

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.

FAITH EDUCATION — FINAL CALL:

Our Faith Education Program for 2026-27 will be beginning in a few weeks. **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. **If you have not already done so, please contact Patty or Father John in the Chapel Office for more information and to enroll your child [440-473-3560].** Thank you.



LABOR DAY:

Monday, September 7th, we take time to celebrate the final holiday of the summer — **Labor Day**. Besides reflecting on summer, the holiday, by its very title, invites us to reflect upon the contributions that each person makes toward the building of the human family. All of us are called by God to continue to participate in the work of creation. Each of us, because of our baptism, is called to bring to life, through our talents and energies, to that small piece of God's kingdom on earth. **We will celebrate Mass at 9:30 AM on Monday.** We would be honored if you and your family will join us.



BLESSING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS — AUGUST 22-23:

This weekend — August 22-23 — we will be doing a special blessing on all Elementary and High School Students and Teachers. As we observe the annual ritual of the beginning of the school year, let us celebrate together the blessings of education, and the wisdom and understanding that we can find as we pursue the truth of the life that God has shared with us. We all journey together to discover that truth — that gift of God in ourselves and in one another — that gift that surrounds us. Please join us for this special moment of grace.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Congratulations to all of the members of the Gilmour Class of 2027 who were Commissioned as Eucharistic Ministers over the summer months: **Kaylani Cika, Lily Detzel, Lilly Dinehart, Savannah Drew, Dominic Dunlevy, Carla Grossner, Avery Guenther, Brett Kelly, Myra Limberg, Morgan Pfundstein, Bella Rosko, and Sarah Thompson.** We are truly blessed. We always welcome those who would like to join this ministry [and the other ministries] at Our Lady Chapel. We have a need for Eucharistic Ministers at our weekend Masses. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be entering their Senior year of High School this fall] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. **Training sessions are coming up in the fall, so if you would like to join in this ministry, please give your name to Father John.** Thank you.



LOVE vs. LONELINESS:

The heart is the symbol of all our humanity — the sum of our thoughts, feelings and desires — the invisible center of our selves. The Evangelist Matthew invites us to reflect on the importance of the heart, quoting this beautiful phrase of Jesus: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” [see Matthew 6:21].

—| Pope Leo XIV

A DISCUSSION OF “*MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS*” — SEPT. 23:

This year's Bible Study will begin with a special discussion/conversation on Pope Leo's Encyclical: **Magnifica humanitas — On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence**. This discussion/conversation is open to any one — not just to the regular Bible Study members. **The discussion will be a virtual experience, so you can enter in from the comfort of your own homes.**

More details to follow in the coming weeks. If you would like to begin to read the document, or to find summaries of it, go to Vatican.va to download a free copy. Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. Join us. You'll have a blast, and celebrate your faith along the way.

MASS SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sunday, August 23: 21 st Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, August 24: St. Bartholomew	NO MASS
Tuesday, August 25:	NO MASS
Wednesday, August 26:	NO MASS
Thursday, August 27: St. Monica	NO MASS
Friday, August 28: St. Augustine	NO MASS
Saturday, August 29: 22 nd Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM [In-person only]
Sunday, August 30: 22 nd Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream

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

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

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



REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

The theme which runs through the Scripture Readings for this 21st Week in Ordinary Time might best be summarized as “power” — the power that comes from knowing Jesus. To know Jesus is to unfold the power of the Eucharist which gives us the power to be open to all God’s gifts and to shut out what hinders our journey. May we come to know and reverence the authority which Jesus gives each of us to use our gifts to continue God’s creation of the Kingdom of gentle mercy. We are charged to tend and to feed God’s garden of life. May we give “power” a good name — a good image by the way we exercise compassion, patience, and justice.

The prophet Isaiah has been placed by God in such a role; he is tending to the people of Israel. Shebna has had a rather lofty image of himself as well as a lofty place in the palace. He has begun to immortalize himself by beginning to construct his own tomb in a lofty place on the mountain. God has told him that he will be waded up like a ball and thrown out of the country with all his finery, and he will die there in disgrace [Isaiah 22:15-24].

In this oracle, God not only takes away Shebna’s symbols of domination, but God calls somebody else from a different family to bless his people. Eliakim will be a “father” to the people of Jerusalem, and all the people will be his family under God. Instead of warring with power and haughty presumption based on family of origin, Eliakim will be steadfast and use his authority for peace.

In Matthew’s gospel [16:13-20], Jesus travels with His disciples to Caesarea Philippi — a city whose name celebrates Roman power and domination of Israel. It is there that Jesus poses the big question for the purpose of eliciting a bigger answer. For the first time in their relationship, Peter — speaking for the other disciples — declares publicly the name which is opposed to the power of Roman and all other worldly force — Jesus — is the Christ and the son of God.

Peter, “son of Jonah”, is given his new name — Peter; like Eliakim, Simon is given a title and a power. Peter — the name in Greek and in Aramaic means “rock” — is to be the foundation of the group called together and more commonly known as “the Church”. Peter’s deep belief and profession of faith in Jesus is not only personal — it is meant to be foundational. Soon, Peter’s faith in Jesus is going to be severely tested, but, for now, we hear Jesus conveying upon this Rock, the “keys” of God’s power. The “keys” which Peter receives are the instruments of governing as Jesus received that power from His Father. Those keys in the hands of Jesus opened ears, eyes, and hearts. Those “keys” in the hands of Jesus shut out darkness, evil, and death from dominating God’s creation and God’s family.

Someone once wrote that power does not corrupt, but power in the hands of a fool corrupts the fool. Keys can be a sign of control — car keys, house keys. Usually people who jingle their keys are saying that the power they have comes from outside — from what they possess. They make the noise of power to frighten away anybody who might not listen to the noise, and might want to ask if anybody’s home in there. That is the fool who has been corrupted by pretentious power. This fool has been fooled by the Evil One of this world into thinking that things authenticate identity, and positions prove authenticity. The Devil offered Jesus power over all things [see Matthew 4 and Luke 4], and this power would prove that Jesus was the “Son of God.” Jesus had received His identity, and needed no jingling of power-keys to satisfy this world’s demands.

Matthew’s gospel is often used to prove papal primacy and the power to admit or exclude. While this could be interpreted from this passage, it really wasn’t the intent of Matthew — nor Jesus. What proves our authenticity is our personal commitment to leniency and clemency. We are the Church — the body of Christ called together. We have our structures based on tradition and Scripture with our Holy Father



as chief key-holder. Each of us has been given the Key of the Eucharist — it has been placed in our hands, and we don't jingle it around as a false sign of belonging and domination. We are each invited to exercise Christ's power to open ears, eyes, and hearts, and to shut out the noises of false teachings, false posturing, and false temptations to identity.

In the history of the Church, power has been corrupted and made fools of those who used the power-keys for self-establishing indulgence. As with Shebna, God brought them down to size. Power can be used as a prop, and a crutch to assist the insecure of spirit. True power is received — not grabbed and wielded like a club. We receive the keys to the Eucharist, and the hands stretched out to accept this blessed gift are the same hands which are rewriting the new and present history of Christ's church. This power does not corrupt, but in the hands of the faithful, it gives life to the world in His Name.

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

OUR HOLY CROSS REFLECTION FOR THIS WEEK:

To Be Seen. As we grow in our Christian life, we want to be able to grow in our relationship with Jesus. When people become friends, they gradually want to reveal to one another who they really are without putting on a mask to appear more acceptable. Jesus wants us to be comfortable in showing him who we really are with all of our imperfections. We no longer need to play the part of always being pious when we communicate with him. We become comfortable in sharing our true feelings and being seen in all of our vulnerability. This is what makes his unconditional love for us so powerful.



When we feel accepted by Jesus, he will reveal to us more of who God is. The knowledge that comes to us from our faith will gradually give way to the gift of knowledge that we experience in our prayer. Thomas Merton experienced God as “mercy upon mercy upon mercy.” This same experience of God will let us be more merciful to the people in our lives. Our being seen by God opens the possibility for us to be more forgiving and loving of our neighbor — the sign that we are living an authentic Christian life.

- How would you describe your relationship with a true friend?
- How would you describe your relationship with God/Jesus?
- What is lacking on your part in all of these relationships?
- Are you comfortable with God seeing you with all of your imperfections?

O God, thank you for loving me just as I am.

—Brother Carl Sternberg, CSC

COLLECTING FOR THE FOOD PANTRY:

As you already know, Our Savior Lutheran Church — across the street from the Chapel — has a Food Pantry which distributes food to our community on the third Saturday of each month. They serve around 150 clients each time. **Our Lady Chapel's Council group has decided to begin an ongoing food collection to assist them.**



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 is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, and we are pleased to collaborate with them, in bringing hope to our neighbors.

All non-perishable food items are welcome. Also, PET FOOD is now being accepted. We have bins in the narthex of the Chapel to accept your donations. The next date that the Food Pantry will be open for distribution will be **Saturday, September 19th.**

WHO DOES JESUS SAY THAT I AM?

We don't often think of it, but the gospels are loaded with questions. Sometimes it seems like there are more questions than there are answers. Questions — genuine questions, not trick questions — imply a quest, a search, and a hunger for knowledge. The word “question” contains within it the word “quest.” That's what Jesus liked — people who are in search for truth, who are questing for God.

So we find Jesus in Matthew's gospel asking: “Who do you say that I am?” And we find Simon Peter answering the question by identifying Jesus as the Son of God. Evidently Peter recognized something deep within Jesus that was divine — someone coming from God. But Peter came to that as a consequence of Jesus asking him a question. Jesus in response sees something deep within Peter that Peter couldn't see for himself.

In a sense Jesus introduced Peter to himself. “Okay,” Jesus said, “you told me who I am. Now let me tell you who you are. You are Rock!” This quality was not, I am quite sure, something that Simon Peter recognized within himself. No doubt it was a big surprise, not only to Peter himself but also to all who knew him. Probably no one would have thought that about him. Nevertheless, he was previously known as Simon and now, because of Jesus, he was entering into a new self-identity. It took long time, however, because Peter's behavior with respect to Jesus was anything but solid and rock-like until after Christ's resurrection [Matthew 16:13-20].

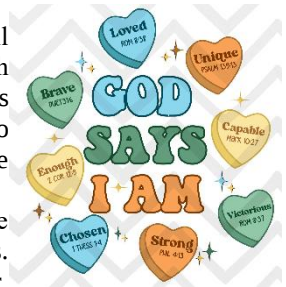
All of this was typical of Jesus. Jesus judged differently, He went beyond appearances. We judge people by appearances; Jesus judges with penetrating insight. He went deep inside people and saw the best that was in them. Then He tried to get them to become aware of those wonderful qualities deep within themselves.

St. Augustine once said: “Dig deep enough in any person and you will find something divine.” That's a perfect description of how Jesus works with us. Put Jesus one-on-one with any person and He will dig until He finds something God-like — something divine — within us. Then He will do everything He can to draw it out of us and into the open. We should do the same.

That's what He did with the woman caught in the act of adultery [see John 8]; He saw something in her that was far deeper than her sinfulness. Underneath her worst, He never doubted that there was something better. And when all her accusers had departed and only Jesus was left standing with her, He did not condemn her even though He recognized her sins. She must have left His presence that day with a whole new vision of who she was. She finished that day with an entirely new identity — a new name for herself, a good name, and a whole new person with a new life ahead of her.

We all hear a lot of bad news about ourselves. We all have a little inner voice that constantly gives us bad news about ourselves. People around us sometimes give us bad news about ourselves. Jesus, on the other hand, comes to give us good news. The good news of Jesus Christ is all about who we really are and who we can become. The good news is this: inside each one of us there is the person God meant us to be. Deep within us is the person God our Father dreams we can be. Hopefully we will eventually come to see that. There's an identity — a name that God has given you that is nothing but good. We don't need to import anything from outside ourselves. All of the skills and talents God originally gave us are still there. All of the personality traits are there. We simply need to become the person our Father always meant us to be, to bring out of ourselves the best that's within us.

That's what Peter eventually came to. But he couldn't do it all by himself — he needed Jesus to draw it out, changing his name so that he could change his picture of himself. Remember that is what



is involved when God gives us a name in our baptism — a name and an identity that comes from God our Father.

What I am sharing with you here isn't just pop psychology. What I'm sharing with you is the notion that Jesus has given us the highest concept of God the world has ever known — a Father who created us to be like His Only Begotten Son.

Why in the world, then, do we depict God to be mean, angry, vengeful and capricious in how He gives us His love? Why do we depict God as being responsible for every disaster that befalls us? Most likely that's because we image ourselves that way. We try to fashion God in our own image and likeness. We make God to be angry and condemning because that's the way we see ourselves and others. We have a bad self-image, a rotten self-identity, and we've given God a bad name in the process. Jesus, however, has given us a picture of ourselves, an identity, that's quite the opposite.

God is always forgiving, always trusting, always faithful, always loving. We've grown cynical and bitter, unloving, cold, and indifferent, if not actually mistrusting of others. Jesus counters by asking us to be like God — to forgive without limit, to trust others no matter how many times they disappoint us, to keep on loving no matter what, to keep on believing in the basic goodness within others no matter how they may appear to us on the surface. We, with Jesus, should always hate the sins of others but love other sinners just as much as God loves them. We need to regard them as He regards you and me.

Finally, Jesus calls us to live together as a family — a family that He calls His Church — a family of faith. He called it “my church”, and He declared that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Hell vanishes in the face of love; the devils flee in the face of trusting, forgiving, believing, and hoping love. Jesus knows that we can't be our best all alone, all by ourselves. The best within us is always brought out in loving relationships with others. No amount of evil can ever overcome any amount of love. That's why the gates of hell are powerless in the face of it and we become like Rocks of Gibraltar, like St. Peter became the Rock, when we face of all of life's storms thrown up against us.

This coming week we will all go out to face a very difficult world. Be kind to everyone you meet. Every one of them is fighting his or her own hard battle. There are many things in our world that appeal to the worst within us. That's why it's so important to hear the words that Jesus addressed to Peter as being addressed to us. We need to hear Jesus appealing to the best within us. He said to Simon: “You are rock.” Jesus is saying something similar to each one of us.

When you hear or read the Scriptures, hear or read what Jesus is saying to you, and then face each day in the midst of our very troubled world, trying to remember just who it is Jesus says you are and who He meant you to be.

—edited from the writings of Father Charles Irvin, which appears on the internet.

THE CHAPEL FACEBOOK PAGE:

Did you know that the chapel community has a Facebook page? This is where you can access a weekly livestream of our Sunday 10 am Mass. You can also scroll through a list of previous Masses to watch a Mass you may have missed. But there are more reasons to check out our Facebook page than livestreams. Did you take any photos at our recent outdoor Picnic that you'd like to share? Feel free to post them here. Just go to www.facebook.com/ourladychapel, and share the memories. While you're there, be sure to “like” the page so that you'll see updates in your feed. Help us build our on-line community!



LOVE OF NEIGHBOR:

The love of neighbor is the measure of our love of God. For Christians — and not only for them — no one is a “stranger”. The love of Chrsit knows no borders.

—St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross [Edith Stein]

WE ARE IN GOOD HANDS:

In Matthew's Gospel [16:13-20], we have one of the most important questions which underpins the structure of the Church. It is of course the great confession of Peter's faith and Christ's declaration: "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church." This is probably the most famous pun in the whole of history — the word Peter meaning rock. On this rock, the rock that is Peter, Christ proposes to build his Church. And from this pun the whole theology of what we call the "Petrine Ministry" is developed; in other words it is from these words that the Papacy came into being.

The basis for all this is the question Jesus puts to the disciples: "Who do you say that I am?" This is a question, of course, that all people everywhere must eventually answer in one form or another. Peter gives his own answer: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Then Jesus tells him that "it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven." Here we have an important teaching about the very basis of faith — namely that it is not something that comes about as a result of one's own volition, but rather is something that is itself a gift from God.

Faith, then, is something that is revealed to us. When we come to faith — whether it be in childhood or in adulthood — it is like scales falling away from our eyes because a new way of understanding the world has been revealed to us. And the one who does the revealing is naturally God Himself.

Faith is therefore a gift — a gift directly from God. A person cannot be condemned, therefore, for not having it, although even without faith it is still necessary for them to live a good and honorable life. But for those that have been given this gift, it is an additional responsibility. Faith should never be a burden; faith is in fact a joy. It is a joyful experience which brings with it certain responsibilities.

The first responsibility is to take care of this gift — to nurture it and enable it to grow in our hearts. There are lots of things that we can do to nurture our faith. For example, we must frequent the sacraments; and, of course, we must pray. Prayer means giving time to God each day; it means thinking about God frequently and asking ourselves what he wants us to do in the circumstances of our lives. Prayer means communing with our creator and giving him a share of our time. Doing this means that we get to know him better and better, and it is in this way that our faith develops and grows. Never underestimate the value of time spent in prayer — a few minutes each day in prayer gains us inestimable spiritual benefits.

Nurturing our faith is the first duty of anyone who calls themselves a Catholic. It is for this reason that in the Church we place a great emphasis on preparing properly for the sacraments and learning about our faith. For while there are the obvious spiritual aspects to this nurturing, there are intellectual aspects also.

It is very important that we attend to both these aspects — the spiritual and the intellectual. Besides catechesis, there are other ways that we can strengthen our faith — reading Catholic newspapers and books, and nowadays also viewing TV programs. A very simple example would be even reading the parish bulletin each week. It is our particular duty to inform ourselves about areas of the faith. We can never have too much information or spiritual enrichment.

Another good thing that we could do is to attend talks and discussions about aspects of our faith. Bible studies are also a great help. These are good ways of acquainting ourselves with the sacred scriptures and so learning more about Jesus and the faith of the Church.



What is also interesting about this scene between Jesus and his disciples is the fact that Peter wasn't actually the most reliable sort of a rock on which the Church could be built. For we know that Peter denied Jesus three times at the most crucial moment of all [see Luke 22]. We know that Peter was timid and unreliable and could certainly be described as a weak man.

But Jesus was always attracted by weak and unreliable people. Look back into the Old Testament and you will see that Moses was a murderer [Exodus 2:11-14], and yet God chose him as the one Israelite he could do business with. We see then that God has a long history of choosing weak and unreliable people to carry out his purposes. Perhaps we ought to say: "Thank God for that!" — after all none of us are all that reliable; none of us are as strong examples of humanity as we would like to be. We remember that St Paul told us often enough that God chooses the weak and fills them with his strength [see 1 Corinthians 1 and 4; 2 Corinthians 12]. It is precisely through weak people that God achieves in the world exactly what he wants.

Besides declaring that Peter was the rock on which the Church would be built, Jesus also states that "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven." These are most profound words by which Christ as he gives Peter and his successors enormous spiritual authority — He is placing the fate of humankind in the hands of his apostles and those who will succeed them.

This ministry has been exercised in the Church down through the centuries. The Church sees itself as a beacon to light up the way of humankind leading in the direction of heaven and all that is godly. The Church — and especially the Papacy — realizes that it is vitally important to speak out on the issues affecting the world at any particular time and pointing out the right way for us to go.

This is not always popular. Oftentimes the Church points in a direction which is rejected by most of humanity. But the Church knows the human heart; it knows, too, the heart of God. And it directs humanity on the road to heaven despite the many difficulties that may result.

We should be proud to belong to the one true faith founded by Jesus Christ on the shoulders of Peter the Apostle. It is him and his successors that we should regard as our best guide as we pass through the struggles and difficulties presented by the world of today.

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

THE CHOSEN – BEGINS AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER:

We have had a wonderful response to our somewhat monthly gatherings to watch episodes of *The Chosen*. We want you to know that our gatherings are on summer break and will resume in September, once all the activity of the summer months has subsided. **We will continue to meet after Sunday Mass from 11:30 until 1 PM.**



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. **Join us for this life-giving experience. If you have any questions, please contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560]. Make plans to join us in September.**

BEAUTIFUL:

In the dew of little things, the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.

—Kahlil Gibran

CELEBRATING FAITH:

A pastor of a west coast parish became frustrated by the number of people in his community who were not coming to church on any given weekend, so he formed a committee to look into it. They eventually sent out this letter.

Dear Parishioner,

You are registered here in the parish, but we have noticed that you do not come to mass on Sunday. So we have designated next Sunday as “There is No Excuse Not to Come to Church Sunday”. We have worked diligently to eliminate any excuse for not joining us for worship.

Next Sunday, cots will be provided for all who feel that Sunday is their only day to sleep in. Coffee and eye drops will be available for those who insist on staying out late on Saturday night. Steel helmets will be provided for those who claim that if they ever walk into a church the roof will fall. Sweaters will be provided for those who feel the church is too cold; fans for those who feel the church is too hot. There will be scorecards available for all who wish to keep track of the hypocrites who come to church on Sunday. We will have gift certificates for area restaurants for those who feel that they must stay home and cook. Finally, we are decorating the sanctuary with Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies for those who have never seen the church without them.

The letter caused a good deal of discussion. But ultimately very few people decided to come back to church on a regular basis. This should not be surprising because you cannot argue, shame, or force people into accepting the value of church community.

Seeing the importance of a faith community is a gift — a gift that is connected to faith in Jesus Christ. This is clear in Matthew’s Gospel. Peter makes a strong profession of faith in Christ. He says: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God” [Matthew 16:16-20]. The very first thing that Jesus reminds Peter is that his faith does not come from flesh and blood, but from the revelation of our Heavenly Father. Peter did not believe in Christ because he was smarter or more observant than other people. He believed because he had been gifted with faith that comes from a God who loved him.

The same is true for us. We have faith in Jesus Christ not because we are particularly intelligent or good. We believe because God has loved us and gifted us with faith. There is a mystery here. Why do we believe in Christ and there still are so many good and intelligent people in the world who do not share in that faith. Why is it that people we love and we would deeply desire to believe, sometimes cannot do so. The only explanation is that we have been given faith. We should respond to such a gift in humility and in thankfulness.

Faith is a gift. It is a gift that is connected to community. This is also clear in Matthew’s gospel. After Peter professes his faith, Jesus establishes the church. He proclaims that it is upon the rock of Peter’s faith — and faith similar to Peter’s — that his church will stand. Faith and church community go together. People who say they believe in Christ and yet do not associate themselves with a believing community have an incomplete faith because the entire witness of Israel and of the scriptures testify that believing and church go together. In choosing Christ, we do more than make an individual decision to believe, we also commit ourselves to brothers and sisters who believe the same thing with us. Faith in Christ requires a place where we worship God with others and serve one another in Jesus’ name.



A parish is a faith community — a community that valued this faith enough to build a Church — along with many ministries and opportunities. We are reminded that our faith in Christ is connected with our relationship to one another. Faith is a gift. Church community is a gift. Each time we gather, we celebrate that giftedness. We celebrate with humility because we have been chosen to believe. We celebrate with thankfulness because we have been given one another. We celebrate with the commitment to pass on both our faith and our community to others in the years ahead.

—edited from the writings of Father George Smiga, 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.

Monday: Revelation 21:9-14; John 1:45-51
Tuesday: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17; Matthew 23:23-26
Wednesday: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18; Matthew 23:27-32
Thursday: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; Matthew 24:42-51
Friday: 1 Corinthians 1:17-25; Matthew 25:1-13
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Mark 6:17-29

22nd Week in Ordinary Time: Jeremiah 20:7-9; Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 16:21-27

WHO IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN YOUR LIFE?

How would you answer that question? Who is the most important person in your life? Who is it? Who is the most important person in your life, right now — today? Many of us would respond with the name of a family member, or a boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/wife. Some would respond with the name of their best friend. Think hard. Of all of the people in your life today, who do you care about the most? Who means the most to you? Whose happiness means the most to you?

The sad truth is that as much as we love or care about another person, there are many of us alive today, who will find the answer to this question not in another, but in the mirror. For years my favorite two phrases were: "I don't want to," and "because I don't feel like it." I was a very selfish person. Actually, it hurts to say this, but I still am pretty selfish — sometimes. As much as I care about others — or claim to — a lot of times, I still put my "wants" and "needs" ahead of others — because I feel like it, or it's more comfortable, or it's easier.

What if Jesus had done that instead of hanging on that Cross? Make no mistake — nails didn't keep Jesus on that Cross — love did.

That person — that person you thought of first, or those people you thought of when I asked you who is most important — would they die for you? Truthfully? Would Jesus? Yes. Did Jesus? Yes. Does that really mean anything to you? Yes. That's love — true love — to be willing to die for another [see John 15:13].

Real love means sacrifice and death. If we want to experience true love, we need to put our own needs and wants second to God's. God has a plan for you. You can follow it. You can fight it. Your choice. Just remember that the easy way out is just that — the easy way out.

Have more faith in God — He has the faith in you. Anything easy has its cost.

—edited from the writings of Mark Hart which appear on the internet



THE ONE WHO HOLDS THE KEYS:

The Scripture Readings for this 21st Week in Ordinary Time present us with two figures who are given keys. The first is Eliakim. Eliakim was the secretary to Shebna — the Master of King Hezekiah's palace back in the 8th century before Christ. Shebna lost favor with the Lord and was replaced by Eliakim. Through the Prophet, Isaiah, God placed the keys of the Kingdom on Eliakim's shoulder — he would now be Master of the Palace, and the one through whom others would have to go to get access to the King [Isaiah 22:15-24].

The second figure is Peter. In Matthew's Gospel [16:13-20] Peter is given the keys of the Kingdom of God. Like Eliakim, Peter would determine who has access to the King. Since the early days of the Church, Peter is usually pictured as carrying large keys which represent the authority given to him by Jesus.

In the Book of Revelation, we read about the faithful people of the ancient city of Philadelphia — an ancient city in current-day Turkey. Because these people were devoted to Christ, they are told that the One who holds the keys of David has left the door open for them to pass through and enter into God's Kingdom [Revelation 3:7].

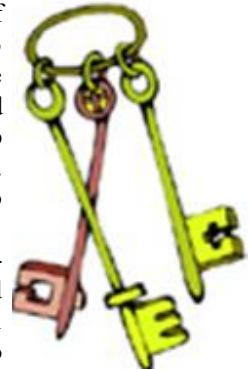
So who holds the Keys of the Kingdom now? Jesus Christ is the judge of the Living and the Dead. He is the one who determines who will enter into God's presence after their death. But who holds the Keys to the Kingdom here on earth? The answer is easy — since these Keys were entrusted to Peter, and since Peter was the head of the Church in Rome, Peter's successor, the Bishop of Rome, holds the keys to the Kingdom. Right now, Pope Leo is that person. But the keys had been held by many before him. They will be held by all who will come after him.

Pope Leo has captured the heart of the world — Catholic and Non-Catholic. Pope Leo most recent encyclical on AI shows a sense of courage and leadership in a highly controversial area. In addition, his calling forth from all God's people — both Clergy and Religious, as well as Laity — continues to show the importance of Synodality in a world that celebrates division and plurality.

When the Popes speak at events like World Youth Day, they address the young — but they really speak to all of us. We are all young in our faith. With Jesus Christ, all things are new. Back in 1993 during the World Youth Day in Denver, Pope John Paul II told the young: "Christ calls you, the Church needs you, and the Holy Father has confidence in you and expects great things from you." This is the Vicar of Christ empowering the young — and empowering us — to change the world. At the World Youth Day in Cologne, Pope Benedict XVI told the young: "Be completely convinced of this. Christ takes nothing from you that is beautiful and great, but brings all to perfection that is worthwhile in life to the Glory of God and for the happiness of men and women."

Choosing Christ means losing that which is not Christ. But, like the converted Augustine, we lose nothing that is beautiful and great. Instead, Christ makes our lives beautiful, and worthwhile, and happy. "Who do people say that I am?" Jesus asks his disciples. "Some say John the Baptist. Some say Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But who do you say I am?" "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God," Peter responds. And Jesus declares Peter his rock, the one upon whom he will build the Church [Matthew 16:13-20].

Who do we say Jesus is? — not with our words, but with our lives? Who do we say that Jesus is? Do we radiate the presence of the Christ, the Anointed one of God? Is He really the motivation,



the foundation, the beginning and the end of our lives? We have to ask ourselves this question, and then we have to follow it with yet another question: “how can I live His Life, my Christianity? How can I — like Peter — become his Rock, his foundation?”

Here are five considerations. First, you and I need to spend more time in prayer. If we want God in the Center of our lives, we have to spend time with Him. That might mean giving up sleep, or giving up computer games for a while, less texting, less time on Facebook, giving up some TV, or giving up that long phone conversation. It is worth it. There is nothing that we lose which is beautiful and great. Christ takes nothing worthwhile from us.

Here’s a second thing we need to do. We need to read the Bible. Read a psalm a day. Read a chapter of the New Testament a day. We need to be people of the Word. And no, we shouldn’t be all that concerned about the exact meaning of every phrase. Bible study is good, but Bible prayer is great. This the Word of God. His Spirit is there. We just need to let God speak to us.

Here’s the third thing. We need the sacraments. We need the Eucharistic nourishment every Week. When we receive communion we need to adore Him within us as well as in Adoration. Spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus is there in the sacrament calling out to us. It is in the Blessed Sacrament that our lives merge with Jesus’ life. We also need Christ’s sacramental presence in confession. There are way too many occasions of sin in the world. There are so many temptations. We need the Grace of Penance to conquer the evil that we and others put into life.

The Fourth thing we need is each other. We need the community of people of faith. We need to reach out to each other and to others of faith. We need to support each other and seek out those who need our support. We are the People of God.

And finally, to keep Christ alive in our hearts. We can’t just say we love Him. We have to serve God — serve his presence in the poor, in the sick, in the hurting, serve His presence in our homes, with our children, our families, our friends, our workmates.

Prayer, Scripture, Sacraments, Community and Service — these are all ways that we can proclaim to the world the answer to Jesus’ question: Who do you say that I am?

Be convinced of this: Christ takes nothing from you that is beautiful and great, but brings all to perfection that is worthwhile in life to the Glory of God and the happiness of men and women.

A great army has been mobilized. It is the army of the young — the children of God. And none of us are too old to be part of this army. All of us must be part of this transformation of the world. We are the Body of Christ.

The Scripture Readings for this 21st Week in Ordinary remind us why we honor the Vicar of Christ — the Pope. We don’t honor the Holy Father for the individual he is. We are not concerned with demagoguery. We honor Pope Leo because he has been entrusted with the Keys of the Kingdom. In the recent centuries we have been blessed with popes who were certainly holy men — Blessed Pius IX, St. Pius X, St. John XXIII, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Francis, and now Leo — all gave us examples of how to live our Christianity. These men were intensely spiritual throughout their lives — they were not just as popes. They were beatified and canonized for the way they lived their Christianity — not for the way they exercised their authority. Other popes may not be candidates for canonization, but they all were holy fathers, entrusted with the keys to the Kingdom.

As we pray and worship together, this would be a good time to pray for our Holy Father, and for the one who hopefully a long time from now will succeed him — one, whom God has already picked. Pray also for the pope after that, and after that — all of whom are already chosen by God. And we thank God for literally devising a way to lead us on earth through the ministry of the man we call pope.

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

JESUS SHARES THE TASK WITH US:

The implications of Paul's letter to the Church at Rome [11:33-36] are staggering. Listen carefully to Paul's praise of God's "wisdom and knowledge" — "How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!" If that's true, then we who claim to be God's disciples have a huge task — to constantly apply God's inscrutable wisdom and unsearchable knowledge to whatever happens in our everyday life. How do we pull that off?

It's evident from what the prophet Isaiah tells us that God is intimately interested in whatever transpires in our daily life — even to the point of arranging for a change in political power. This notion, of course, is so foreign to us because of our "artificial" distinction between church and state. If God is concerned about everything, then God is concerned about everything — no exceptions. But how do we make God's concerns our concerns?

St. Matthew's Gospel [16:13-20] is the same Gospel which was heard on the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul — June 29. We need to remember — as was mentioned then — that no Scripture scholar today would say that this scene between Peter and Jesus is biblical proof for the papacy. Matthew's purpose in composing this narrative is to stress Peter's faith in the risen Jesus — not his prerogative as the first infallible pope.

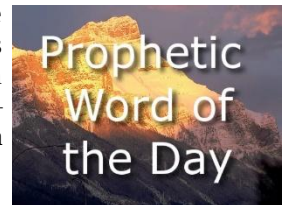
This is the faith on which the Christian community is built. Matthew is zeroing in on the faith — not the person. Paul, in his letter to the Church at Galatia reminds us that if one's faith in the risen Jesus begins to break down, then even Peter can make an egregious mistake — in this case, siding with the community's Judaizers instead of giving his wholehearted support to Paul's Gentile ministry [see Galatians 2]. Perhaps that's why Matthew's Jesus also gives the power to bind and loose to the whole Christian community — the same power which he gives only to Peter [see Matthew 18].

The quest to know God's will is a constant task for anyone who dares to follow God. There's no one person, no one institution, no one situation that has cornered the market on God's will. Our sacred authors presume our minds and hearts must always be open to surfacing that will even in situations, institutions, and persons in which we've never noticed it before.

The late theologian, Avery Dulles, was ahead of his time, when in his 1969 lecture he said: "Had there been a Holy Office in the early church, we Catholics would have just one gospel in our bibles — Mark. But in our history books we'd have reference to three notorious early Christian heretics named Matthew, Luke and John." As significant as that remark is, it's just as important to remember that the famous Jesuit theologian made this remark within the context of a talk on the Second Vatican Council's expansion of the church's magisterium. Dulles stressed that the council's documents show that we can no longer rely just on papal decrees or conciliar statements to pinpoint God's will in our lives — somehow the whole church — even the whole non-Catholic Christian community — must now be brought into the picture.

Both the earliest church and the biblical Jews presumed that the usual way to surface God's will was to surface the community's prophets — those special individuals whom God inspires to be our conscience — to provide us with the future implications of our present actions. These are the people who consistently challenge us to return to the beginnings of our faith, who are able to cut through centuries of institutional addenda and recreate God's original plan for God's people.

Perhaps one of the papacy's most important tasks isn't always to tell us God's will, but to surface the prophets in the church whom God has inspired to do just that.



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

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Jacqui Lundi, Maintenance Associate, mother of Connor Lundi ['17], who is in extended care.
- For Sarah Finucane ['08], sister of Katy Finucane ['06], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Frank Pines, Sr., father of Frank Pines, Jr. ['11], who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Bob Willey, brother-in-law of Father John, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Jennie Shaw, friend of Advancement Associate, Meg Wanick, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Michael Pryatel ['08], Son of Religion Instructor, Eileen Pryatel and Steven ['78], and brother of Steven ['10], Meghan ['13], and Kevin ['15] Pryatel, nephew of Mark ['76] and Keith ['79] Pryatel, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For James Cissell, father of Denise Shade, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Sister Ann Marie Teder, S.N.D., who is recovering from surgery.
- For Sister Julie Smith, S.N.D., who is recovering from surgery.
- For Marsha Ogletree, office manager at St. Adalbert School, undergoing medical treatment.
- For Brother Bobby McFadden, C.S.C., who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Brother Donald Schapker, C.S.C., who is under the care of Hospice.
- For Rebekah Klein, daughter of former Gilmour teacher and coach, Jeff Klein, who is critically ill.
- For Lois Grano, who is seriously ill.
- For John Luskin, who is undergoing treatment for a serious heart condition.

PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Father George Rozum, C.S.C.
- For Brother Thomas Cunningham, C.S.C.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For the victims of the earthquake in Columbia, and the storms in Hawaii.
- For a greater openness to the needs of others, especially during this time.
- For an end to war and hostilities among nations.
- 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

WE NEED LIVE-STREAM HELP:

We would like to build a team of people who would be willing to help us with the Live-stream production that takes place here at Our Lady Chapel. Andy and Loren will provide all the information that is necessary. It's not that complicated, but when musicians are running the Live-stream and playing at the same time, that can get complicated. Both students and adults are welcome to join our Live-stream ministry. Please reach out to Fr. John or Andy if you are interested. Thank you.



CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer as We Begin School ~

**Loving God,
Our creator, our savior, and our companion,
bless this journey of a new school year
that we undertake at this time.**

**Refresh our souls
and renew our spirits
as we embrace
this beautiful journey
that you have called us to.**

**We welcome those
who are new to our community
and we ask
that you strengthen them
to share their wonderful gifts
that you have given them.**

**Lord,
make our hearts pure
as we prepare for our return
to academic life,
and the pursuit of truth.**

**May you guide us
to return with open hearts
and minds eager to learn.**

**We ask this in Your name,
Amen**

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