

# 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.*

## “TETELESTAI” IS COMING:

Our Lady Chapel is blessed to host the Passion Play, *Tetéléstai*, this coming Lent. Cleveland Performing Arts Ministries’ musical passion

play will be presented at Gilmour’s Center for the Performing Arts on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup> [8 PM], Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> [8PM], and Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> [2 PM] — Palm Sunday weekend. Our Lady Chapel will be utilized for overflow seating, with a livestream of the performance.

*Tetéléstai*’s dramatic stage production and timeless music tell the story of Jesus’ trial, execution and resurrection in a visual way that will leave a lasting impression. Having *Tetéléstai* here as we begin Holy Week will be a great way to enter into our observance of the Paschal Mystery.

There is no charge for the presentation, but free-will offerings will be accepted. Each performance will be followed by a reception with refreshments in the Center foyer. For more information, please contact the Chapel office [440-473-3560] or visit the *Tetéléstai* website: [www.livethepassion.org](http://www.livethepassion.org).

# TETELESTAI

## LENTEN COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE:

Our community celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on **Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**. Our service is centered around reflections by the various characters involved in the passion and death of Jesus. There will also be songs and hymns, and a time to bring ourselves from our sinful ways back to the Lord. As we confront our own sinfulness, we realize that we, too, have a part to play in the death of Jesus. The service will last about 45 minutes. There will be a time for individual confessions following the service, for those who wish to avail themselves of this opportunity. Please join us.



## HOLY CROSS ROADS – WRITINGS FOR THE JOURNEY:

The Church is like a garden in which many flowers are planted. An example is the beauty of God’s creation. These flowers can represent the saints. They come with different histories and nationalities. They give witness to Christ being planted in different times and cultures. Some are called to martyrdom in difficult times. Some are called to found religious communities. Others are ordinary people — like you and me — and are called to live their lives in an extraordinary way. Some are called to rely on the unreserved compassion of God as they change their lives and embrace a compassionate God.



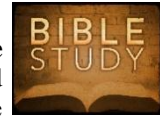
What do they all have in common? They all have made Christ the center of their lives. Their faith and trust in God have led them to expand their plans to surrender to God’s will and extraordinary events on their spiritual journey. They become true witnesses to Christianity. They are people who have not only talked the talk but people who have walked the walk. Their lives become part of a beautiful garden that Christ has cultivated in the Church. We too are called to let the Christ life grow into sainthood.

- Who is your favorite saint?
- What qualities in him or her are especially appealing to you?
- How close are you to making Christ the center of your life?

O God, thank you for the witness of the saints to help me on my life’s journey.

—Brother Carl Sternberg, C.S.C.

**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25:**



**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. Bible Study** usually meets 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: Prayer — what we learn from Jesus in the garden**

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.

**MASS SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Sunday, March 22:<br>5 <sup>th</sup> Week in Lent | <b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream |
| Monday, March 23:                                 | <b>NO MASS</b>                          |
| Tuesday, March 24:                                | <b>NO MASS</b>                          |
| Wednesday, March 25:<br>Annunciation to Mary      | <b>NO MASS</b>                          |
| Thursday, March 26:                               | <b>NO MASS</b>                          |
| Friday, March 27:                                 | <b>NO MASS</b>                          |
| Saturday, March 28:<br>Palm Sunday                | <b>5:00 PM</b> In-Person only           |
| Sunday, March 29:<br>Palm Sunday                  | <b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream |

**SCHEDULE OF LENTEN EVENTS & HOLY WEEK/EASTER SERVICES:**

- *Tetelstai* presentation in the performing arts center. Overflow will view livestream in chapel. **Friday, March 27 at 8:00 PM, Saturday, March 28 at 8:00 PM, and Sunday, March 29 at 2:00 PM**
- **Communal Penance Service — Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**
- **Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM.**
- **Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:15 PM.**
- **Good Friday Service** [Liturgy of the Word, Veneration of the Cross, and Communion] on **Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3:00 PM.**
- **Blessing of Easter Foods** will be at **12:00 noon on Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>** [if there is interest].
- **Easter Vigil Service** will be at **8:30 PM on Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>.**
- **Easter Sunday Mass** will be at **10:00 AM on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.**

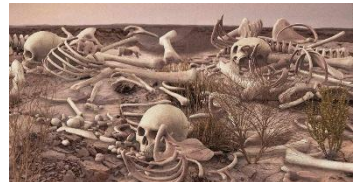
## REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S THEME:

There was a sign in the window of our neighborhood shoe repair shop. It read simply: “Time wounds all heels.” Obviously, it is a play on “Time heals all wounds.” Both are true, but the latter can take much longer than the former. We all have probably had our eye poked with a stick or finger, and that little wound can hurt and weep for a long time. The heart gets hurt figuratively even more often — it can take years to heal, and to trust again.

Throughout the course of these days of Lent, we move closer towards the celebration of Christ’s Resurrection. And with God’s help we move toward those graces of resurrecting from the tombs of our hearts’ pains. There are no easy methods of living with pain and loss. We cannot write their names on a sheet of paper and then burn them all away. Those hurts and disappointments find comfortable residences in our emotional living rooms. They can become permanent guests, and for various reasons, we might grow quite accustomed to their company.

All of us can remember times, events, and persons who have broken our hearts and souls; sometimes even we have been our own worst enemies. As these pains have brought us to our knees in the past, we bring these to our God who alone can replace the empty or broken in our hearts and souls.

The prophet Ezekiel speaks of a vision he had to the disheartened people of Israel in captivity — away from their promised lands. He sees a vision of the “Dry Bones” where the prophet calls upon the “Breath” or “Spirit” of God to bring life and spirit together as the bones are rejoined. We hear a promise meant to bring joy and hope back into their lives [Ezekiel 37:1-14].



Two points of hope are stressed with a comforting introduction: “My people” proclaims that God has not disowned Israel while they are in captivity. As the bones in the vision will return to life, so their graves will be opened, and the dead shall rise. They will be returning to their land — their identifying holy ground of the ancient promises. To affirm the promise, the Lord says that “this is my story, and I am going to stick with it.” God is professing fidelity along with the double promise.

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent, we heard about the man who was blind from birth, and Jesus healed him “so that the works of God might be made visible through him” [see John 9]. In this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent, Jesus is told about the illness of His good friend, Lazarus [John 11:1-45]. John has Jesus saying the same thing — “this illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Stated simply, Jesus does these “signs” or “works” so that seeing them, people will come to believe that He is the One who has been sent.

Seeing is a means to seeing beyond what is seen — we call this faith. Recovery of sight and recovery of life go together — they are the same work or sign. Glory for John is revelation or visibility. We do not believe within a vacuum, and God has come as the Light to enlighten us through the presence of the God made Flesh.

Again John uses the theme of light, by having Jesus talk about walking during the day and stumbling at night, and at night, without the light, stumbling is real. John keeps working his basic themes throughout his entire writing.

Lazarus is dead, and again the impossible situation presents a drama through which Jesus brings resolution. Can a man born blind be given sight; can a dead man rise? The answer is clear, but the physical is a bit symbolic. There is more to seeing than seeing — there is more to living than being brought back from death. Jesus says to Martha that believing in Him is what life is and those who do believe will never die.

When Martha meets Jesus, she affirms her faith despite being tested by grief. Jesus does not dismiss her pain, but joins her, demonstrating that faith and sorrow do coexist. His actions reveal his unwavering compassion for all human suffering. His response — “I am the resurrection and the life” — challenges Martha to look beyond physical death to the hope of eternal life with God. It is comforting and demanding, calling me to live in the tension of life and death, joy and suffering. A stance that embraces life in all of its fullness.

When Jesus asks Martha if she believes, she says simply: “Yes Lord.” At the end of the narrative, we hear: “Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what He had done began to believe in Him.” All John’s stories end with such statements of belief. The man who was blind, the woman at the well, those who were fed in the desert, all had to see the “signs” and surrender to what was really present beyond and yet within those gestures.

The resurrection is not just a future hope; it is standing with Martha before the person of Jesus. Calling Lazarus to come out of the tomb demonstrates his authority over death. As Lazarus comes out of the tomb, covered in bandages, Jesus’ command to unbind him and let him go is a powerful symbol of the unbinding of humanity from fear. He is the One who enters the places of suffering, breaking the bandages of slavery and creating life.

While this is the reality to which Christ calls us, is this really how we look at it? To be honest, I personally am glad I have never witnessed a “miracle” in the ordinary sense of the word. Miracles would somehow force me to the leap, to the surrender, and to the believing. I do not want to be sure any more. I have witnessed signs which I have taken as hints or “come-ons”, but they also could just be what they outwardly appear. I like to choose a more free response, based on these hints, and let go of my human arrogance which demands the security of knowing clearly. I would choose to be at the Wedding Feast at Cana, and the water remained just water [see John 2]. I would like to have watched Jesus taken the five loaves and two fish and give them away and just say that there isn’t any more [see Mark 6]. I would be with Mary and Martha while Jesus weeps over His good friend’s death and walk with them home to talk about the good life of Lazarus [see John 11]. I would be the Man Born Blind, and want to come to faith as a way of seeing, rather than being given sight and then believe [see John 9]. I do not believe in Jesus because of miracles! I believe in Jesus because, well, just because of who I find myself to be and Who I find and how I find God to be in my mind and soul.

Everybody believes in something; there are not any unbelievers. As we say, atheism is a God-given option. —taken from the writings of Gladyce Janky and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

## **SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — SAT. APRIL 18<sup>th</sup>:**

Our Savior Lutheran Church — across the street from the Chapel — has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on **the third Saturday of each month**. They welcome volunteers. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help unloading the trailers and setting up items for distribution and preparing for the food pantry to open. It serves around 150 clients each time. The food pantry serves clients from 9:30 AM—1:30 PM on Saturday.**



Our Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. **Please 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.

## RISING TO NEW LIFE:

All of us, I am sure, have read recent accounts about the decline of interest in religion among Americans. A recent survey reports that 20% of Americans have no religious affiliations at all and feel no need of or belief in God. It seems they feel that they are self-sufficient — God is not necessary. So why do those of us who go to Church go? Our motives are many and mixed. Some go in their need to seek God's help; some go seeking God's forgiveness; others go out of love of God; others out of thanksgiving for all that God has done for them. Some go simply out of a sense of duty and others out of mere habit. All of us are looking forward to everlasting life with God in heaven.

Our liturgy for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent began with this prayer: “Help us, O Lord, to embrace the world that you have given us, that we may transform the darkness of its pain into the life and joy of Easter.” And that is followed by the words of God spoken over the dry bones: “Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Lord God says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them’” [Ezekiel 37:1-14]. What does this mean for us, living out our lives as we do in 2026 America?

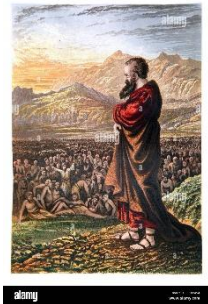
To answer that I would pay some attention to what we frequently hear on the news, or read in our local papers — namely, the spirit of defeat that is spoken or quoted, and which sometimes infects our own hearts and thoughts. Perhaps some of our own sons and daughters, nieces or nephews, relatives or friends, speak of how awful life is, or about how much they are life's victims. They blame other people for being so mean to them, they blame their depression on the economy, they talk about their own lack of fulfillment, they tell us they're getting nothing out of life, and so forth — doubt, disillusionment, discouragement, and depression hold many people in bondage.

Fortunately for we who are people of faith, there are words of optimism coming from many people who surround us countering those transmitting a spirit of defeat. What are the causes of this defeatism? Well there are many of course. But here I would like to examine four of them and then turn to what we can do about them.

The first source of defeat for so many people is called “extremism”. It's the sort of attitude that converts what is really happening only occasionally into something they claim is *always* happening. “I always goof. I never do anything right,” we hear them say. “People always take advantage of me.” These words and similar phrases are symptomatic of the spiritual condition these people are in. Their thoughts come from a way of looking at life that is either extremely idealistic or else extremely pessimistic. They see life as either one or the other — not balanced. Defeat is guaranteed them because they do not have a balanced view of what really happens in life. Life isn't “either-or,” “black or white,” “all or nothing.” In reality, life is a complicated mixture of many factors and forces.

The second source of defeat comes from the sort of mentality that continually makes comparisons. This outlook dooms one into never thinking that one has enough. This kind of person is forever comparing his or her lot in life with people who are better off. Someone else is better looking, has more money, lives in a better house, has a better job, and so on. Depression is guaranteed them — defeatism finally takes over. This is one of the major sources of defeat and frustration in our culture today. The entire advertising industry is built on the business of comparing yourself to others so that you will buy their advertised product and then be as wonderfully happy as others are.

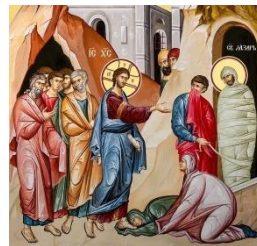
A third source of defeat that infests many souls is what is called “passive resignation.” We simply surrender ourselves to our feelings and then call it “fate.” We hear these people say: “Well, that's just



my lot in life”; “I was never destined to do any better”; “That’s life, and I might just as well accept it”; “It’s God’s will that I suffer”.

The final source of defeat which I’d like to point out is too much reliance on self and the things of this world. This is often the most common source of defeat. There is not enough reliance on faith in Christ and the things of God. The underlying problem is a lack of real belief that God can or will do anything to help me. Either we think we’re not worthy because we’re too evil, or else we think that God really doesn’t care because He never seems answer our prayers anyway. The result is that we make the hidden assumption that if we’re going to be happy and successful in life, we’ve got to achieve it ourselves because God won’t take care of us until we get to heaven... if in fact we do get there.

In the face of all this, God’s Word in the Scripture Readings for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent comes to us with a challenging question — a question that hits each one of us. The question is this: “What is your heart wrapped around?” Put another way: “What is the thought that’s constantly on your mind? What continually absorbs your attention? And then listen intently to what the Lord says to you: “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not. See, I am doing something new!” [Isaiah 43:18-19]; “Lazarus, come out” [John 11:1-45]. God wants us to see things afresh, not in our usual ways but rather in His renewing ways.



You see, we must begin to think now of what can be in our future and stop thinking about what has been in our past. Each of the Sacraments is an act of God in Christ. The Sacraments are not merely symbols, nor did human beings invent them merely to be pretty ceremonies. Sacraments are the acts of God Himself in Christ reaching out to make things fresh and new for us. Baptism is a Sacrament of beginning a new life for us. The Sacrament of Reconciliation gives us a fresh start, a new beginning, and a new lease on life. Matrimony, Ordination, Anointing of the Sick — all are opportunities for us to pick-up on life where we left off, if only we will let God do His work in us, if only we will do things with Him in His ways.

Really, then, what is defeat for us? When you get right down to it, nothing can defeat us except the spirit of defeatism. We recall that in the bottom of the Great Depression in the 1930’s, Franklin Delano Roosevelt cried out: “We have nothing to fear except fear itself.” And we know Roosevelt was right. Once our national self-confidence was restored and once we shook off the spirit of defeatism and isolationism — those two great works of the devil designed to make us weak and impotent — we then began to come out of our depression.

The same is true in our own personal and individual lives. For Easter is the religious and theological statement that, for the Christian, there is really no ultimate defeat. To be sure, we shall suffer temporary setbacks. And to be sure, we shall suffer in the future. But defeat? We should see that because of Christ’s Easter Resurrection we can never be totally defeated. What is required is that we stop constantly feeling sorry for ourselves and let our faith in God replace our own lack of faith in our selves.

Am I preoccupied by my own failures and misfortunes? Is my heart wrapped up in the illusory comfort of feeling sorry for myself? Am I passively resigned to my fate in life? Well, now is the time to throw open the doors of that self-made prison. The stone has been rolled back from the tomb of poor Lazarus. Christ has commanded that he be released from all that bound him up, and then set him free.

The same is true for you. Christ has rolled back the imprisoning stones that entomb our hearts. It’s time to go free because God in Christ wants us — like poor Lazarus — to be free, to be happy, and to enjoy life. He wants us walk in the glorious freedom of the sons and daughters of God.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent

Defeatism is the sacrament of the devil, along with his other sacraments of doubt, depression, and disillusionment. For if we walk with Christ and join our passion and suffering into His, then we can walk away from all in life that's cold, dead, dreary, depressing, and all that which leads us into the hell of our own defeatism.

“Remember not,” your God says to you now, “the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not. See, I am doing something new.” This Easter, let God do something new within you. The Resurrection is God's promise that we can have a new life.

—taken from the writings of Charles Irvin, 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 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.

|  |       |                  |
|--|-------|------------------|
| <b>Total Offerings: Saturday [3/14/26]</b> | ----- | <b>\$ 775.00</b> |
| <b>Total Offerings: Sunday [3/15/26]</b>   | ----- | <b>\$ 260.00</b> |

### SELF-DISCIPLINE:

Self-control is like the immune system. People who despise self-control think that they are breaking free. In reality, they are breaking down. Ignore self-control and the big laws that God has given in the Ten Commandments, and you don't get freedom — you don't even get anarchy. You get the small laws. You will have to micromanage a hundred petty problems, and put out a thousand little fires created by your failure to take the trouble to do the right thing in the first place. And the busier you are with that, the less time you have to deal with the reality of a dangerous world in which there really are people and demons who wish you ill. We experience this every single day in the world in which we live — the world that doesn't know God. The same is true in our individual lives. Abandon self-control, and you will soon be controlled by someone or something else. Control yourself, and you will not be “repressed” — you will be free. —Anonymous

### FAITH EDUCATION:

**Faith Education will resume on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>.** Faith Education is an important part of every young person's religious 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. **Please contact Patty or Father John in the Chapel Office for more information.**



## RAISING THE DEAD:

“Lazarus, come out!” Come out, Lazarus. Come out of the tomb. Come out of the darkness. Come out of the stench. Come out of death. “Lazarus, come out!” Somewhere along the line, I must have had a name change that I didn’t realize. You too! I think my name really was *Lazarus*. Maybe if you think about it, Lazarus was also your name. I figure that my name was Lazarus because I didn’t just live among the dead — I was dead. And where I was stunk — it was foul and dark. For I, like perhaps you, lived in a world of sin — joining in every now and then. Sometimes the sin was in the accumulating and hoarding of stuff. Sometimes the sin was in the refusal to control what I say or do. Sometimes the sin was in selfish indulgence. Many times the sin was in ignoring the needs of others — as the rich man did to another man named Lazarus. The particular sins might be different for everyone, but all of us — including the finest people each of us has ever met — all of us have not just lived among the dead — we chose to be dead ourselves.

“Lazarus come out!”

And so Jesus calls us — me and you. “Lazarus come out! ” Someone else has done the heavy lifting. Someone else rolled away the stone for us. Jesus did this with the sacrificial love of the cross. But we still have to come out ourselves. We have to leave the familiar comfort of our tomb. Stinky and foul as it is, we have to leave the familiar comfort of our self-centered lives, and we have to walk to the voice, walk to Jesus, walk to the one who is calling us.



And we have walked to Him. And life is so much more beautiful now! The air is fresh. We forgot how great that was to live in fresh air. The birds are singing. Our ears are no longer ringing with the clamor, the noise of selfishness. Life smells good. Life is beautiful now as we walk to the One who is calling us, as we walk to Jesus.

And Jesus says: “I called you from the tomb so others can live also. I need you to be my voice. I need you to call out.”

We look around us. The gossip — it is as though the only joy that some people have in their lives is tearing down others. The using — so many people only have one thought when it comes to another person: “What’s in it for me?” The hollow joy of momentary pleasures — the party-now worry-later attitude that results in self-destruction. The selfishness that locks us into a downward spiral.

And we recognized the frustration of so many around us — the frustration that had been under the thin surface of our own lives. And we call out to others: “Lazarus, come out!”

So many who are all wrapped up in their little worlds see you, see me, and say: “I want to be happy like him, like her.” Our very happiness, our living the life of Jesus Christ calls out to others: “Lazarus, come out of that tomb!” By seeking union with the One to whom we walk when we leave our tombs, we are calling others to join us — “Lazarus, come out!” By living a Christian lifestyle — even though that means being different than those who brag about their immorality, even though that means being holy, for being different is being holy — our very lives call out to all: “Lazarus, come out!”

Why should I live in a dark, foul tomb? Why should you? Why should anyone live among the dead? Listen, listen to the voice. Walk to the voice. Let us call out to the world: “Walk with us — and with Lazarus. Walk with us to the One who is the Lord of Life!”

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

## THE CALL:

Anchor the eternity of love in your own soul and embed this planet with its goodness. —John Lewis

## **PRAYER BETWEEN BREATHS:**

Once, after a parish gathering with migrant women, I sat next to a mother who had just received difficult news about her son. He had been detained earlier that week. The room had grown quiet as people slowly began to leave. She remained seated, her hands folded in her lap. Every few minutes she whispered the same words under her breath: "Dios mío, cuidalo" ["My God, take care of him"].

She was not praying long prayers or speaking in theological language; her words were short — almost fragile — like someone holding onto the thinnest thread of hope. Yet as I listened, I realized that what I was witnessing was not a weak form of prayer — it was one of the most powerful prayers I had ever heard.

The deepest prayer in the world rarely happens in churches or retreat centers. Rather, it happens in kitchens, hospital waiting rooms, detention centers; quiet moments of worry, when people speak to God with only a few words. These are the prayers that rise between breaths. Prayer, at its most essential, is not a performance of faith, but a gesture of trust. A few words whispered in the midst of fear can carry the weight of an entire life. Prayer is simply what happens when the human heart speaks to God in the middle of ordinary life.

In the Gospels, many of the prayers Jesus hears are brief and urgent. A blind man cries out from the roadside: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me" [Mark 10:47]. A desperate father pleads: "Lord, help my unbelief" [Mark 9:24]. From the cross, another voice requests simply: "Remember me when you come into your kingdom" [Luke 23:42]. These prayers are not polished or carefully constructed. They rise from the raw edge of human need. They are survival prayers.



The Christian tradition has long known that prayer does not always require many words. In fact, Scripture often connects prayer with breath itself. In the biblical languages, the word for Spirit also means breath or wind. The Spirit is the breath of God moving through creation — the quiet life that sustains everything that lives. To pray, then, is nothing more than allowing that breath to carry a few words toward God.

This is why some of the most ancient forms of Christian prayer are brief phrases repeated gently with the rhythm of breathing: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." "Come, Holy Spirit." "Into your hands." These prayers are simple enough to be carried throughout the day, whispered while walking, working, waiting or worrying. They remind us that prayer does not always require special conditions. Prayer is simply what happens when the human heart speaks to God in the middle of ordinary life.

In the communities I have accompanied over the years, I have heard many of these small prayers. A mother blessing her children before they leave the house. A man whispering: "Lord, give me strength," while waiting for difficult news. Someone murmuring a quiet "Thank you, God" at the end of a long day.

Among migrant communities, these prayers often become even more essential. They are whispered while waiting for news from home, while crossing borders and while beginning again in unfamiliar places. They are short prayers carried in pockets and repeated in moments of uncertainty — like small lights people refuse to let go of. In such moments, prayer does not appear as spiritual achievement. It appears as trust — sometimes fragile, sometimes stubborn, but deeply real.

These prayers rarely appear in books about spirituality. They are too brief, too ordinary, too woven into the fragile rhythms of daily life. Yet they carry a depth that formal words sometimes cannot reach. They rise not from certainty, but from relationship, from the quiet confidence that someone is listening.

They may be simple prayers, but they hold the weight of real life. The smallest prayers are often the most honest ones. They are not meant to impress, only to reach the heart of God, one breath at a time.  
—taken from the writings of Yolanda Chávez which appear on the internet

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

We list the Scripture readings for the week, with the hope that you will take some time in your busy day to reflect on God’s word in your homes. We hope you can make good use of it.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Monday:</b>      | Daniel 13:1-62; John 8:1-11  |
| <b>Tuesday:</b>     | Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30   |
| <b>Wednesday:</b>   | Isaiah 7:10-14; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38                              |
| <b>Thursday:</b>    | Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59   |
| <b>Friday:</b>      | Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42   |
| <b>Saturday:</b>    | Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56  |
| <b>Palm Sunday:</b> | Matthew 21:1-11;<br>Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66 |

## THE RAISING OF LAZARUS AND BAPTISM:

Set against the backdrop of Jesus’ impending Death, many elements of the raising of Lazarus foreshadow the good news of Jesus’ own Resurrection. Jesus, facing the conflict with the Jewish authorities, acts in complete obedience to God. In raising Lazarus, Jesus shows his power over death so that when Jesus dies, those who believe in him might remember that and take hope. Just as Jesus calls for the stone to be rolled away from Lazarus’s tomb, so too will the disciples find the stone rolled away from Jesus’ tomb.

With our catechumens preparing for their Baptism at Easter, John’s Gospel [11:1-45] calls us to reflect on Baptism as a dying and rising with Jesus. In Baptism we die to sin’s power over us, rising as children of God. In Baptism we join ourselves with Christ, who conquered death once and for all so that we who believe in him may have eternal life. With Martha and Mary, we are called to profess our belief that Jesus is indeed the Resurrection and the life.



Likewise, each of us, as a result of our Baptism, can recognize how Jesus has rolled away the stones of our own tombs and called us to new life. We, in turn, are sent forth to bring hope of new life to others who are entombed by suffering, despair, and injustice.

- Who are some of the people/groups of people in society today who are “entombed” by suffering, despair, and injustice?
- How can we bring hope and new life to those who are “entombed” by these realities?
- When was a time that someone brought hope and new life to you?
- What are some of the “stones” that need to be “rolled away” in our society so that people may truly be free from injustice?

—taken from the writings of Joe Paprocki which appear on the internet

## WHEN JESUS ARRIVES LATE:

It is very easy to move too quickly past the beginning of this story about Jesus and Lazarus [John 11:1-45]. We rush past the beginning because the rest of the story appears, at first glance, to be far more fascinating. Indeed, most of the time it is what Jesus did all the way at the end of the story that galvanizes our attention. There, after all, is the main drama, since it was at the end of the story that Jesus performed his most astonishing miracle — raising Lazarus, deceased four days, from the dead. Jesus had done a number of other miracles in the Gospel of John, of course. He had turned water into wine [see John 2], healed a paralyzed man [see John 5] and restored sight to a man blind from birth [see John 9]. But to raise someone from the dead? This was breathtaking, unheard of, a remarkable sign of the inbreaking of the eternal — an anticipation of Jesus' own resurrection. No wonder the end of the story attracts our gaze — it is where the fireworks are.

Sometimes, however, when we have finished our amazed gazing at the end of the Lazarus story, we still have enough energy to shift our sights to what Jesus did in the middle of the story — namely, he wept! This piece of the narrative is fascinating, too. “Jesus wept” [John 11:35] is the shortest verse in the Bible, but it is not the easiest verse to understand. Why did Jesus weep? Is he moved with grief over the death of his friend Lazarus? Is he in sorrow over the unbelief around him? Is he anticipating his own death, too? John does not say. And even though the reasons for Jesus' feelings remain somewhat mysterious, we are still drawn to this picture in the middle of the story of an emotionally affected Jesus — tears slowly falling down his cheeks.



Because Lazarus' raising at the end of this story is so dramatic, and Jesus' weeping in the middle so enigmatic, it is, therefore, easy to overlook the beginning of this story. What at the beginning could possibly rival the action in the middle and at the end? To do so, however, would be a loss — for there is something curious and important at work there as well.

What is most intriguing about the beginning of this story is the fact that Jesus is intentionally tardy — that he plans his schedule so as to arrive on the scene belatedly. Jesus receives word that Lazarus is ill in the village of Bethany, but John makes it clear that Jesus was in no hurry to respond. In fact, John draws attention to Jesus' delay. John says that even though Jesus loved Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, nevertheless, Jesus waited two days after he heard the news to go to Bethany [John 11:5-6]. By that time, of course, it is too late — Lazarus is dead.

Both Martha and Mary pour salt into the wound by pointing out to Jesus that his tardiness has cost a life. “Lord, if you had been here,” they both say, “my brother would not have died” [John 11:21, 32]. Indeed, Jesus was not there, intended not to be there, and Lazarus did die. John waves a flag over this fact so that we will not miss it.

This is certainly strange behavior on the part of Jesus; it *should* cause us to raise our eyebrows a bit. What kind of person would dally around while a friend lies dying? What could possibly have kept Jesus where he was while Lazarus, whom he loved, sweated out his last few breaths on his death bed? What Jesus did seems to be a violation of basic human compassion not to mention a scorning of the elementary instincts of pastoral care. Why in heaven's name, we ask, was Jesus late?

And that, it turns out, is precisely the question the author of John wants us to ask. Why in heaven's name was Jesus late? John knows that if we keep asking that question, we will discover something profound about **JESUS**, and about God's ways in the world. But what? What good can we possibly find in Jesus' tardiness?

Part of what we will find is that Jesus sometimes saves us by being absent rather than present — at least not present in the ways we demand or expect. Later in the Gospel of John, Jesus tells his disciples that he will soon depart from them. “You will look for me....but where I am going, you cannot come” [John 13:33]. This announcement that Jesus plans to separate himself from the disciples causes fear — perhaps even panic — to set in. The disciples cannot imagine being apart from Jesus. They plead that they will be lost without him [John 14:5], beg to be allowed to follow him [John 13:37], but Jesus refuses. He clearly intends to be their Lord by being absent from them.

What this means is that Jesus will be obedient to God’s will and not theirs. Jesus will accomplish the saving work of God and not their small and local understanding of who he should be. They want him to be the leader of their little band, but Jesus is the light of the whole world. They want him to teach them, guide them, heal them, protect them, save them — Jesus teaches, guides, heals, protects, and saves all humanity. They want him to respond to their immediate concerns, but his mission is not captive to their sense of what is urgent. He is their Lord because he transcends their little world; he is their Lord because he is Lord of all.

On Sunday morning, July 17, 1966, a very special gathering was held in St. Peter’s Cathedral in Geneva, Switzerland. A great congregation had gathered, including Christian leaders from all over the globe. Reporters from around the world were present to cover this event. The service had been planned as a part of the World Council of Churches Conference on Church and Society, and there was an exceptional air of expectation that day since the sermon for the morning was to be delivered by the world famous civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



But Dr. King did not show up for the service. The hymns were sung, the prayers were prayed, and the ecumenical affirmations were spoken, but the pulpit was empty that day. Dr. King was absent. He had canceled his trip to Geneva because racial rioting had erupted in the city of Chicago, and his presence was needed there as a mediator. He sent a video tape of an excellent sermon to Geneva, and it was played over television monitors at the appropriate time, but, as one of the worshippers pointed out: “Even more powerful than his sermon that day was the simple fact that Dr. King was absent.”

In other words, Dr. King chose to be absent in a place where he was expected to be present because of his larger sense of mission. If he had been a politician looking for a photo opportunity, he would no doubt have shown up in the Geneva pulpit, smiling for the cameras, rather than risking his life and reputation amid the chaos of Chicago’s violent streets. But given the wider scope of Dr. King’s ministry, what appeared on the surface to be the most important place for him to be — St. Peter’s Cathedral — was not, in fact, where his vocation took him.

In an even deeper sense, Jesus’ mission transcends our tiny definitions of urgency. A man was dying. More than that, it was Jesus’ friend, Lazarus, who was dying. Lazarus’ body grew weak, hot with fever. Mary and Martha were wringing their hands with worry. The whole village of Bethany was troubled. Naturally, from Bethany’s perspective, this was the most urgent, important, life or death crisis in all of creation, and Jesus should have dropped everything in the world to be there. But Jesus will not drop the world; he will save it, all of it. Jesus is not controlled by illness and death — even his dear friend Lazarus’ illness and death; to the contrary, Jesus is the one in control. Jesus does not jump when illness and death say “jump”; he conquers illness and death for the entire human race.

Not only will Jesus not allow illness and death to set his agenda, neither will Jesus allow death to be the ruler of time. In the world as we know it, death is in charge of time. When the hospital’s intercom

crackles with the message “Code Blue” — a signal that a patient has suddenly gone into cardiac arrest — all normal time ceases. Physicians and nurses abruptly interrupt their customary duties and rush with emergency equipment to the afflicted patient. Routines are halted; all other activities must wait. Death has sounded the alarm, and pushed the stem on the stop watch, and all must urgently obey death’s timetable.

But not Jesus. He gets the “Code Blue” on Lazarus, receives the word that the old clockwatching slaved river — death — has punched in “911”, and his immediate presence is demanded. But Jesus does not respond to death’s timetable. Jesus is Lord over death, and Lord of all time. No longer will death set the times and seasons, but only God. So, Jesus takes his time, because it is, after all, his time. He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and he is the Lord over Monday, and Thursday, and all the ticking minutes and desperate seasons of life. He is Lord over all time. He was there in the beginning, before all time, and through him all creation, including time, came into being.

There is a couple in Arkansas who have given their six-year-old son strict instructions to come home from playing every afternoon no later than 5 PM. He is allowed to play with his friends, but his parents are quite serious about his curfew. If he is not home by 5 PM, they begin to worry and call around the neighborhood to find out where he is. The boy knows this, though, and is careful to arrive every day on time.

One April Monday, however, the day after Daylight Saving Time went into effect, the boy was late coming home. When he finally arrived, a few minutes before 6 PM, his mother scolded him for being late. “You know you are to be home by five,” she said, “and here it is nearly six.”

Puzzled, the little boy pointed out the window. “But the light,” he protested, “the light; it’s the light that tells me when to come home.” Realizing what had happened, his mother smiled and gently explained that the day before the time had been changed, that everyone had reset their clocks, and, now, the daylight lasted longer. The boy’s eyes narrowed. “Does God know about this?” he asked suspiciously.

In a childlike way, this little boy shared John’s theological vision. Time finally belongs not to human beings, not to the corruption of illness and death, but to God. We know what time it is not by death’s clock, but by Jesus’ light. Jesus arrived in Bethany on his schedule — not death’s. When he got to the tomb of Lazarus, now dead four days, Jesus, the Lord of past, present, and future, reached into the future of his resurrection victory and reversed the past of Lazarus’ death, thereby displaying the glory of God in the present.

“God so loved the world,” John writes, “that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him” can change their clocks. Instead of watching the clock, wondering when death will finally come — calling to stop the hour hand from moving — those who believe recognize that Jesus came calling with life eternal. When Jesus at last came calling on the little village of Bethany, it was the common verdict that he was woefully late. But when Lazarus danced away from the tomb of death, the light of eternal life in his eyes, the whole world could see that Jesus was right on time.

—edited from the writings of Thomas Long which appear on the internet.

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:**

Father John is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you. Please call him [440-473-3560] to arrange for this experience. 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].



## LOVE AND DEATH:

Very soon Holy Week will be here. Let us be frank. Jesus will go from the status of great healer and holy man to that of a common criminal who is humiliated and put to death. What could he be thinking as he goes toward such a fate? What was Jesus' attitude toward death and Good Friday? Was he unmoved by such a prospect? The readings for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent offer us a clue.

The readings for this 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent tell us that human love gets its life from God's love, and even life itself gets its being from God's love. Let's explore. John's Gospel begins with an unusual situation. Even though "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" yet oddly, Jesus remains out of town during the days of his friend's illness and death [John 11:1-45]. He could have gone, but he chose to delay instead. When he finally makes the trip, Martha says: "if you had been here, my brother would not have died." These are hard words. The Martha sends for her sister Mary who says: "Where were you!" Aren't these basically the very same words that Jesus would pray from the cross a short time later: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" [Psalm 22].

When Jesus sees the tears of Mary and the friends who surrounded her, he "becomes disturbed and deeply troubled." This is a picture of Jesus we do not ordinarily see. The famous words that follow are unlike any others in the Gospels: "And Jesus wept."



Jesus was not indifferent toward death or toward his loved ones — not at all. But his tears make Mary and Martha's question still more poignant. "You love us and you loved him; why did you not come to us when he was still alive, when you could have saved him?" I think many of us are tempted to ask God that same question when a loved one dies.

Look back at the beginning of John's Gospel to find the answer — Jesus told the disciples: "this illness of my friend is not going to end in death." What? It isn't? Lazarus is dead! And then we see Jesus' re-arrangement of human values: "This is happening for the Glory of God." He is saying that he knows this is hard for them to comprehend so he has to show them in the flesh that even sorrow and death are immersed in God's always gentle love. They are like flowers sprouting out of an "earth" which is love. The glorious love of God undergirds everything else. Every other love gets its growth from God's love. Even life gets its life from God's love.

So Jesus calls out in a loud voice — calls to the love where Lazarus' soul is resting even in the midst of death and decay. He calls to God's pregnant love. From that womb the life of Lazarus was born and now is born again. Out of the tomb he walks.

And so Jesus is right. Lazarus' illness does not lead to final death. We usually have it backwards. We always think of love as an emotion that springs from the fact that we are alive. But the opposite is true. Life is a condition that springs from the fact that we are rooted in God's love. This love is the real earth and real ground. When life ends, we are drawn back into love's rich loan. Jesus cast his voice into this fertile ground when he said: "Lazarus, come out!" And love, stronger than life or death, gladly obeyed, letting earthly life be there again.

The cross is referred to in advance here. Jesus' own death and resurrection are foretold. Very soon Jesus will have to trust in his own words, that his suffering "will not end in death" — death of his oneness with the Father. "It would be happening for the Glory of God."

Trust love. Life has its roots there.

—taken from the writings of Father John Foley, S.J., which appear on the internet

## HONESTY:

Honesty with God, others, and self demands a huge amount of courage and humility. —Eamon Tobin

## IF ONLY:

We've sung this song ever since Adam swallowed his bite of the apple — "If only I had thought it through better... If only I hadn't left the iron on.... If only ..." Martha and Mary sang their own "If only" song when Jesus arrived after they had buried their brother [John 11:1-45]. John's Gospel doesn't say why he delayed, but specifies that Jesus headed to Bethany on the third day. More than a period of 72 hours, the third day is scriptural shorthand for the moment of salvation. On the third day, Isaac was saved from Abraham's knife, the Lord appeared on Sinai, Hosea's people were saved and, of course, Jesus promised to rise on the third day.

Setting off on the third day, Jesus knew well that promise and danger lay ahead. The journey toward Jerusalem was about more than Lazarus. As Thomas made clear, Jesus and company were on the way to confront death. As they walked, Jesus offered his friends an enigmatic explanation: this "is not to end in death but the glory of God".

When Martha met Jesus, she spoke for many: "If only you had been here, my brother would not have died!" When Jesus said that Lazarus will rise, Martha affirmed her belief that, as Ezekiel promised, God would open the people's graves on the last day [Ezekiel 37:1-14]. Skipping over that proclamation of faith, Jesus responded to her "if only" with an "I AM" — "I AM the resurrection and the life."

Saying "I AM," Jesus identified himself as the fully present giver and sustainer of life — "I AM" the bread of life, light of the world, door of the sheep and good shepherd, the way, truth and life, and the true vine. Explaining the full meaning of all these statements, he added: "Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live and anyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

Jesus' "I AM" turned everything upside down and inside out. Now it wasn't Martha and Mary saying: "If only," but Jesus himself saying: "If only you believe, evil and death can have no hold on you." What is more, Jesus' "if only" focuses not on the past but on an endless future.

Jesus' raising of Lazarus presented people with a great sign. Lazarus remained mortal! Like us, Martha, Mary and the disciples, Lazarus still faced the challenge of believing that, as Paul said to the Romans, the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus could dwell in him as well.



As John weaves his Gospel narrative, he portrays the extreme reactions to Lazarus' miraculous return to life — some people came to believe in Jesus while those who saw him as a threat intensified their plans to be rid of him. Life and death were nearing the moment of their ultimate contest. Very soon there would be no more "if only" — death and evil were about to unleash their full fury, inadvertently opening the way to the decisive revelation of the glory of the life-giving God.

Like everything in John's Gospel, the Lazarus narrative has onion-like layers of meaning. On this last Sunday before Holy Week, this story introduces us to the processes of evil and of discipleship.

First, it deals with the "natural evils" of illness, natural disasters, etc. — all symbolized by Lazarus' death. Martha's "if only" expressed the wish that Jesus — and God — would control or prevent natural calamity. But Jesus, rather than moving as a magician or first responder, acted from God's third day mode. He was fully present to those who sought him, sharing their grief, and promising more than they could see at the moment.

This narrative also deals with purposeful evil — symbolized by the desire to be rid of Jesus. John shows us how such evil grows more intense when goodness attracts a great following.

From the opposite side, the narrative depicts discipleship as a process. Thomas and company will move from declaring their willingness to die, through faith-shaking experience of his death and slowly

into Resurrection faith. Martha and family symbolize the gradual growth of faith from theory: from “the dead will rise” to encounters with Christ's invitation to live from his Spirit.

The coming Triduum reminds us that experiencing the power of suffering and evil is inevitable. At the same time, Jesus' third day “I AM” presence reveals the glorious God who never abandons us — whether or not we realize it. As we move toward celebrating the holiest week of our liturgical year, God continues to say: “If only you believe, you will experience my death transforming glory, my life-giving Spirit, my future.” “If only” we will believe.

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

## **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:**

We have begun the process of discerning those in our chapel community who feel called **Eucharistic Ministers** to Eucharistic Ministry. We have a need for more Eucharistic Ministers, particularly **Ministers** within our younger families who come here regularly, as well as with those who regular attend the Saturday Evening Mass. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be going into Senior year of High School next year] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry.

## **LAZARUS AS A DISCIPLE:**

The Gospel for this 5th Week in Lent is the story of Lazarus [John 11:1-45]. We have heard the story many times. Therefore, we might be tempted to say: “Lazarus? I know that one” — and then turn to thinking of something else. But every great story can become fresh, if you look at it from a new perspective. So, here is the question I would like us to consider today: How do we imagine that Lazarus felt about being raised from the dead? Now remember, Lazarus was not resurrected. Resurrection is a movement from death into a perfect new life. Resurrection is what happened to Jesus on Easter and what we hope will happen to us when Jesus returns on the last day.

Lazarus was not, however, resurrected — he was resuscitated. Instead of being called forward into a new and perfect life, Lazarus was called backward into the life that he had just left four days earlier. That life had ended with a serious sickness whose ravages probably still scarred his emaciated body. Lazarus was being called back into a life where there would be further sickness and further pain — a life that would again end with a death that he would have to endure.

So how do we imagine that Lazarus felt about being called back to that life? Could we picture him suddenly waking up in the still, dark tomb and hearing Jesus from outside calling: “Lazarus come out!” Could there be a part of Lazarus that thought: “Come out to what — to work, responsibility, hunger, hurt, misunderstanding, suffering and death?” Could there have been a part of Lazarus that objected: “Come out? I like it here. It's peaceful, safe, easy.” Could Lazarus have thought even for a moment that maybe if I lie very still, he'll just go away?

But Lazarus did come out — out of the tomb, into the light, back to the real life in which we live. And by that action, Lazarus became an example to us of what discipleship entails. Because discipleship involves the courage to leave behind what is peaceful, safe, and easy and answer the call of Christ. Every day Christ is calling us to “come out” into the real world where our responsibilities lie. Perhaps he is calling us to come out into difficult relationships that are characterized by misunderstanding and competition, or into a difficult job that is not fulfilling or even just. He might be calling us to come out and again take up the burden of grief over a loved one who we have lost or to struggle with a sickness that is threatening our future. He very likely is calling us to come out and use our abilities for the sake of others, to be a mentor to those who want to learn or an advocate for the poor and the oppressed.

Every time that Jesus calls us to “come out,” we can be tempted to choose what is easy — to lie still in our tombs of denial, fear, and inactivity and hope that he just goes away. But Lazarus shows us that a disciple is one who stands up and walks. And that action of Lazarus is not without hope, because when we leave the tomb behind, we discover that we are not alone. As our eyes adjust to the light of the real world in which we live, we come to see that Jesus who has called us is the one who is also standing by our side.

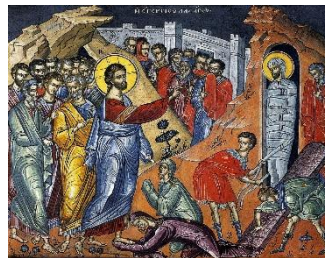
—taken from the writings of Father George Smiga, which appears on the internet.

## EXPERIENCE NEW LIFE:

No concept is more restricted by the limits of our human nature than the life Jesus offers His followers. What exactly is that life? In the 1960's epic movie *Barabbas*, the title character asks Lazarus — years after the event narrated in John's Gospel [11:1-45]: "What's it like being dead?" Jesus' resuscitated friend responds: "How do you explain to a fetus in the womb what it means to be alive?"

In such a situation, you're talking about two different concepts of life. The second — outside the womb — has yet to be experienced in a fetal environment; so it's impossible to describe.

The authors of the New Testament faced a similar difficulty when they tried to explain the life which comes to us when we die and rise with Jesus. Ezekiel didn't have that problem [Ezekiel 37:1-14]. He simply guarantees his community in exile that God will one day bring them back to live in the freedom of the Promised Land. He's so certain of this that he assures his people that not even death will stop God from carrying out this promise. If need be, God states: "I will open your graves, have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel."



On the other hand, Paul, in his letter to the Church at Rome [8:8-11], reflects on the brand new life at the heart of the existence Jesus' disciples now live. It's not just a return to an ideal past life. Though Christians live in the same world as non-Christians, Paul assures his readers: "You are not in the flesh; you are in the spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness."

Paul believes that even before our "mortal bodies" come to life after our physical death, the deepest part of ourselves — our spirit — has left its old life behind and stepped into the new life Jesus promised and experienced.

Writing about 40 years after Paul, St. John carries this idea several steps further. He believes that much of what we're expecting to happen in the future — especially after death — is already taking place here and now. The exchange between Jesus and his grieving friend, Martha, is a perfect example of John's "new and improved" theology. "Your brother will rise," Jesus assures Martha. She then echoes the "traditional" first-century belief: "I know he will rise — in the resurrection on the last day."

At this point, Jesus leads Martha down a new road: "I am the resurrection and the life; those who believe in me, even if they die, will rise, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

In some sense, we're called to "come out" of our old ideas of eternal life, and, like John, explore new ways in which Jesus' life is already being realized and experienced now.

Many wonder what motivated such a significant theological change. The answer is simple. Jesus' earliest followers weren't restricted by a set of established dogmas and doctrines. They relied on their day-by-day experience of the risen Jesus' being a part of their lives.

Some of us modern followers of Jesus believe falling back on dogmas and doctrines is enough to get us into heaven. We forget that, because our ancestors in the faith put their trust in their faith experiences, they actually were able to recognize the heavenly life invigorating their daily lives.

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

## TRUE LOVE:

We are called to love the flaws and imperfections of our loved ones. And it should be their uniqueness you love, excluding nothing, but accepting and welcoming all.

—Anthony Buono

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

### PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Denise Linkov, cousin of Anna Akkus, who is a civilian war prisoner, and who is ill.
- For Mary Bislosky, who is seriously ill.
- For Rebekah Klein, daughter of long-time teacher and coach, Jeff Klein, who is seriously ill.
- For Krishna Gupta, sister of Science teacher, Neena Goel, and aunt of Nikhil ['13] and Nuper ['17] Goel, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For James Cissell, father of Denise Shade, who is undergoing treatment for senior related medical issues.
- For Heather Saluan
- For Rick Debacco ['99], brother of Michelle Chiacchiari ['96], uncle of Aurelia ['28] and Olivia ['30] Chiacchiari, who is critically ill.
- For Louise Miklus, who is recovering from injuries sustained in a fall.
- For Thomas Noble who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

### PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Terry Clyne ['65], brother-in-law of William Fitzgerald ['52]
- For John Kealy ['62], father of Christine Kealy Spence ['90].
- For Sister Margaret Kerr, S.N.D.
- For Steve "Tucker" Ellis, father of Ed Ellis ['92] and grandfather of Riley Ellis ['22]
- For Sister Lenette Marcello, S.N.D.
- For Sister Marian Coughlin, S.N.D.
- For Mike Kelley, brother of Brian Kelley ['04].
- For Cathleen Ann Clinton, sister of Caroline and sister-in-law of Jim Farrar ['59], aunt of JP ['91], Mary Kate ['93], Dan ['94], and Amy ['96] Farrar
- For Father Genaro Aguilar, C.S.C.
- For Veronica Pauer, sister of Brother Charles Smith, C.S.C.
- For Andre Polsinelli.

### PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For a greater openness to the needs of others, especially during this time.
- For an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine, and the war with Iran.
- 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 its forms.
- For all service men and women, and for their families

## ALTAR SERVERS and LECTORS:

We continue to be in need of servers and lectors. **Any student who is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become an altar server; any student who is in the 5<sup>th</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become a lector.** 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. **Adults are also welcome...especially in our Lector Ministry. Please call the chapel office [440-473-3560].**



**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ Prayer for the 5<sup>th</sup> Week in Lent ~**

**O Lord,  
Like the traveler  
lifting the fallen on  
on the road to Jericho,  
healing all his wounds,  
You went to the tomb of Lazarus  
and would not let him die,  
but loosed the bonds of death,  
so great was your love for him.**

**O Savior,  
I believe  
you weep at every death,  
and pray at every tomb,  
for all the dead  
whose faith  
is known to you alone.**

**Like Lazarus,  
call us your friends,  
stay in our company,  
share what we have,  
come to our aid,  
and grant us  
eternal life.  
Amen.**

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.  
phone: [440] 473-3560 [office] or 216-570-9276 [cell].  
e-mail: [blazekj@gilmour.org](mailto:blazekj@gilmour.org)