christ.

Many people will disagree with this. They will say that a person shouldn’t take his or her faith too seriously. Or that decisions should not be based on faith, but on what is expedient, pleasurable, etc. There is some of this in each of us. There is that dark part of us that wants to believe that we can put our faith in a corner of our lives, but do not have to let it determine our lives. It is the part of us that longs for the fleshpots of Egypt, even though we know that the price of fleeting pleasure is slavery [Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15]. Think about that. When we choose pleasure where God is not present, we become slaves to that pleasure. And yet, there is a part of us that goes to Church on Saturdays or Sundays, but thinks it is quite alright to get drunk on Fridays. It is that part of us that really does not want to be fed with the Bread of Life.

But there is another part of us; hopefully it is the dominating force within us. This is the part of us that truly wants to grow in the Life of the Lord every day until we die. It is the part that always wants

**SUSHI AND FAITH:**

Do you like sushi? I know what I like and don’t like. I am stubborn. So when it comes to trying new foods I am not always open-minded. One example is sushi. Years ago I “knew” that I would not like it and swore that I would not eat it. Friends tried to get me to eat it, taking me to sushi restaurants only to watch me order chicken. As time wore on they’d beg me to “take just one bite” of the uncooked mess. I refused. Finally, just to shut them up, I tried it and I couldn’t believe that raw fish could actually taste good. I can say, now, that I’m glad my friends pushed me to expand my horizons.

You know, faith can work in a similar way. It’s not always easy to share our faith with other people, especially close friends and family. When you or I have had a profound or powerful experience of the love of God, often we feel obligated and excited to share it. That’s good. Often times too, however, we get disappointed when those we wish to share it with are uninterested or refuse to listen — that’s not good.

When it comes to matters of faith we should remember the wisdom of the Saints, like Blessed Mother Theresa who reminded us that: “We are not called to be ‘successful’, but FAITHFUL.” We are faithful to God when we live and share the Gospel with others, NOT when they are “converted” or “transformed”. We are not anyone’s Savior...that job has already been filled [and quite well, I might add].

Substitute the sushi for faith experiences...other people whom I love and trust [like family] could tell me about the food, but they couldn’t make me eat. Others could suggest good restaurants and “guarantee” that I’d like it, but they couldn’t make me eat. They could even drive me to the restaurant, but they couldn’t make me eat. They might even order it and offer me some of their food in smaller “bite size” pieces, but they couldn’t make me eat. And even if I did finally take a bite — how fast I chew, whether or not I swallow the food, and whether or not I take another bite or order a plate for myself is still up to me.

We cannot change anyone. Only God can change the hearts of others, when those hearts are moved, and open to Him. All we can do is to be faithful and faith-filled, showing others how wonderful a new experience can be through our personal love of it, our recommendation and our willingness to “share” from our own plate in bite size pieces. That is the ‘faithfulness’ that Mother Theresa spoke about, and that is the faithful example that St. Paul speaks about in his letter to the Church at Ephesus. He writes: “may Christ dwell in your hearts through faith; may you be rooted and grounded in love, and have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” [Ephesians 3:17-19].

You’ve heard that “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink”. Same premise here — you can drive someone to Church, but you can’t make them love God. I need to concentrate on continually trying to change MY own heart more, growing in love of God and neighbor. I need to concentrate on being faithful, and through that faithfulness, God willing, someday I may just be successful, too. Never underestimate the power you have to change yourself. —the Bible Geek.

**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].



**LIVING THE LIFE:**

Three laborers were dragging massive stones. The first was asked by a reporter what he was doing. The reply was terse: “I’m dragging a big stone and it’s breaking my back.” The reporter put the same query to the second man. His reply was: “I’m helping to build a wall and I need your help right now.” The journalist politely declined. He moved on to ask the third man. This man replied with a smile: “Sir, I’m building a cathedral for God.”

We are living out our own lives in an epoch in which work has fallen on hard days. It was said of a USA town where they assemble autos: “Never buy a car built there on Fridays or Mondays.” On Friday, serious drinking began to salute the opening of the weekend. On Monday, many of the workers — if they came at all — were nursing hangovers. They kept their eyes open with toothpicks. The owners finally closed the plant.

If you have ever worked with college students, you will find that for many of them the work habits and life style of the auto “craftsmen” is the norm. Thursday evening began party hearty time on campus. Their weekends often are “Missing in Action”.

Unhappily these work habits touch just about every industry and college in our country. We are talking about a national — and, in fact, and international problem. As Catholics, we have to examine our attitude to work. Are we working for the food which lasts and which gives eternal life as John suggests [John 6:24-35]? Or are we part of the problem? Are we giving a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay? Are we as careful about our job responsibilities as we are about our salary? If negative, we are sinning against justice — and we are talking about confessional matter.

God has given each one of us a task and role to do. Blessed John Cardinal Newman once said: “God has created me to do Him a definite service. He has committed a work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission.” This mission can be as lofty as a president of a company, or as humble as this scribbler. Whatever it be, it is our vocation. Do we look upon this assignment as an onus or a privilege? Stalter sums up this thought in verse — “No matter what my daily chores might be to earn my livelihood, still may I see the real position that I hold is bringing others to the Master’s fold.” So, as the proverb advises, in a world that couldn’t care less, Christians should care more.

Was not this the motivation that prompted the founding of the Young Christian Workers among miners in Belgium by Joseph Cardijn in the 1930’s. Its counterpart was begun in France among students. Not surprisingly, it was called the Young Christian Students. Both movements were lauded by Pope Pius XI. The YCW and the YCS have fallen largely into disfavor. And yet there was never a period when we need them more. Perhaps a resurrection is in order for both groups. We need such groups to remind us of Robert Gibson’s advice that we should shine like stars in a dark world, and that we are keyholes through which others can see God.

**Why Be Catholic?** by Rohr and Martos bring the same thought to the subject under discussion. They write: “Living the Bible does not mean memorizing Bible passages or attending prayer meetings any more than it means memorizing the catechism — it doesn’t mean having the answer and going to church, but living the answer and being the Church.”

Maybe this should be our attitude toward work — “God, where shall I work today?” Then God pointed me out a tiny garden and said: “Tend that for me.”

And, if our garden proves to be a bust, think of this thought from Dorothy Day: “Jesus met with apparent failure on the cross. But unless the seed fall into the earth and die, there is no harvest. And why must we see results? Our work is to sow. Another generation will be reaping the harvest.”



The monk said: “We’re not meant to do great things for God, but we are meant to do small things with great love.” The composer JS Bach began and ended all his compositions with prayer. We know the result. Should we copy his style?

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

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

**Monday:** Jeremiah 28:1-17, Matthew 14:13-21

**Tuesday:** Daniel 7:9-14, 2 Peter 1:16-19, Mark 9:2-10

**Wednesday:** Jeremiah 31:1-7, Matthew 15:21-28

**Thursday:** Jeremiah 31:31-34, Matthew 16:13-23

**Friday:** Nahum 2:1-3:7, Matthew 16:24-28

**Saturday:** 2 Corinthians 9:6-10, John 12:24-26

**19<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** 1 Kings 19:4-8, Ephesians 4:30-5:2, John 6:41-51

**I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE:**

Shakespeare had a very unique way of introducing main characters — they would always begin with the words: “I am.” For example, King Lear descends so quickly into seeming madness that we don’t know what to make of him. But then, at a dramatic moment, King Lear says: “I am a very foolish, fond old man.” That “I am” statement lets us know he is not really insane, but that his fondness and his foolishness have driven him to an extreme. In John’s Gospel, Jesus makes an “I am” statement. It initiates his great self-revelation. Jesus says: “I am the bread of life” [John 6:24-35]. Jesus not only multiplies bread — He is bread.

At the end of last week’s multiplication of the loaves [John 6:1-15], Jesus fled when they wanted to make him king. It wasn’t some kind of false humility; the fact is that Jesus is greater than any king. A king — or any political leader — can give people bread. That is a good thing. A political leader can create a system where people are motivated to produce bread — and that is a better thing. But Jesus offers something much, much greater — Jesus is bread. As Jesus says: “Whoever comes to me will never hunger.”

To understand the significance of Jesus’ self-revelation, we need to look at the context. Jesus is speaking to his Jewish brothers and sisters. Jesus is a son of Israel; he was born into the chosen race, the Jewish people. His mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, was a faithful Jewish woman. When the Jewish people heard the word “bread,” they immediately thought of the manna — the miraculous bread God gave them during the forty years in the desert. So they said to Jesus: “our ancestors ate manna in the desert.”

You and I can also say: “our ancestors ate manna in the desert.” We have become part of the Jewish people. As St. Paul says, we are “wild branches” that have been grafted on to the olive tree. By our baptism, you and I have been grafted to the olive tree of Judaism. As Pope Pius XI stated: “we are spiritual Semites.”

But what is important here is this: we do not create community — Jesus does. What we do is express the union that Jesus has already achieved by making us part of his people. Our ancestors ate manna in the desert. In Jesus, we are part of the chosen people. As part of that people, Jesus satisfies our hunger. He initiates his great self-revelation by saying: “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger.”

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