

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer on the Ascension ~

You are not only risen
and alive,
You are Lord.
This is your ascension,
your ascendancy
over the whole universe.

You stand over and above
all that is best
in life.

As its source.
You stand above
all that is worst.
As ultimate victor,
You stand above
all powers and authorities
As judge.

You stand above
all failure and weakness and sin
as forgiveness and love.

You alone are worthy
of total allegiance,
total commitment.
You are Lord
of all.
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.

WELCOME ALUMNI:

This weekend, we honor our alumni — both from Gilmour and Glen Oak — and we would like to extend a warm welcome to all who have returned to our campus — particularly those who have joined with us to share in Eucharist. **Special congratulations to the Class of 1975 who are observing their golden anniversary this year.** Also a very special welcome goes out to the Class of 1970 who are celebrating their 55th anniversary, to the Class of 1965 who are celebrating their 60th anniversary, to the Class of 1960 who are celebrating their 65th anniversary, to the Class of 1955 who are celebrating their 70th anniversary, and to the Class of 1950 who are celebrating their 75th anniversary. God bless you. May the Lord continue to bless all those who have passed through our campus; we are enriched because you have been here.



COLLECTION FOR ST. ADALBERT:

NEXT WEEKEND IS THE FINAL TIME FOR THIS PROJECT. Spring is here, and Our Chapel Community is collecting playground toys for St. Adalbert’s playground. These include basketballs, frisbees, footballs, baseball & softball bats and balls, and sidewalk chalk. Please place in the bin located in the Narthex. Now through May! Thank you for your support.



PLAY BALL!

Our Lady Chapel is going back to Classic Park to watch the Lake County Captains. Join us on **Friday, June 13th** as the Captains take on the Dayton Dragons. Game time is **7:00 PM** and gates open at 6:00 pm. Our Picnic dinner will be served shortly after 6:00 pm. This year’s menu will include Hamburgers and Chicken Sandwiches, Chips, Cookies and beverages. The meal will be available until 8:30 PM. **Cost is \$30 per person and includes the buffet and a box seat ticket. The game will be followed by fireworks and a faith witness by members of the Captains team. You will need to RSVP: please put your name on the Sign-Up Sheet on the easel in the Chapel narthex.** Or you can call the Chapel Office [440-473-3560] or email Patty in the Chapel Office at: szaniszlop@gilmour.org. **The last day to sign up will be Sunday, June 1st. We will notify you when the tickets come in, and you may pick them up and pay for them in the Chapel Office.**



CHAPEL OUTDOOR PICNIC — JULY 13:

Put this date aside; mark your calendars! Our Chapel Outdoor Picnic is Sunday, July 13th. Every year, the Chapel picnic has been a great event for the entire family. The picnic will be held rain or shine from **11:15 AM – 1:30 PM at the Lower School Patio & Dining Hall. Family Mass takes place at 10:00 AM** and the picnic begins right after Mass — what a wonderful way to continue our celebration of community. Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Pulled Chicken, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Ice-cream treats, Cookies, and beverages are provided. So here it comes once again. It will be a great event for the entire family. **Pot Luck (non-perishable) sides & desserts are welcome! Come and enjoy family and friends. Swifty and a face-painter friend will join us, as will the Euclid Beach Rocket Car.** In order to properly prepare for our picnic, we ask that you please **RSVP by July 7th to Patty [440-473-3560]** in the chapel office, or simply **sign up on the Picnic Sign-Up Sheet on the easel located in the narthex of the Chapel.**



FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT:

Without fear, united and hand in hand with God and with each other, let us go forward, let us be disciples of Christ, Christ goes before us. The world needs his light. Humanity needs Him as a bridge to be reached by God, by His love.

— Pope Leo XIV

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 Nick Chiacchiari, father of Mark Chiacchiari [‘94], father-in-law of Michelle Chiacchiari [‘96], and grandfather of Aurelia [‘28], and Olivia [‘30] Chiacchiari, who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Thomas Noble who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Brother Dan Kane, C.S.C., former long-time instructor at Gilmour, who is under hospice care.
- For Danielle Adams, who is recovering from surgery, and undergoing further testing.
- For Toddy McMonagle, wife of Judge James McMonagle [‘62], mother of James [‘80] Coakley, and sister of Francis [‘67] and Clare [‘72] Coakley, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Tara Hyland Zittel [‘07] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Sister Rosemary Hammer, H.M., former religion teacher, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Ted Potts, father of AVI Concession specialist, Ryane Potts, who is recovering from a stroke
- For Mary DiLisi, mother of Rick [‘82], Greg [‘83], and Jennifer [‘96] DiLisi, grandmother of Tomasso [‘16], Jack Michael [‘19], and Anna Marie [‘22] Solomon, who is in rehab following serious surgery.
- For Gary Mills, brother of John Mills, uncle of Morgan Mills Converse [‘11], who is preparing for back surgery.



PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For John Hornyak
- For John Carney [‘62]
- For Elaine Eden, grandmother of Laurel [‘14] and Kieran [‘25] Brown, and Gilmour Art Teacher, Alexa Brown.
- For Marie Forsythe.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For all our Alumni.
- For all those suffering from the severe storms in the Midwest throughout these past weeks.
- 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.

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].

WHY WE'RE DIFFERENT:

The authors of the Christian Scriptures believe those who imitate Jesus not only are unique individuals, but also should be conscious of what makes them different from others. Rarely is this concept conveyed more forcibly than in John’s Gospel [John 17:1-11], when on the night before Jesus dies, He prays for those whom God has “given” Him. They’re a special lot — they have both kept God’s word, and committed themselves to deliver to others the message God gave Jesus to deliver to them.

No wonder John’s Jesus tells those gathered with Him for His Last Supper: “I pray for them — not for the world, but for these you have given me — for they are really yours. If it is in them that I have been glorified, I am in the world no more, but these are in the world as I come to you.”

In John’s theology, it’s a gift of the Spirit to be “in” the world, but not “part of” the world — to be surrounded by people who either refuse to share in or know nothing about the faith of Jesus. John believes such individuals will never experience the same kind of eternal life that God bestows on those who carry on Jesus’ ministry.

It’s important to note that God gave us to Jesus “out of the world.” Though we’re not a part of the world, neither are we expected to leave the world. There’s no concept in the Christian Scriptures of formal religious life as we know it — no cloistered convents or monasteries. Daily, Jesus’ followers are expected to experience something they’re not a part of. It’s a strange position to be in, but Jesus assures us that we’re not here by accident. He actually tells His supper companions why they’re so chosen: “They belonged to you [God], and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.”

Though Scripture scholars don’t agree on whether John read Acts before he composed his own Gospel, his emphasis on “the word” dovetails with Luke’s belief about what makes a good disciple [see Acts 1:12-14].

Most of us perk up when we hear the list of those who go into the Jerusalem upper room, prayerfully to await the Spirit’s Pentecost arrival. These are the chosen followers of Jesus who will be present for the birth of the Church. The names of the eleven are familiar. But Luke adds a few extra people: “some women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers.” Though Luke mentions nothing about Jesus’ mother being present on Golgotha, he makes a point of her being in the upper room for Pentecost. It’s easy to see why. Throughout Luke’s first volume, he depicts Mary as the perfect disciple — the ideal Christian.

He accomplishes this by habitually referring to her as someone who “hears God’s word, and carries it out.” That’s the one action that Luke’s Jesus demands of His followers.

Ironically, John’s Jesus expects the same from those who are in the world, but not part of the world. There’s something essential in early Christianity about making God’s word the center of our lives, and the basis for our actions.

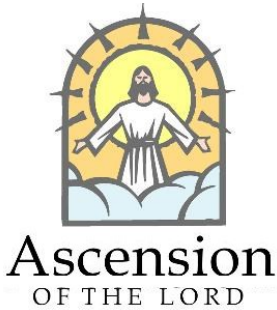
No matter the writer, God’s word and our reaction to it constantly come up. No wonder we’re so different from people around us. We hear and carry out a word that almost no one else even notices. It doesn’t make us better than those others — it simply gives us different responsibilities.

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

BE FREE:

The great spiritual task facing me is to so fully trust that I belong to God that I can be free in the world— free to speak even when my words are not received; free to act when my actions are criticized, ridiculed, or considered useless; free also to receive love from people and to be grateful for all the signs of God’s presence in the world. I am convinced that I will truly be able to love the world when I fully believe that I am loved far beyond its boundaries.

—Henri Nouwen

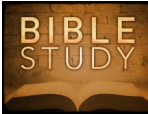


NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4th:

Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, June 4th 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: **Life the life of the Spirit in today’s world**

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, June 1: Ascension of Jesus	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, June 2:	NO MASS
Tuesday, June 3:	NO MASS
Wednesday, June 4:	NO MASS
Thursday, June 5: St. Boniface	NO MASS
Friday, June 6:	NO MASS
Saturday, June 7: Vigil of Pentecost	5:00 PM In-Person only
Sunday, June 8: Pentecost	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream

A YOUNG ADULT GROUP:

A Young Adult group has formed at Our Lady Chapel. Their next meeting will be following Mass on June 22nd. The Topic for Discussion will center on Fatherhood, manhood, and Joseph — Being a Biblical Man. The group has been meeting 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.



GOOD ADVICE:

It’s easy to get caught up in complaining about what everyone else is or isn’t doing. Remember, you can’t control their actions but you can control your own. Focus on your attitude, effort and actions. Be the best you that you can be and elevate the positivity around you.

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

At times, it can be all too easy for us to romanticize discipleship and the lives of the apostles and early followers. We can find ourselves drawn to their journeying with Jesus in His time of active ministry, drawn to their witnessing and assisting as He heals and preaches, and as He prays and performs miracles.

And, in this season of Easter, which is quickly drawing to its close, we can so readily be attracted to the apostles' experiences with the Risen Jesus — the overwhelming joy in recognizing Him kindling a fire on the seashore as He prepares breakfast for His friends, knowing Him in the breaking of the bread, hearing His exhortations of peace and His summons to Love [see John 21].

Yet, we all know too well that discipleship is not without strain and struggle, suffering, and sacrifice. We need look no further than Jesus' own Passion, or, in this Easter season, to the experiences of the early followers who see him "vanish from their sight" [see Acts 1], charged with the responsibility of leading others in the mystery of God's love. For them, it became a time to try to figure things out. — worn, wandering, weary and oftentimes forlorn.

The Ascension stories highlight two things that we — disciples of Jesus — still tend to do, and they outline for us our Mission today [Acts 1:1-11]. "They worshiped, but they doubted." We worship him, but we doubt. Sure we do — we hold something back, don't we? Even in our most devout moments, we don't always fully give ourselves to the faith that our life is in his hands, and that we have nothing to fear because he is always with us. In fact, we tend to live our day to day lives, not like people who fully believe in the resurrection and the hope and joy that gives, but like people who can easily get upset by the smallest of things.

We can each take a little test right now. Let's make two quick lists in our head: [1] list the ways you show signs of living the hope and joy of the resurrection; [2] now list the ways you show yourself upset, disturbed, impatient, frustrated, angry at the people, situations, circumstances around you. See what I mean? It takes great grace to be freed by the Good News: "I am with you always."

The second thing we tend to do is to catch ourselves "standing there looking at the sky." Jesus will return in glory, but we aren't supposed to stand flat footed, waiting for the return. We have a mission. Too often we get caught realizing that our faith in Jesus — the gift of grace given to us — is not just about keeping us from sin. It is not only about our relationship with Jesus — saying our prayers and avoiding evil. We are called to take his place in this world and to share the Good News with others — to make a real difference in bringing others to the Lord.

Another simple, quick examination of our conscience can help. This involves a quick "self-grading." [1] What grade would you give your fundamental relationship with the Lord in my everyday life? A? B? C? D? [2] Now, grade what do you give your efforts at self-sacrificing love for the people closest to you, for those people with whom you struggle, and for the poor of the earth? A? B? C? D?

Our lives are full of "transitions" — we are always moving from one relatively comfortable place to a new and unfamiliar place. Graduating, getting married, having a baby, starting a new job, facing new responsibilities, moving into a new home, facing the death of a loved one, recovering from the breakup of a relationship, beginning to see a therapist, recovering from a heart attack, living with cancer, a new Pope for our Church — all of these, and many more personal examples we know in our experience, are transitions. They take us from what we know into the unknown. They present us with a new mission — a new orientation, a new challenge, a new moment in our vocation, a new part of living our baptism into Jesus.

This weekend, we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven. It is the feast of



circumstances, she opened herself to voice inside her that she had, until then, mainly ignored because it lay inside her precisely as a voice that was almost non-existent, almost unfelt, and largely unnoticed. But once touched, it gushed up as the deepest and most real thing inside her, and set the direction of her life forever afterwards. Like C. S. Lewis, she too — once she had opened herself to it — felt it as an unyielding moral compulsion opening her to ultimate liberation.

Why doesn't God show himself to us more directly and more powerfully so as to make faith easier? That's a fair question for which, partly, there is no fully satisfying answer. But the answer we do have lies in understanding the manner in which God manifests himself in our lives and in our world. Unlike most everything else that's trying to get our attention, God never tries to overwhelm us. God, more than anyone else, respects our freedom. For this reason, God lies everywhere — inside us and around us. He is almost unfelt, largely unnoticed, and easily ignored, a quiet, gentle nudge; but, if drawn upon, He is the ultimate stream of love and energy.

—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 located 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 [5/24/25] _____ \$ 0
Total Offerings: Sunday [5/25/25] _____ \$ 347.00

THE CHOSEN :

We had a wonderful group of people join us for our initial showing of an episode of *The Chosen* this past Sunday. The viewing was followed by a very inspiring sharing among those present. **Allowing for a break for summer months, we will begin again in the fall with a monthly gathering, as we continue the journey of faith together**

The Chosen is an American Christian historical drama television series. Created, directed, and co-written by filmmaker Dallas Jenkins, it is the first multi-season series about the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Primarily set in Judaea and Galilee in the 1st century, the series depicts the life of Jesus through the eyes of the people who interacted with him, including the apostles and disciples of Jesus, Jewish religious leaders, Roman government and military officials, and ordinary people. In contrast with typical Bible-focused productions, Jenkins has given more depth to his scripts by adding backstories to various characters from the gospels without contradicting the material of the gospel. **Beginning in the fall, our series will resume on the 2nd Sunday of each month. October 12th. Please plan to join us. If you have any questions, please contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560].**



GOD’S QUIET PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES:

The poet, Rumi, submits that we live with a deep secret that sometimes we know, and then not. That can be very helpful in understanding our faith. One of the reasons why we struggle with faith is that God’s presence inside us and in our world is rarely dramatic, overwhelming, and sensational — something impossible to ignore. God doesn’t work like that. Rather God’s presence — much to our frustration and loss of patience sometimes — is something that lies quiet and seemingly helpless inside us. It rarely makes a huge splash.

Because we are not sufficiently aware of this, we tend to misunderstand the dynamics of faith and find ourselves habitually trying to ground our faith on precisely something that is loud and dramatic. We are forever looking for something beyond what God gives us. But we should know from the very way God was born into our world, that faith needs to ground itself on something that is quiet and undramatic. Jesus, as we know, was born into our world with no fanfare and no power, a baby lying helpless in the straw — another child among millions. Nothing spectacular to human eyes surrounded his birth. Then, during his ministry, he never performed miracles to prove his divinity — only acts of compassion which reveal something about God. Jesus never used divine power in an attempt to prove that God exists beyond doubt. His ministry, like his birth, wasn’t an attempt to prove God’s existence — it was intended rather to teach us what God is like, and that God loves us unconditionally.

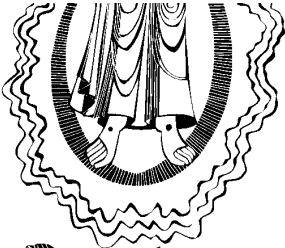
Moreover, Jesus’ teaching about God’s presence in our lives also makes clear that this presence is mostly quiet and hidden — a plant growing silently as we sleep, yeast leavening dough in a manner hidden from our eyes, summer slowly turning a barren tree green, an insignificant mustard plant eventually surprising us with its growth, a man or woman forgiving an enemy. God, it seems, works in ways that are quiet and hidden from our eyes. The God that Jesus incarnates is neither dramatic nor splashy.

And there’s an important faith-lesson in this. Simply put, God lies inside us — deep inside — but in a way that’s almost non-existent, almost unfelt, largely unnoticed, and easily ignored. However, while that presence is never overpowering, it has within it a gentle, unremitting imperative — a compulsion towards something higher which invites us to draw upon it. And, if we do draw upon it, it gushes up in us in an infinite stream that instructs us, nurtures us, and fills us with endless energy.

This is important for understanding faith. God lies inside us as an invitation that fully respects our freedom — it never overpowers us. But also never goes away. It lies there precisely like a baby lying helpless in the straw, gently beckoning us, but helpless in itself to make us pick it up.

For example, C. S. Lewis — in explaining why he finally became, in his words, “the most reluctant convert in the history of Christendom” — writes that, for years, he was able to effectively ignore a voice inside him precisely because it was almost non-existent, almost unfelt, and largely unnoticed. On the other hand, in retrospect, he realized that it had always been there — a gentle, incessant nudge, beckoning him to draw from it — something he eventually recognized as a gentle, but unyielding, imperative — a “compulsion” which, if obeyed, leads to liberation.

Ruth Burrows — the British Carmelite and mystic — describes a similar experience in her autobiography, *Before the Living God*. Chronicling her late adolescent years, Burrows describes both her religious flightiness and her lack of attraction to the religious life at that time in her life. Yet she eventually ends up not only being serious about religion, but becoming a Carmelite nun. What happened? One day, in a chapel, almost against her will, triggered by a series of accidental



transition. In Luke’s account, the very last words of Jesus to us are: “you will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth” [Acts 1:1-11]. Like the first disciples who heard those words, our transitional growth is from being tentative and afraid — anxious followers who have received “power” when the Holy Spirit “comes upon” us. Our mission is to replace Jesus in this world. The power of his Holy Spirit remains with us — we are his “witnesses” in this world. The Greek word Luke uses for “witness” is “martures” — we are to be his “martyrs” — giving witness, giving evidence of our faith with the commitment of our lives.

But times of transition are difficult. We often cling to what we know, and are afraid of what we don’t know. It’s called a time of “transition” because we are “in between.” We are usually still longing for something that we must leave behind — some distinct loss. What is before us offers new challenges that we haven’t gotten good at yet. So often we feel “power-less” — quite impotent and insecure — on so many levels. We are not able to do much — let alone be a witness of Jesus. It is too often why we cover-up our fear and assert ourselves in acts of power or control or aggression. We become “counter-witnesses” — in effect, saying: “the power of Jesus’ Spirit isn’t here!” Embarrassment at our powerlessness or our “in-apt-itude” need not lead us into discouragement or “aggressivity” in our dealings with our loved ones and others. Jesus invites us to long for — to deeply desire — the power of his Spirit. Only that power can help us and heal us. The Holy Spirit is a spirit of comfort [cum — “with”; forte — “strength”] to strengthen us in a deeply spiritual way.

On this day of the Ascension of Jesus — which introduces this time of transition to our life in the Spirit, our life of mission — let us express our desire for a renewal of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Let us imagine the healing presence of the Spirit in each of our relationships. This is where we will begin to witness to Jesus. Let us imagine how we can die to ourselves in our key relationships. From there, our witnessing can begin to go out “to the ends of the earth”.

Let’s not make the same mistake as the early disciples did — let’s not be looking up into heaven. Let’s imagine ourselves “on a mission.” Let us feel the power of letting the Spirit “assemble” us together and “animate” us for mission. And, let us lift up our hearts because it is right for us to give God thanks and praise. And with a renewed desire to celebrate the upcoming feast of Pentecost, let us go out ready to begin our mission at home, in our faith communities, and with our relatives and friends.

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

COUNTDOWN TO THE FEST BEGINS:

Don’t miss **the FEST!** All ages are welcome to spend the day at the 25th annual Catholic family FESTival on **Sunday, August 3rd** at the **Center for Pastoral Leadership** in Wickliffe. The FEST! brings *Maverick City Music, Danny Gokey, Ben Fuller, and Seph Schlueter* to the main stage along with faith-based activities for all ages. Come and enjoy delicious food along with great displays and presentations. The FEST! **Mass begins at 8:00 PM.** Join thousands from across the Diocese as we celebrate our faith with an outside Mass followed by an amazing American Fireworks Display. The day begins at **noon and continues through 10:00 PM.** All of the many events, activities, displays and directions can be found at www.thefest.us The FEST! is FREE and open to all. It’s a great family day. Make plans to come to the FEST!



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.



THE ASCENSION DOES NOT MEAN ‘GONE’:

The nights are warm now. Sometimes I step outside and looking up marvel at all of those stars sprinkled all over the night sky. In such moments I have asked myself if there is another parallel universe that we don’t see — one that has other dimensions not subject to human measurements of time, space, weight, and volume. I think there is. Because of Jesus Christ, I am certain there is!

A long time ago there lived in England a holy man named St. Bede. He lived from 673-735A.D. Among the things he wrote are the following words he penned while meditating on the death of loved ones: “We seem to give them back to you, O God, who gave them first to us. Yet as you did not lose them in giving, so we do not lose them by their return. Not as the world gives do you give. What you give, you do not take away. For what is yours is also ours. We are yours and life is eternal. And love is immortal, and death is only a horizon, and a horizon is but the limit to our sight.”

God our Father has sent His Son to us not to condemn us, but to show us that He loves us. He wants to save us — to save us by being joined into His Son and with His Son to return to Him, our Father in heaven. With that in mind, what is God telling us in His word for us today?

God our Father sent Christ Jesus to us from another universe — one beyond anything that we could imagine. A heavenly star guided sage visionaries to find Him in a manger. Unearthly beings — beings we call angels — announced His arrival. The whole scene is set in another dimension — one that cannot be measured or judged as we normally measure and judge things. A parallel universe intersected with our universe in that moment. Those wise men — those magi — glimpsed through a star gate and saw the unimaginable enter into our space and time. What was intangible became tangible through Mary, lying there as He was in a little animal-feeding trough.

The Child grew and became a man, working miracles and giving us teachings that defy our human measurements, proofs, and categories. At the end of His life among us, His disciples had to experience two departures. One departure was at the Last Supper when He said His goodbyes. The other departure, His ascension, found them better prepared.

When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost and they received His inspirations, they realized that these departures were, after all, not really departures. Oh, perhaps a scientist would say they were, but they were events that really cannot be measured. Even using the word “up” isn’t adequate.

St. Luke reports in this gospel account we just heard that Jesus was “carried up to heaven.” Immediately we associate the word “up” with a directional measurement. But it’s a mistake to do so. The word “up” is used in the sense of telling us that Jesus entered another dimension — a higher and greater dimension. He was taken up into the parallel universe from which He came to us in the first place — a universe we call heaven.

It isn’t proper to call His ascension a “departure.” It wasn’t a departure, anymore than His death on the cross was a departure — a going away from us. Christ’s ascension into heaven is parallel to His Easter resurrection. Both are inaugurations of a new Presence. God has not left us — God has instead come to us in a new way — a way that is just as sure as His coming to us that night there in Bethlehem, coming to us from a universe beyond the stars we can see in the night sky.

In his letter to the Church at Rome, St. Paul writes: “For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come to between us and the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus our Lord” [Romans 8:38-39]. That passage is often used in funeral liturgies. It speaks not of loss but of gain



THE ASCENSION — TO BE CONTINUED:

A good story will typically end nicely, bringing everything to a neat conclusion — perhaps with the words: “And they lived happily ever after.” So it would make sense for the Gospel — the greatest story ever told — to end the same way: Christ returns home to His Father and “They live happily ever after.”

We find in the Gospels, however, not a neat, tidy ending, but rather, the set-up for a sequel. All four Gospels conclude with a reference of some kind to future events or missions. Only Mark and Luke even mention Our Lord’s Ascension — and Mark just barely. Indeed, the Ascension itself, while concluding things in one sense, also cues a new beginning. It is not so much “The End” as “To Be Continued.”

In the same vein, as we celebrate the Ascension of Jesus, the Church places before us the Great Commission which Jesus gives us — “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” [Matthew 28:19-20]. Perhaps we could call it the Great Continuation — because the command that Jesus gives is, in essence, to continue His presence on earth. We have this Gospel on the Ascension to teach that Our Lord’s return to His Father does not end the story, but begins a new chapter — His life and His mission are to be continued in His disciples.

The word “disciple” indicates, of course, a follower of Christ. But what kind of follower? Jesus does not desire disciples who follow at a distance or who follow mindlessly — He desires disciples who follow because they know and love Him. The word “disciple” literally means “student”. To follow Christ requires that we be His students. It demands that we study Him — not only things about Him, or what others say about Him — but Him — the man Himself. To be a disciple means to know Him personally. He cannot continue His life in those who do not know Him. And a disciple’s learning never ends. A true disciple never grows complacent or satisfied with his or her knowledge, but always desires to know Jesus more intimately.

Further, from the word “disciple” comes the word “discipline” — to study anything demands self-control and self-denial. A disciple of Christ must therefore deny himself. Our Lord cannot continue His life in those enslaved to themselves. The person who lacks self-discipline — who chases after his or her every desire and passing fancy — will never know the Lord. Without the capacity to control and deny oneself, discipleship is impossible.

Notice also how Jesus commands disciples to be made — by “baptizing” and “teaching.” In other words, it is a work from the inside and the outside. To reach inside, Jesus issues the most basic sacramental command: “baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Baptism — and indeed all the sacraments — enlightens the intellect from within by the grace of God Himself. Disciples are made from within. We come to know Christ Jesus by way of His Spirit dwelling within us. Our study of the Faith is not a mere external affair, but something accomplished deep within our souls. Students of Christ learn Him primarily in their interior life.

Still, instruction from the outside remains essential. So Jesus also commands the Apostles to “teach others to observe all that I have commanded you.” Born again as children of God, we should desire to hear the truth from our heavenly Father. The teachings and rulings of the Church answer the desire for truth and holiness created in our souls by baptism.

Jesus both ascends and remains — He ascends in His human body and remains in His mystical body — the Church. May we show ourselves to be true disciples — learning Christ Himself through the enlightenment of His grace and the instructions of His Church. For only through genuine disciples can His life in this world be continued.

—taken from the writings of Father Paul Scalia, which appears on the internet



WHAT IS TRUTH? — THE STORY OF A JOURNEY:

As I was converting to Catholicism, I remained strongly relativist. I was a “cafeteria Catholic.” You had your own version of truth, I had mine, and that was what was comfortable for me. I jumped around a lot in my faith life throughout my years, and I had no real connection to any “true” moral doctrine. I viewed Most teachings I encountered as cute, but not worth the commitment.

I was an atheist until 7th grade, when I started to study Judaism on my own because it seemed like it had the largest basis for being the correct religion. Christianity seemed too preachy with its followers going either to heaven or hell. I then actually started to go to a nearby Methodist Church the following year because my friends did, but I gained nothing at from it. The one time I went to an adult service, I half-heartedly sang a few rock praise and worship songs, and pretended to listen to the pastor’s sermon, only going to the youth group because I wanted to fit in. I spent a lot of time in gossiping and lying and living a pretty immoral life to try to get people to like me — all the while calling myself Christian, but not really believing it.

A few Catholic friends of mine then invited me to their church and youth group, and so I went. I attended a few, until one day they were discussing a mixture of chastity, theology of the body, and abortion. I arrogantly got into a debate with the youth group leader, passionately defending what I believed were women’s rights — abortion was the women’s choice, men simply didn’t understand. He boldly told me “no” — “women are gifted with the amazing blessing of life bestowed by God, that only He has the power to take away, innocent life does not deserve to be taken unjustly!”

I was flustered, and countered: “surely contraception was the solution to the problem? Sex outside of marriage hurts no one.” He looked sharply at me — unfazed — and told me that contraception prevented true love as it is meant to be, that sex was a bond meant only for the married because it created a life-long bond and children, and damages those unready for the emotional and physical consequences.

I was shocked and humbled — I had never been so confronted with truth in my life. I felt that all that I thought I knew and was secure in come crashing down. I avoided that leader and youth group for quite some time — unsure of what was truth and what wasn’t.

I continued with the Catholic Church and formally began conversion in an RCIA course, when one day the priest leading it lectured on truth, beauty, and goodness. He detailed various permissive actions that our society quietly — but most often loudly — encourages, and I realized I was guilty of them. Again, I was terrified, and I was at a loss — here I was so sure of myself, and I couldn’t even define what truth is or looks like.

I, however, learned that the Catholic Church voices the truth everyday — to all that will or will not listen. She is not afraid of controversy, or to correct you, because every doctrine has real purpose and meaning. It is what has strengthened her over 2000 years. Throughout this time, so many have bravely given their lives as martyrs — to be a witness for the truth.

Unlike our relativistic culture, and some other religions and philosophies, Catholicism believes truth is objective and knowable. We have minds that desire satisfaction and understanding. By upholding objective truth, the Church upholds our dignity, and it rebels against relativism, proclaiming: “fallacies do not cease to become fallacies simply because they become fashions” [G.K. Chesterton].

From that day on, I truly opened my heart to Christ — “the way, the truth, and the life” [John 14:6], and I sought truth daily. The result was that a real conversion began. Each challenge with truth I encountered drove me to answer the question of “why?”, and to discover that the Church in all her glory is so much wiser than me, that she wants the best for me, and that by learning “why” I could share with others the same questions they have too. I learned to never apologize for the truth. The same applies to you. The truth will defend itself, even though some may just be too stubborn to hear it. But trust me, you never know how it might cause others to reflect on their life and make them want to seek truth. So let the truth loose on the world.

—taken from the writings of Hannah Williams, which appear on the internet

— the gain of God’s presence, power, and love that comes to us in Christ Jesus.

Thus, the ascension of Jesus Christ is not His leaving us. It’s not a departure. It is, like His mysterious birth — the inauguration God’s presence to us in a totally new way, a way that we cannot measure or put into any of our puny little human categories.

The Church’s liturgies will now focus on Pentecost and the time after Pentecost. With Pentecost we have yet another inauguration of God’s Presence among us. In the life and the acts of the Church, the Holy Spirit is now at work in human souls. That is what the Book of Acts in the New Testament is all about. Some theologians like to speak of the Book of Acts as the “Book of the Holy Spirit”. It reveals to us the marvelous works of God as expressed in our human works. Indeed, the life of the Church is all about the workings of the Holy Spirit in our humanity.

Our human responses to God’s presence have not been what they should be. We are “being redeemed sinners”; we are a work in progress. Our sins, our failures, our rejection of God’s loving presence is found in both secular human history as well as in the history of the Church. All of the human depravity that was present in Christ’s suffering, passion and death did not end with His resurrection and ascension — it continues on in our unredeemed humanity, as we so very well know. Some claim that God failed. Others live as if Christ was a failure. Still others simply don’t seem to care. Is this God’s fault? Or is it our fault? The answer is obvious . Failure is ours.

It was by the power of the Holy Spirit that Christ was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. During His life, Jesus manifested the power of God’s Holy Spirit at work in His miracles. By the power of the Holy Spirit Jesus was raised from the dead to become the Christ of glory. And now, because of His ascension back to the Father, Christ with His Father sends us the Holy Spirit. This points to the necessity of Christ’s ascension, His movement into that higher world, that universe that is God’s. For without Christ’s Ascension Pentecost would not have happened.

God is with us. God has always been with us. God will always be with us in the future. The Ascension is not His departure; it is the ushering in of His new way of being with us, His presence among us now in His Holy Spirit.

How, then, will we respond? Human history reveals responses that are both good and bad. The saints, however, reveal God’s Holy Spirit at work within us. Your lives and mine can do the same. May Christ, by the power of His Holy Spirit, be with you now and forevermore. And may you, one day, ascend in Christ into heaven.

—taken from the writings of Father Charles Irvin 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].**

ALL THINGS NEW:

Every new day brings new opportunities. Decide in advance to look for the good, to seize the moment, to feed the positive, to weed the negative, and to be your best while bringing out the best in others!



THE DANGER OF LOOKING UP:

The Book of Acts of the Apostles is Luke’s sequel to his Gospel. The Book begins with the risen Christ appearing to his apostles during forty days speaking about the kingdom of God. Then the risen Christ is lifted up and disappears in a cloud [Acts 1:1-11]. At that point two people dressed in white garments say to the apostles: “People of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?”

Have you ever looked up into the sky, wondering what’s up there, or imagining yourself so far above that you can look down upon the earth and get a “different perspective”? “Looking up in the sky” can also be a metaphor suggesting the common temptation to escape from the real challenges of our everyday life on this earth. One form of this escapism is to rely totally on God to solve human problems while failing to do our part to deal with them. For example, an alcoholic prays regularly to her higher power for help with her addiction, but does not attend AA meetings; a couple in a troubled marriage continues to attend Mass regularly hoping for divine intervention, but resists seeking professional assistance; a high school teacher prays every day for her students, but does little to stay up-to-date in her field; a priest does not prepare his Sunday homilies, but relies on the Spirit for inspiration — which, incidentally often makes the Holy Spirit look inept. We can all probably find such escapist tendencies, perhaps quite subtle, in our own lives.

The Acts of the Apostles not only warns against escapism — it also calls us to participate in the mission of Christ which includes concrete action promoting human development. The ascended Jesus — who no longer walks this earth — sends the Holy Spirit, empowering us to do our part in spreading God’s reign in the world. As the traditional wisdom puts it: “We should pray like everything depends on God, and act like everything depends on us.” Doing our part to carry on the work of Christ involves us getting ourselves in challenging situations that require hard work, careful planning, prudent decisions, and persevering efforts. An “Ascension spirituality” calls us to a personal conversion which makes more attentive to the signs of the times, more understanding of the struggle between grace and sin, more reasonable about options for good, and more responsible for spreading the reign of God.

To cooperate with God’s grace, persons with a drinking problem might have to find a new circle of friends, start exercising during stressful times of the day, keep alcohol out of the house, and work a twelve-step program. A couple not happy with their marriage might do a Marriage Encounter, plan a weekly date night, set aside time to discuss feelings, and see a counselor. A teacher trying to stay current in his or her field might take an online course, read a book, attend a workshop, and consult with colleagues. A priest who comes to realize the importance of preparation for preaching might start on Monday, read a commentary, spend time in prayerful reflection, and participate in a faith sharing group.

Too much standing around looking at the sky is not a viable Christian posture. We do better to identify our own escapist tendencies, and then find concrete, constructive ways of participating in the mission of the ascended Lord to spread the kingdom in this world.

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

ASCENSION OPTIMISM:

A young couple gave birth to twin boys and they named one Peter and the other Paul. The parents could tell from the very start that these two boys were very different. Peter was a happy baby, whereas Paul seemed stubborn and very seldom would smile. As the boys began to grow, they polarized even more. Peter was the eternal optimist — always seeing good in every situation. Paul was negative and complaining. Nothing was able to make him happy. By the time the boys reached their 8th birthday their parents knew they had to do something to make Paul more positive and Peter less so. So, they decided to



took on the poison of the world and found a life free of evil — a life of meaning — the Christian life.

Jesus ascends to heaven and then says to us: “Get to work. Fight off the snake — the devil. Fight off poisons of the world. You can win these victories. You can win them because I really haven’t left you. I am with you. My spirit, the Holy Spirit, strengthens you.

We all have poisons that we have to fight off in our lives. We all have our own demons. Some are of our own making. Some are imposed upon us by others or by situations beyond our control. One person wages a continual battle against alcohol. Another against drugs. One is fighting to be in a Christian relationship with his girlfriend or her boyfriend. Another is fighting against his or her own selfishness. One must deal with the fact that her family is not what it should be. Another is suffering the terror of abuse. One has physical challenges, another has psychological challenges. All these and so many other demons and poisons of the world attack us, but they can’t beat us down. We will win against the evil of the world because we have the greatest weapon there ever was. We possess Jesus Christ.

Jesus ascends into heaven and assumes his place as Lord of heaven and earth. What does that mean, “Lord”? It means that he has the power to win, to beat off evil. It means that he is in control. He is our Lord. He is the one who fights for us and with us.

There is an expression that the best defense is a good offense. When Jesus ascended into heaven, his followers went on offense. They didn’t cower in a room, afraid of what the enemies of God’s kingdom would do to them. Instead, they took the battle to the devil. The gospel puts this so simply: “They went forth and preached everywhere.” People who would never leave their villages traveled the world to wage the battle of the Kingdom. They preached everywhere. That’s what we are all called to do. We are called to take the battle to the enemy. We are called to combat moral evil wherever it exists, within us and around us. We are called give people the Gospel — the good News. The Good News is this: there is a much better life than the one the world paints as ideal. There is a life where every action has meaning. There is a life of fulfillment. This life is the life of the Lord. That’s the Good News. Life is infinitely better when it is lived united to Jesus Christ.

Snakes will attack. Poison will be forced down our throats. But we — the people of the Ascended Lord — will beat it all off. How? Well, the gospel explains how in its last words: “the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word.”

We don’t wage this war alone. We fight with the might of the Lord Jesus Christ. And with Him on our side, how can we possibly lose?

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



READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday:	Acts 19:1-8, John 16:29-33
Tuesday:	Acts 20:17-27, John 17:1-11
Wednesday:	Acts 20:28-38, John 17:11-19
Thursday:	Acts 22:30-23:11, John 17:20-26
Friday:	Acts 25:13-21, John 21:15-19
Saturday:	Acts 28:16-31, John 21:20-25
Feast of Pentecost:	Acts 2:1-11, 1 Corinthians 12:3-13, John 20:19-23

TAKING ON THE SNAKES AND POISONS OF THE WORLD:

Please Note: Over the last number of years we have celebrated the Ascension of the Lord on a Sunday. In the past I made the corny joke that we didn't celebrate the Ascension last Thursday because the Lord's flight was delayed. I won't do that this year.

OK, sorry, I can't resist at times.

"These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents with their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" [Mark 16:15-20].

Ministers and their congregations in some of the rural communities of our country take this passage literally. As a test of faith they will plunge their hands into a box of rattlesnakes, pull one out and hold it in front of the congregation. Others will drink strychnine poison. Some will survive. Some will be bitten by the rattlers. Some will die from the poison. Now these simple rural communities view the survivors as positive examples of the faith of the entire community. They view those who are bit by the snakes, or who die from the poison, as examples of the weakness of the community's faith.

They are all wrong in interpreting Jesus' words literally. He doesn't want us to challenge him to heal us, nor does he want us to put ourselves in unnecessary peril. But they are correct in recognizing that faith in Jesus gives them the ability to conquer the evils of the world. And their communities are right when they credit success on the Lord and see failure as a result of their lack of faith.

A word needs to be said about literal interpretations of the Bible. This form of fundamentalism demands that every word, every statement be believed exactly as it is written and read. These interpretations often get so bogged down in the details that they miss the point of the message. An example is in order. A young mom teenager takes her six year son to the beach. The mom is keeping an eye on the little one playing in the water, when suddenly the child calls out: "Shark, Shark!"

Mom runs into the water to protect the child, and the child just starts laughing. "This is not funny," Mom thinks, "I need to impress upon him that it is wrong to call for help when you don't need it."

So she tells the child the story of the boy who called wolf. You remember, the boy was a shepherd watching sheep and bored. So he called wolf to get the attention of the townsfolk. Then he laughed when they came running, all concerned. He did this twice. The people came both times, but were furious that he was playing a bad joke. Then the boy really did see a wolf. He called for help again, only this time no one listened and he and the flock were attacked. Now, the mom at the shore tells this story to the six year old to impress upon him the importance of only calling for help when it is needed. That is the point of the story. Anything particular about the shepherd, or whether he was tending sheep or goat, or where he lived is not important. To get bogged down in the incidentals is to miss the purpose of the message.

What was the message that Jesus was giving when he mentioned the signs of those who believed? The message was that they could fight and conquer evil in its worst forms. Jesus used snakes to represent the devil. His followers — those who believe in him — can take on and beat off the devil. He used poison to represent the evil of the world — not just a poisonous potion — but the poison that is hatred, the poison that is materialism, prejudice, alcoholism, the drug culture, the sex culture, and on and on. Jesus said that his followers would be able to take on the poison of the world and defeat it.

Then he ascended into heaven. Peter and the boys didn't grieve that he was gone. Mary Magdalene and the girls didn't resume their crying. No, they were too busy. Instead they got to work and proclaimed the wonders and the beauties of Jesus' life. The devil went after them in full battle array. He tortured them, expelled them from their communities and friends, he talked others into killing them, but, you know, the devil didn't win. He couldn't stop the work of the Kingdom of God. They beat off the snake. All the evil of the world went to war against Jesus' followers. The poisons that destroy the soul, that destroy life attacked them. The Christians didn't go into hiding. They

use the boys' birthday presents to accomplish this end. They told the boys that they would each receive a very special birthday present, and they set aside two rooms in their house. One room they filled with all the gifts, toys and clothing that they could afford. All of this was to be Paul's birthday present. They were hopeful that at least something would make him happy. The other room was for Peter. In that room they brought in a huge pile of animal manure from the nursery. They were confident that even Peter could not find anything good in such a birthday gift.

When the time came for the boys' celebration, they directed each boy into the appropriate room and closed the door. After about an hour they went into Paul's room. "Honey how do you like your birthday presents?" "Not very much," he said. "My bike is the wrong color. All these clothes are dorky, and my friends already have these video games." The parents were discouraged. At least half of their experiment had failed. Paul was as negative as he always was.

But there was still hope that Peter had become more balanced. As they approached the second room they could hear the squeals of Peter laughing in delight. They opened the door, and there he stood in the middle of the room covered with manure and gleefully digging into the pile. He looked up and said: "Mom and Dad thank you for this gift. I am sure with this much manure, there is a pony in here somewhere!"

It is our common experience that some people are optimists and others are pessimists. But the feast of the Ascension reminds us that if we are Christians, if we are followers of Christ, we are called to be optimists. What stands at the center of our faith is not warning and fear, not rules and commandments. What stands at the center of our faith is good news — the good news that Jesus who was crucified has been raised up and has entered into glory. Entering into that glory is what we celebrate today. It is what we mean when we talk about Jesus' ascension. But the good news does not stop with Jesus. We believe that the same pattern that shaped Jesus' life is now our own. We who follow Christ, who have been baptized into him, believe that our lives are now patterned on his. We believe that there is a movement in our life that is not downward toward death but upward towards life and glory. Our conviction that such a movement is our own is what supports Christian optimism.

Now not all optimism is Christian. Not all optimism is even healthy. There is a kind of optimism that is blind, that refuses to admit that there is evil in the world. Such an optimism is out of touch with reality, and it is not Christian. Christian optimism recognizes that there are many things wrong with our world, but it refuses to let that which is wrong negate that which is good. Christian optimism holds onto the hope that our lives and our world are in fact modeled after Christ's, that we are indeed moving towards glory.

Is it easy to live this kind of optimism? Not at all. It is difficult when there are problems in our family; when we worry about our children or our parents; when there is misunderstanding and hurt. It is difficult for a Christian to believe that when we love and forgive, things will work out for the best. It is difficult when we experience sickness and loss to continue to trust that we can find the courage to continue and once again be happy. It is difficult when we live in a world where so many lives are controlled by violence and war and hatred and injustice to believe that women and men of goodwill can make a difference, that working together we can find a road to peace.

It is difficult to remain optimistic in the real world in which we live, but that optimism is at the center of the gospel. We who follow Christ are challenged to believe it. Yes, there is much that is wrong about our world. But we who follow Christ believe that the world and our lives have been patterned on Jesus' own life, which changes everything. We who celebrate this feast today believe that we know the pattern and the movement of our lives. We believe that that pattern is not downward but ascending.

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



THE ASCENSION AS A LIMINAL MOMENT:

The Feast of the Ascension has got to be one of the most dramatic in the liturgical year. Not perhaps very dramatic in its liturgy [which is the same as any other Sunday], but dramatic in what it is all about — the lifting up of the Risen Jesus to his place in heaven. In the account given by St. Luke, Jesus was literally lifted up from the earth to heaven [Acts 1:1-11]. And we can imagine the extraordinary impact that this had on the disciples as he was lifted up right in front of them until a cloud took him from their sight. Then comes the appearance of two people in white who predict his return on the last day. Their chiding words — “Why are you people of Galilee standing here looking into the sky?” — imply that the disciples should be getting on with the job that Jesus has given them.

This feast of the Ascension of Jesus marks a crucial hinge point in the history of salvation. Christ — having completed his work on this earth — returns to be with the Father. The work of salvation is now transferred from the direct initiative of Christ to the work of the Church in the world — to us. This is the “handover moment”, and this moment is completed by the Feast of Pentecost which marks the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Apostles and the work of the Church really begins.

Academics would refer to the Ascension as a “liminal moment”. The Latin word “limina” literally means “threshold”. You will remember that every five years the Bishops are called to Rome to meet the Pope and to give account of their stewardship. Usually they go in groups from a particular country or region, and the Pope makes a speech in which he identifies what he regards as the most important pastoral priorities for the Church in that region for the next few years. These visits are called “ad limina” visits because they are visits to the threshold of the Apostle Peter.

But this idea of a liminal moment — or sometimes what is called liminal space — has a much wider application. It is nowadays applied to any time of transition or crossing of thresholds. When you cross a threshold, you pass from the outside to the inside, or vice versa. But in any event it is always a decisive transformation from one thing to another.

There are many liminal moments in life. They are often “rites of passage” — like moving to secondary school, being confirmed, starting your first job, getting married, etc. There are also liminal spaces — periods of time when we transfer from one mode of being to another. A common one is the journey to work. We have a period of time when we make the transition between our home life into our working life. These interludes are very important because they allow us pools of time when we are neither one thing nor the other. These spaces can be particularly fruitful moments for thinking or meditation or praying.

We are human beings, and we need time to adjust to change — to adjust to different modes of being. One important liminal moment is that of entering a Church. A liturgy professor once said that the ideal setting for a Church is in a garden. The professor pointed out that it was important not to simply step off the street into a Church — there should be a garden through which to pass so that each one felt that they were leaving ordinary existence behind — moving from worldly space and time into sacred space and time.

Not all Churches have gardens, but they all have porches where that transition can be made. It is another reason why in Catholic Churches we bless ourselves as we cross the threshold moving from the secular to the sacred or vice versa. The next time you enter a Church, think about crossing this threshold as you bless yourself with the water of Baptism.

The Disciples of Christ had been on a bit of a roller coaster. They had followed Christ around and then made the final journey to Jerusalem; they knew that the entry into Jerusalem was going to mean the inauguration of the Kingdom of God, but little did they know how it was going to happen. From the



“high” of Palm Sunday, they move to the solemnity of the Last Supper, and then they were cast down to the deep despondency of Good Friday. They are then roused from the depths of depression by reports of the appearance of the Risen Christ. They are puzzled and confused, but they realize that this is indeed Good News — even if they can’t make sense of it.

Then come the events we celebrate today when the Risen Christ gives them his last instructions and withdraws from their midst. Then they wait — not even sure what it is they are waiting for. After the roller-coaster ride of the past six weeks, they are brought to a sudden halt. Something is sure to happen, but they don’t know what. They are in a sort of in-between time — a waiting time, a thinking time, a moment of transition from how they are now to something they do not yet know.

And then comes the disturbing but exhilarating events of Pentecost and their new mission becomes clear, and they are impelled into the world to begin the great task of making known the Gospel.

But the in-between space is important. It is a time of deepening, a time of consolidation, a time of transformation. It is a time to get into a new role — a space where one life can be left behind and another kind of life begun. It is a time of moving from one certainty through a disconcerting uncertainty only to arrive at a new certainty.

We all need such moments — such spaces. These “no-mans-land” phases of our lives are vital. We need these moments of dislocation and disturbance and transition in order to reach our full maturity as human beings and as Christians. They are uncomfortable but necessary, and it is only a pity that modern society seems to think that all discomfort is bad and should be eliminated, because without such moments our lives would become disconnected from the greater reality that surrounds us.

The Church knows about these things. They are an important part of ritual. They are essential to our sacramental life. The design of our buildings, and the shape of the liturgy give us the structures we need to make the transitions which — while often uncomfortable — are so necessary for our lives.

Christ rose to his rightful place at the side of the Father. But, just as those two people dressed in white prophesied, he will return, and his return on that last great day will be to lift us up to be with him forever — that will be the last, greatest, and most definitive transition of our lives. That prophesy was made to those Apostles who were standing with their eyes gazing on heaven — not knowing what to say or do or think. If we can identify with them, then we know that those words are addressed to us too.

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

SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — SAT. JUNE 21st:

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.



HOPE:

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

—Desmond Tutu