

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for the 1st Week in Lent ~

Lord,
Let everything I do this day
and in this season of Lent
come from you,
be inspired by you.

I long to be closer to you.
Help me to remember
that nothing is important in my life
unless it glorifies you
in some way.

It is so easy to get caught up
in the day to day of my life
and keep saying:
"Tomorrow,
I will spend more time in prayer,"
but now
my longing meets your love
and I want to do it now.

Help me to rely on you for help.
Help me to know
that the perfection that I long for
is found in discovering
my most authentic, real self.
My "perfection" might be
holding my many flaws in my open hands,
asking you to help me accept them.

Heal me, Lord,
and help me to find you
in the darkness of my life.
Let me reach out in this darkness
and feel your hand and love
there to guide me.
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.

THE CHAPEL INDOOR PICNIC:

Thanks to all who joined us for the Chapel Indoor Picnic this past Sunday. . . What a wonderful time we had together. Special Thanks goes out to our Chapel Council and all who helped make the picnic a great time of community celebration before the Lenten Season began. God bless all of you. **Please mark your calendars for our Summertime outdoor picnic which will take place right after Mass on Sunday, July 13th. We hope you can join us!**

**LENTEN NOTES:**

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

—LENTEN REGULATIONS:

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

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

MEN’S RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:

Thursday, May 1st, from 6:00—8:30 PM will be our annual Spring Men’s Retreat. All men of Our Lady Chapel and the Gilmour Academy Men’s Club and their guests are invited to join us. We will begin with **Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 6:00 PM, and then move to the Center for Performing Arts for a light supper, and our evening of discussion, led by Fr. John.** There is no cost, but we are requesting a free will offering for the evening. If you cannot make it for Mass or for dinner, you are still welcome to attend the evening of spiritual conversation — come when you are able! Mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord! **Sign up on the retreat sheet located on the easel in the narthex of Our Lady Chapel or contact Patty in the Chapel Office (440) 473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org**

**WOMEN’S EVENING OF RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:**

Tuesday, May 6th from 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM will be our annual Women’s Spring Retreat. All women of Our Lady Chapel and the Gilmour Academy Women’s Club and their guests are invited to join us. We will begin with **Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 6:00 PM, and then move to the Center for Performing Arts for a light supper, and our evening of discussion, led by Fr. John.** There is no cost, but we are requesting a free will offering for the evening. If you cannot make it for Mass or for dinner, you are still welcome to attend the evening of spiritual conversation — come when you are able! Mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord! **We will post a sign up sheet on the Easel in the coming weeks. Or you may contact Patty in the Chapel Office at (440) 473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org**

**LOVE and COMPASSION:**

Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.

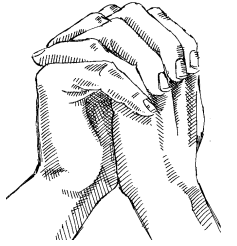
—Dalai Lama

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- 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 Josephine Fernando, who is seriously ill.
- For Father Ray Sutter, pastor emeritus of St. Matthias Parish, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nick Chiacchiarri, father of Mark Chiacchiarri [‘94], father-in-law of Michelle Chiacchiarri [‘96], and grandfather of Aurelia [‘28], and Olivia [‘30] Chiacchiarri, who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Thomas Noble who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Denise George, who is in rehab following a stroke.
- For Rick Shelby, who is recovering from open heart surgery
- For Brother Dan Kane, C.S.C., former long-time instructor at Gilmour, who is under hospice care.
- For Mary Vereb, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Finley Stay, father of Allen Stay [‘87], who is undergoing treatment for Covid Pneumonia.
- For Eileen Issing, mother of Father Dan Issing, C.S.C., who is under the care of hospice.
- For Danielle Adam, who is recovering from surgery, and undergoing further testing.
- For Toddy McMonagle who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- For Chris Keller, former trustee, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Holly Burke, mother of Hannah [‘10] and Nathaniel [‘10] Burke, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

**PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For John Roddy. [Birthday]
- For Father Larry Jerge, C.S.C.
- For Sister Kathleen Cooney, O.S.U.
- For Rudy DeRiso, father of Father John DeRiso, C.S.C.
- For Henry Kurdziel, grandfather of Annie Mesmer-Kurdziel.
- For John Halm, father of Father David Halm, C.S.C.
- For Brother James Reilly, C.S.C.
- For Tatum Gardner, daughter-in-law of Stacy Gardner..

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For all who are suffering from the various viruses which are going around.
- For an end to the war between Israel and Hamas, and Russia and Ukraine.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For an end to violence in our society in all of its forms.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.

JESUS AND US:

Serious readers of the Bible should always remember the late Dennis McCarthy's classic definition of biblical "canonicity" — "These particular books are in our Bible," the Jesuit scripture scholar said, "because they've helped the most people over the longest period of time to understand their faith." Though it might surprise some, Faith doesn't come from reading the Bible. Scripture kicks in only after we already believe. Our sacred authors presumed their readers shared the same faith they professed. Their goal in writing was not only to help their readers Understand the implications of that faith, but also to let them know they weren't alone.

Experts in fear often remind us that the greatest fear humans experience is the fear of being alone. Research has shown that almost all our fears can ultimately be tracked down to that one basic fear. Most of us wouldn't fear death, for instance, if we knew we wouldn't have to go through it by ourselves. If we could be certain a loved one will one day walk us through the process, we wouldn't be near as fearful. That's why Ray Moody and Elizabeth Kubler Ross' research on the subject was so consoling — they assured us no one is alone at the moment of death.

Faith is also something we approach alone — it's an extremely unique experience. Though organized religion purports to be a community of believers, each believing member has not only taken a different road to reach faith, but also looks at faith's implications from a different perspective. That's why believing people eventually saved the specific writings which became our Scriptures — it assured them that there were people out there who had traveled the same road and shared their perspective — they identified with the diverse sacred authors.

Notice, for instance, how smoothly Moses switches from the third person to the first person as he talks to the people today [Deuteronomy 26:-11]. He instructs his people on what to say when they're offering the first fruits — "My father [Jacob] was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household; but there he became a nation great, strong and numerous. When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us, we cried out to the Lord..." — what had once happened to their ancestors was happening to them. All followers of Yahweh needed liberation.



In a similar way, how would Luke know which specific temptations Jesus experienced in the wilderness [Luke 4:1-13]? Mark, whose gospel he copied, didn't list any. We presume, because he was writing for second and third generation other Christ's, he simply gave the gospel Jesus the temptations they were undergoing at this particular time in their lives — tendencies to only take care of people's physical needs, to grasp after power, to do the spectacular. Luke reasoned that if his readers were experiencing these temptations, then Jesus also must have experienced them.

It is clear from Paul's letter to the Church at Rome that he believed faith in Jesus was the great leveler [Romans 10:8-13]. No matter your culture, race, or gender, sharing the faith of Jesus unified all people — "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, enriching all who call upon him."

No one person of faith can identify with the experiences of all our sacred authors. If that were our quest, we'd not only have to possess a split personality, we'd have to have hundreds of personalities. The reason our Bible is so thick is because there's no one way to faith, no one way of looking at that faith.

It's a shame that our scripture readings for this 1st Week in Lent only cover a small part of our Scriptures. Perhaps the part and author with which we can most identify is never proclaimed during a liturgy on any given weekend — we might actually have to read the whole book!

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

NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, March 19th 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: The Journey of Lent

Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. We usually will meet every other week — topic to be decided at the end of the previous meeting. Join us. You'll have a blast, and celebrate your faith along the way..

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, March 9: 1 st Week in Lent	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, March 10:	NO MASS
Tuesday, March 11:	NO MASS
Wednesday, March 12:	1:15 PM
Thursday, March 13:	NO MASS
Friday, March 14:	NO MASS
Saturday, March 15: 2 nd Week in Lent	5:00 PM In Person only
Sunday, March 16: 2 nd Week in Lent	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — MARCH 15th:

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:

We have begun the journey which leads to the renewal of our baptism and the reception of those seeking entrance into the Church. Lent might be the season of “prepositions” as well — does one decide to “give up”, or “give over”, or “give to”, or “give back”? But the real meaning of Lent is about “receiving again”. Through the liturgical readings and prayers of these days, the Church reminds us about how God has handed to us the Eternal Son with a loving desire that we allow the Gift to be handed to us again and again. We come to each Eucharist to be re-gathered and re-minded of the conditions into which the Son was given — and is now given — to us. We begin the journey to our baptismal renewal by coming together as Church — as Christ’s Body; we admit our condition in which we are going to receive Him once more.

A large portion of the Book of Deuteronomy is dedicated to proper religious behavior within the Israelite community. Moses is near the end of his life. The journey to the promised land has been long and difficult. Thus, Moses reminds the people of Israel of the continual presence of the hand of God throughout their history. They needed to pause and reflect upon how God has carried them through adversity and triumph. Perhaps that is an ideal starting point for each of us this season. God has certainly been there with each of us every step of our journey — something that we so easily forget in the rush of life and something that definitely deserves our attention.

The role of the priests in the Israelite community was to receive the first-fruits of the harvests. Then there is a communal prayer reflective of the reasons the fruits are handed over. God, through Moses, rescued Israel collectively and personally, from the slavery of Egypt. God handed over the soil as a gift, and the people were to multiply as well. So in addition to first-fruit, the first-born of the family and of the flock were likewise dedicated in thanksgiving to God who had handed all things over. So too as a sign of dependence and gratitude for the soil, the people were to hand over some of what they had received. Following this holy prayer of remembrance and surrender, the people would perform a gesture of surrender by physically bowing down in reverence of the presence of the One and Holy God [Deuteronomy 26:1-11].

The Gospel for the 1st Week in Lent is always about Jesus going into the desert and being tempted by the devil. This year we read Luke’s version [Luke 4:1-13]. Jesus has been baptized according to Jewish custom. Again, as the rescued nation of Israel past through water from slavery in a foreign land to freedom on their own holy soil — so each Jewish person would enter the Jordan river to then emerge cleansed from personal slavery, and again stand renewed on the ground of freedom. During His being baptized, Jesus heard His identity as the Beloved One — He heard it, received it, and then began living it. And so, as Jesus is led into the desert to reflect on these life-giving questions. There, he confronts the three temptations proffered by the devil and responds with the three affirmations of Who He knew Himself to be. Thus, the temptations are not so much temptations as they are a context for Jesus to begin showing up as Who He had heard He was.



The key word in the devil’s presentation is the word “if”. This conditional word moves the whole scene into the subjunctive — or “contrary to present fact” mood. Jesus remains in the “in the indicative — “affirmed actual fact” mood. The devil wants to offer or hand over to Jesus what is already in and of Jesus. The devil quotes scripture but says “if you are”, and Jesus replies with scripture — but denies the “if”.

and sit for a time with that — patiently learning some lessons that only a certain sadness could teach you. Again, the idea was that there is some necessary inner work that can only be done in sadness and heaviness and we need sometimes to enter these voluntarily.

Finally, there is yet another rich image in anthropology to can help us understand lent — the image of our own tears as re-connecting us to the flow of life. The image is simple — our tears are salt water — as is the ocean which is ultimately the origin of all life on this planet. What our tears do is put as back into touch with the physical origins of all life on this planet — salt water. The idea then is that, occasionally, it is good to forsake the joys of life for the salt of tears because only tears can deepen us and help us connect to our origins and grounding.

Lent is meant to do exactly that.

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

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:

A collection box is locaed just inside the center door when you enter the chapel. Please place your offering in the collection box. 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 [3/1/25] _____ \$ 275.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [3/2/25] _____ \$ 518.00
Total Offerings: Wednesday [3/5/25] _____ [Ash Wednesday] _____ \$ 83.00

A YOUNG ADULT GROUP:

A Young Adult group has formed at Our Lady Chapel. During Lent, the group has formed prayer buddies so that they can journey together back to God. We celebrate this opportunity to get together, share some time in faith, and also to support each other in life’s journey, as we continue to grow and become the people that God wants us to be. If you are interested and would like to be part of this new adventure, please join us at our next meeting, or contact members Richard Jones, Stephanie Leonor, Joe Gurney, or Edwin Heryak. Of course, you can also contact Father John at the chapel if that would be easier for you. God bless you.



KNOW WHAT COUNTS:

The inner person is the soil in which God has sown the divine likeness and image and in which God sows the good seed, the roots of all wisdom, all skills, all virtues, all goodness — the seed of the divine nature.

—Meister Eckhart

IMAGES FOR LENT:

What is the meaning of lent? Why do we set aside forty days each year to voluntarily give up some legitimate enjoyments so as to prepare for Easter? The need for lent is written right into our DNA. Perhaps a look at some of images for lent can help make this clearer.

Religiously the richest image we have for lent is the image of the desert — of Jesus going into the desert voluntarily to fast and pray [Luke 4:1-13]. Scripture tells us that Jesus went into the desert for forty days and, while there, he ate nothing. This doesn't necessarily mean that, literally, he took no food or water during that time, but rather that he deprived himself of all physical supports — including food, water, enjoyments, distractions — that protected him from feeling, full force, his vulnerability, dependence, and need to surrender in deeper trust to God. And in doing this, we are told, he found himself hungry — and consequently vulnerable to temptations from the devil — but also, by that same token, more open to God.

The desert, by taking away the securities and protections of ordinary life, strips us bare and leaves us naked — both before God and the devil. This brings us face-to-face with our own chaos. That's an image for lent.

But we have some wonderfully rich anthropological images for lent as well. Let me briefly mention three of them.

In virtually every culture there is, somewhere, the concept of having “to sit in the ashes for a time” as a necessary preparation for some deep joy or fulfillment. We see this, for example, in the story of Cinderella. The name itself — Cinderella — holds the key. The word “Cinderella” is derived from two words — “Cinders”, meaning ashes; and “Puella”, the Latin word for young girl. Etymologically, Cinderella means the eternal girl who sits in the ashes, with the further idea being that, before she, or anyone else, gets to put on the royal clothes, go to the ball, and dance with the prince, she must first spend some time sitting in the ashes, tasting some emptiness, feeling some powerlessness, and trusting that this deprivation and humiliation is necessary to help bring about the maturity needed to do the royal dance.

There is a similar concept inside some North American Native cultures, where it is accepted that, in everyone's life, there will come a season where he or she will have to spend some time sitting in the ashes. For example, in some tribes, when they used to live communally in long- houses, the fires for heating and warmth were kept in the center of the house so that a partially open roof could function as a chimney. Ashes would, of course, accumulate around the fires, and occasionally someone from the community would, for a period of time, simply sit in the ashes, quiet, withdrawn from ordinary activities, and take little food or water. Eventually a day would come when he or she would get up, wash off the ashes, and resume normal activities. Nobody asked why. It was taken for granted that this person was working through something — a depression or crisis of some sort — and needed that space, that quiet, that withdrawal, to work through some inner chaos and demons. In short, he or she was seen to need a Lenten Season.

A second image is that of being a child of Saturn. In some mythologies, Saturn was thought to be the planet that causes us to feel sadness and despondency. And so if you were a poet, an artist, a philosopher, a writer, or a religious thinker you would want, sometimes, to sit under Saturn — that is, to enter voluntarily into certain inner areas of the soul that ordinarily you might want to avoid precisely because they trigger chaos, sadness, heaviness, and despondency. Part of the idea was also that, occasionally in every person's life, you would for a time become a child of Saturn — meaning that you would be overcome by a certain sadness and heaviness and would have to cease your normal activities



Much has been spoken and written about how we too are tempted with offerings of power, domination, and possessions — as was Jesus. Those are worthy temptations which each of us needs to reflect upon; but in this context of Lent, the more important reality to consider is how we are tempted to deny to others our having been baptized. Jesus lived out His “I am” because He had listened and believed He was the Beloved. We are preparing to enter again the water and grace of being reminded of who God in Christ has said in the indicative mood and spirit who each of us really is.

The key to understanding all of this is God's word. In his letter to the Church at Rome, St. Paul reminds us that “The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” [Romans 10:8-13]. Lent is truly a time for us to focus upon God's Word — the written Word we find in our precious Bible as well as His spoken Word to our hearts as we spend time quietly contemplating our loving God and what He has in mind for each of our lives.

Jesus could listen to all temptations, challenges, and invitations to disown Himself — to fall down, to be unreal — because He listened once and often to the prayer of God over and within Him. Baptism — the Easter Sacrament — is our joining the Israelites as they entered often the river of remaining. Jesus lived Who He had received from God. We follow Jesus in and out of the same waters of indicative identity.

But we so easily forget. If we don't tell the stories of our pasts, we will forget who we are. St. Patrick's Day is around the corner. For Irish-Americans, it is a time to visit our heritage — and an invitation to others to look at their own. As young American/Irish children, we would visit our aged relatives often and especially on St. Patrick's Day. We would be lined up in front of them, and we would sing the songs of our ethnic history accompanied with much sentiment. We would hear the old stories, and be dressed in appropriate colors. We were reminded that the Gillicks of County Cavan in Ireland were royalty — actually kings! We learned who we were by what we heard and then lived. The only problem was that not one of our neighbors — nor the kids on the playground nor our teachers — treated any of us appropriately. Even our parents would occasionally forget. Irish royalty walking right down the streets of the south side of Milwaukee — we were the only ones who knew it. My siblings continue this tradition. If they don't celebrate their cultic and family histories, why they'd forget just how wonderful and blest they are.

Our forty days have begun. Our time to celebrate our identity has begun. We will listen to the stories, sing the songs, do the things which reveal to ourselves who we really are. We will receive again our name, our holiness. The real new life flows from the truth that we will do those things which reveal who we know ourselves to be. The people of Israel knew who God named them by their being baptized through the Exodus. They were to live in community doing the holy things of which offering the first fruits was a sign. We too have received our names through our being immersed in the baptismal waters of our identity. We are who God has claimed us to be, and we are called to do those actions appropriate to that name.

Lent is a time for us to focus upon our amazing God who loves us unconditionally — so much more than we could ever comprehend or truly appreciate. We need to carefully consider how indeed we are choosing to respond to that love and to ponder how we are actually living out every moment of our life.

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

FAITH EDUCATION — SCHEDULE:

Meeting dates for March are 9th. Dates for April are 6th, 13th, and 27th. Faith Education is an important part of every person's formation. Please make sure that you have not forgotten this important responsibility for your children. 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**. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility.



IS IT ABOUT GOD OR US?

Oscar Wilde was a much-celebrated Anglo-Irish literary figure — very witty, and very worldly. He once wrote: “I can resist everything but temptation.” He lived in total self-indulgence, ridiculed Victorian moral norms, and died in Paris of meningitis in the year 1900. His view of life aptly ushered in the 20th century — particularly the cultural rebellions of the 1960’s and 1970’s.

There are many today who live as Oscar Wilde lived. They regard temptations as irrelevant, things representing what they regard as hypocritical middle-class moral norms — norms that constrict us and deny us our freedom. We are to live, many claim, with only one self-indulgent moral norm: “If it feels good, do it. Anything is all right so long as it doesn’t hurt anybody.”

We could spend hours talking about questions dealing with the nature of evil. What is evil? What is the essence of evil? Why is there evil, anyway? Evil is the corruption of what is good. A temptation always presents something to us as good — it comes to us wearing the disguise of good. Few people choose to do something simply because it is evil. To be sure, there are a few in our world who choose evil simply because it is evil. It’s their form of rebellion; it’s their declaration of independence from the rest of us. Most people, however, choose a course of action that appears to be good. And some people have no moral problem in using evil means to achieve a good end. For them, the end justifies the means.

Some think that God tempts us just to see which way we will choose — it’s God’s way of testing us, they think. As for myself, I can’t imagine an infinitely good and loving God doing that to us. I believe rather what St. James tells us in his epistle: No one experiencing temptation should say: “I am being tempted by God”; for God is not subject to temptation to evil, and he himself tempts no one. Rather, each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire” [James 1:13-14].

We are now entering Lent. It seems to me that we should be thinking more about how to deal with temptations rather than where they come from. It helps us to recognize the nature of temptations because, as I said, they always present themselves to us as something good. We should not choose what only appears to be good or simply feels good. We should choose only that which is actually good. Choosing something that is bad is not the way to achieve what is good.

Let’s now look at the three temptations the devil put to Christ [Luke 4:1-13]. “Turn these stones into bread,” the devil suggested. The Evil One wasn’t talking about the starving people of our world. Rather he was tempting us all by suggesting that all of our appetites should be satisfied. Why settle for any hunger at all? Isn’t life all about making sure that we lack nothing, want for nothing? “If you have a need, an urge, a desire, or if you have any bodily hunger, satisfy it, he tells us. You have the power to do so. Find heaven on earth; lack for nothing. Forget about that hunger you feel in your soul. Ignore the fact of your spiritual hunger for meaning and purpose; ignore your hunger for God’s love. As a matter of fact, why even bother with God. Deal only with what is here and now.

The second temptation is to simply give up on the struggle to be good and surrender to the world as it is. In the gospel account you just heard, the devil boasted: “It is all mine, and I give it to anyone I choose.” The world, he arrogantly asserts, is his — it belongs to him. That, of course, is a great lie. This beautiful world is God’s — and He has given it to us.

Nevertheless, the devil’s temptation is to despair of goodness, and to simply declare that people are people and they will never change. Meanness, hatefulness, and hard-heartedness are everywhere in this dog-eat-dog world, so why fight it? Just grab what you can, get what is yours, and let everyone else fend for himself or herself. The world will never change. And as for God? Well, why bother? He’s not here.

You can have whatever you want, the devil tells us, whenever you want, and as long as you want. Be a self-authenticating and self-affirming person; be a self-determining person and let the chips fall where they may. All of this religious talk is nothing more than fanaticism — a running of guilt trips on



integrity? How are we to cope in a world in which we constantly pulled this way and that? How are we to overcome these things which inevitably pull us away from the person we want to be?

The first thing to observe is that much of the work which enables us to overcome temptation is done in childhood. It is in childhood that we learn how to maintain good boundaries; it is our parents who instill in us the vital habits of discipline and get us into good habits. It is our parents who teach us to share and to be unselfish. It is they who help us to lay down patterns of good behavior which stay with us for the rest of our lives.

For many years I was the chaplain to a women’s prison, and I often observed that criminal behavior was passed down through families. If one parent had been in prison, there was a greatly increased risk that the child will also end up in prison. This was because the attitudes of the parent are handed down to the children, and their selfishness and disregard for the law is quickly learned by their offspring.

So the role of parents is crucial. It is vital that they instill in their children the values that will help them to live a good and disciplined life. The importance of this task cannot be underestimated. It is a sacred duty to teach one’s children the fundamental values of the Christian life, and indeed it is the greatest gift you can give them. That is what you might call the “remote preparation” for resisting temptation — the work done in childhood where we are imbued with the values of truth, honesty, sharing and other such virtues.

More difficult though is later in life when we are confronted with a major temptation — when we find ourselves faced with the desire to enter an inappropriate relationship, to steal a sum of money, to indulge ourselves beyond what is reasonable, to take advantage of another person, or to gossip about a neighbor. These are more difficult to resist.

One good way is to have clear and fairly rigid rules for your life. This, of course, is easier if you have been taught the difference between right and wrong at an early age. But it is imperative to develop such rules for one’s life if we are not to be led astray.

Another way is to balance wrong actions with good ones. For example, we might find ourselves engaged in salacious gossip about a neighbor; as soon as we realize what we are doing, then we ought immediately to try to turn things around and say something positive about that person to balance the negative.

Most often though resisting temptation is simply about will power — it is making decisions in advance about what to do in a given set of circumstances and then sticking to it. In this way, we build up a body of good habits that will sustain us through our lives.

We have begun Lent; we resolve during Lent to live more like Christ, we want to live good lives, and most of all we want to resist temptations. Let us then work hard to build up good habits and patterns of behavior that will keep us on the straight and narrow. Let us live disciplined lives with our ultimate priorities clear in our minds so that we can inhabit this world in a pure and contented way — sure and certain that the journey on which we are embarked has Christ as its goal.

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

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE AN ALTAR SERVER or LECTOR?

We are resuming our need for Servers and Lectors. Each and every week, we always are finding that we have a need. Ever since COVID, people seem to not have the same interest and/or desire. But these 2 ministers are so grace-filled — both from God and personally. **Any student who is in the 3rd [and up] grade is invited to become an Altar Server; any student who is in the 5th [and up] grade is invited to become a Lector.** Adults are also welcome to join in our Lectoring ministry.

These are both wonderful ministries — a great way to serve God and the faith community. If you would like to take advantage of these opportunities, **please give your name to Father John.** You do not have to attend Gilmour to be an Altar Server, Lector, or to be involved in any other Ministry at Our Lady Chapel. **Please call the Chapel office [440-473-3560].**



CHARTING THE COURSE:

Lent always begins with an account of the Temptation of Jesus in the Desert when Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights. We can see how fitting this is when we realize that apart from the Sundays, Lent is forty days long. Of course, for us Lent is nothing like a desert — we do not leave our homes, but rather spend this period of time in spiritual preparation for the great feast of Easter. But it is useful for us to think about the fact of the Temptation of Jesus. Of course, the temptations that Jesus is subjected to don't really appeal to us. But he is the Son of God and the temptations are very specifically designed to appeal to his particular status.

The temptations that we are subjected to are a bit more banal. We are more inclined to be led astray by the temptations of greed, lust, jealousy, hate — among others. Our temptations can be summed up in one word — selfishness. This is the temptation to turn in on oneself and to give way to the desire to have our perceived needs gratified whatever the cost to other people.

What we have to constantly fight against is a deep rooted self-centeredness which manifests itself in the overwhelming desire to acquire material things, in an uninhibited indulgence of lust, in a constant wish to judge and put down other people, and in the wish to exclude God from our lives. All this runs clean contrary to the way we are made. Human beings are after all, at root, social animals — we entirely depend on each other. If we are prevented from interacting with other people, we shrivel up and die. Our intellectual development, for example, depends entirely on stimulating conversation with our fellow human beings. So temptations take us away from being fully human.

Jesus conquered the temptations he was presented with by a sort of spiritual joust with the Devil — each one quoting scripture at the other. This was a battle which the Devil was bound to lose. Jesus, being the Son of God, was always going to be true to his divine nature, and the Devil hadn't a hope of winning the fight.

With us it is a bit different; we frequently lose the battle against temptation. Our will is weak — and the temptations too glamorous for us to be able to resist them. And in the modern age, the media has joined the battle, and millions of dollars are spent on subtle techniques to convince us to become materialists, and to ignore the values that were ingrained into us by our parents.

Many of the things we find ourselves absorbed in are good in themselves, but we take them too far. For example, an interest in fashion — which is good in itself — can lead to an irresistible urge to be constantly buying the latest and the smartest clothes. We get so involved in fashion that we find no time for anything else. Or we can become absorbed in providing the best conditions for our family — which again is in principle something good. However, we can find ourselves desiring to live always in a bigger and better house, and spend more and more hours at work to raise the cash, and then end up never seeing the family that we thought we loved so much. The same goes for passing attractions to someone other than our spouse. It is good to be interested in other people — to be attracted to them, and to socialize. But these things can get out of control, and we find ourselves pursuing inappropriate relationships and affairs which put the fundamental relationship with our spouse at risk.

A big temptation for many in the modern world is internet pornography — which can very easily become addictive, and so becomes extremely hard to resist. It corrupts us by distorting our view of human sexuality, and leaves us unfit for normal relationships.

The big question is how to resist these and a myriad other temptations? How are we to preserve our



others. And when anything bad happens to you? Well, make someone pay for it! Get a lawyer and make the person or the institution nearest to the event pay for what has happened to you even if what happened to you was the result of your own carelessness. Take care of yourself and leave others to taking care of themselves.

The third temptation is to turn your religion into something that you do to make God act. Prayer? Well, prayer is so you can tell God what He needs to do for you. It's informing God that He hasn't made a perfect world and that He needs to fix it here and now. Go to church, the devil suggests, so you earn redemption points, and then when you die tell God He's obliged to give you a death benefit; remind Him that He owes you a place in heaven. The third temptation is to make God act — not you. In other words, don't put yourself to the test, instead put God to the test. Make God responsible for what happens to you. Force God's hand. Then, of course, you won't even have to bother with belief.

The temptations the devil put to Christ, and the temptations the devil puts to you and me, all deal with putting self-first and ignoring what God wants us to do in order to be the persons He wants us to be.

Lent is a time to combat all of these ancient and yet very modern temptations. Lent is a time to fast from food so we can feed our spirits and join ourselves into the life of Christ. Lent is dying to our own selfish self-centeredness in order to bring life into our lives and into our souls, the life God intends us to live not only here in this world but on into the next. Lent is about sharing life, and the good things of life, with others. Fasting and self-restraint allow us to be share with others and be available to them, to put others first instead of ourselves first.

May your Lenten life and devotions strengthen you in God's great and good Holy Spirit. May your humanity be more fully joined into Christ's humanity — His Spirit-filled, risen humanity in which He lives victorious over all that would diminish, degrade and demean us — victorious over all that would tear us away from all that God dreams we can be.

Lent is a time when we voluntarily restrain our own desires so we can better be at God's disposal. To do that we need to take more time to pray and make more time to be with Jesus in the Eucharist — to be nourished with the Bread of Life instead of food for our bellies.

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

A FEMINIE HYGIENE DRIVE FOR THE POOR:

Gilmour's Feminism Club is hosting a Feminine Hygiene Drive collecting diapers, tampons, and pads for homeless women and their children. **There are labeled boxes outside the chapel for donations.** All proceeds will go to the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless who help and advocate for the thousands of homeless people in Northeast Ohio. **Please join in this very worthwhile project as part of your Lenten journey.**

**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.

**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].



LENT — THE BREAKING OF ROUTINE:

There is nothing like a conversation with the devil to seize your attention. A confrontation with the Prince of Darkness certainly breaks the routine of life. The story of Jesus' temptation is the only scene in the gospels where Jesus and the devil have a conversation. It stands apart from every narrative in the gospels. It is unique. The church has wisely chosen to use this story each year on the first Week in Lent because its very uniqueness points to an important aspect of the 40 days we are beginning. This story reminds us that Lent is different from every other time of the year.

There are of course many ways to understand the purpose of Lent. We can view Lent as a time to turn away from sin, as a time to grow as a person, as a time to deepen our relationship with the Lord. All these approaches are valid. But I would like to suggest to you that there is another purpose for this season.

Lent is meant to break the routine of living. This is an important result because the danger of routine is all too easily underestimated. You see, once we become set in our careers; once we establish our families; once we learn the ropes of living; it is easy for routine to take over. We know all the familiar patterns. We settle into the well-worn grooves of habit which move us easily from one thing to the next. "I know this. I've done it before. I can do it again." Our life becomes automatic. In doing so, our living becomes shallow. We slide from one thing to another, without much thought or reflection. We eat, we sleep, we work, we relax. We drive the children to the dentist, we make love with our spouse. Such living may seem easy, but it lessens our life. Because once we let routine take over, we are not really living but simply responding to the routine that pushes us along.

Now routine is not a problem for everyone. If you are still looking at what you want to do in your life; if you are cutting your teeth on a new job or relationship; if there is some tragedy in your life such as sickness or divorce or death, routine is the least of your problems. But for those of us who are set, for those of us who have settled in and fallen into habitual living, routine is a lethal danger. For once we have put our lives on automatic pilot, the days and the years slip by without much reflection or depth. Once those opportunities are gone they are gone for good.



Lent then is an opportunity to break the routine of life. This is what Lenten practices are meant to achieve. This is why we decide to make the Stations of the Cross or give additional time and money to the poor. This is why we give up media or alcohol. It is like putting a stone in your shoe. It is something to remind you, something to break the normal pattern of living. The hope, of course, is that if we can break the routine, we can begin to ask important questions: Who am I? What do I value? How do I need to change? What am I taking for granted? Those are the questions that the routine of life erases from our consciousness. Those are the questions which must be asked if we are truly going to live.

Therefore, on this week in Lent, stop and ask yourself: What am I going to do to break the routine of my life? Do I need add something that is not normally in my life? Do I need to stop something that is commonplace in my living? Do I need to reach out to others in service? Do I need to withdraw into myself and spend some time in reflection? You get to choose what step you want to take.

But please dare to break the routine of living. Dare to change the pattern of your regular routine. You do not need to run out into the wilderness and live there for 40 days. You do not need to arrange a conversation with the devil. But you do need to put breaks upon the forces that are moving you mindlessly from one thing to the next. You do need to create a space in which you can hear the voice of God. And I promise you this. If you create that space to listen, God will not be silent. God will speak a word to your heart — a word that will reveal the shallowness of routine — a word that will thrust you into the depths of living. God will speak to you a word of grace, of forgiveness and, yes, of re-creation.

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

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL WITH LENT?

When I was a kid, Lent didn't mean a whole lot. Lent meant getting a filet-o-fish instead of a cheeseburger in my usual Friday Happy Meal. It meant that the music at Mass got more "serious," and we didn't say the "A" word — you know: "Allelu—" . It meant that soon Easter was coming, and do you know what that meant? That's right — an Easter egg hunt against my brothers!

It seems like many Catholics who "give things up" for Lent don't really know why, and they just proceed to make the rest of the world miserable. An example: I tried giving up caffeine one year — not a good idea! It took a couple of weeks for the headaches to wear off, but even after that I was still pretty difficult to get along with — okay, I was impossible to get along with.!

So what really is the big deal with Lent, and what's the point of those sacrifices, anyway?

The very word lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten" — which basically means "spring." Why spring, you ask? Well, because spring is about death and life. Look at the trees and flowers in the season of spring, which have died and are now coming back to life. That's what Easter is about. The death of Good Friday and the life of Easter Sunday is what we call the Paschal Mystery — the fact that in order to rise, we must first die.



Lent is the Church's "spiritual wake-up call" to us to prepare for Easter, and to remind us that we need to die to ourselves. Dying to yourself means dying to your own selfish wants, pleasures, desires, etc., in order to better focus on what God wants for you in your life. Lent is a great time to re-prioritize — "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" [Hebrews 13:16].

When we sacrifice anything during Lent — either something we "need" — caffeine — or something we enjoy — candy — it's the sacrifice that counts. The sacrifice isn't meant to make us miserable, but rather to help us keep in mind what an incredible sacrifice God made for us on the cross.

Sacrifice without a little discomfort is probably not really a sacrifice.

—The Bible Geek

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Leviticus 19:1-18, Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday: Isaiah 55:10-11, Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday: Jonah 3:1-10, Luke 11:29-32

Thursday: Ester C:12-25, Matthew 7:7-12

Friday: Ezekiel 18:21-28, Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday: Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Matthew 5:43-46

2nd Week in Lent: Genesis 15:5-18, Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 9:28-36

A NEW PERSPECTIVE:

Shift your perspective and realize it's not about having to do anything. Life is not an obligation. It's a gift. Focus on gratitude and you'll find yourself feeling blessed instead of stressed.