

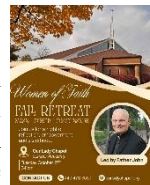
Our Lady Chapel



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.

WOMEN'S EVENING OF RETREAT — TUES, OCT. 27th:

Tuesday, October 27th from 6:00 PM – 8:15 PM, we will host our annual Women's Fall Retreat. Our theme will be "Our Lady Chapel Women of Faith." All women of Our Lady Chapel and Gilmour Academy, and their guests, are welcome. We will begin with **Mass together in the Chapel, at 6:00 pm** and then move to the Lennon Boardroom for a light supper, and spiritual discussion, led by **Father John**. Even if you can't make it for Mass, join us for dinner & discussion. It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal! **So, mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **There is no cost for the evening, but we will be accepting free-will donations. Sign up on the Retreat sheet which is located on the easel in the narthex of the Chapel, or call [440-473-3560] or email: szaniszlop@gilmour.org.**



THE CHOSEN –SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18th:

We have had a wonderful response to our somewhat monthly gatherings to watch episodes of *The Chosen*. Our meetings are monthly! **Our next meeting will take place after Sunday Mass on October 18th 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. We will present the episode in the Chapel, and follow up with a discussion in the Commons, with a light lunch. If you have any questions, please contact Father John at the chapel office [440-473-3560]. Make plans to join us this Sunday.**

FAITH EDUCATION: OCTOBER 11th:

Our next session will be on **Sunday, October 11th**. After this weekend, the **Dates for the month of October are: 25. November Dates are: 8 and 15.** 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 and to enroll your child [440-473-3560].** Thank you.



EUCHARIST — FOOD FOR LIFE:

When we invite friends for a meal, we do much more than offer them food for their bodies. We offer friendship, fellowship, good conversation, intimacy, and closeness. When we say: "Help yourself", "take some more", "don't be shy", "have another glass," we offer our guests not only our food and our drink, but also ourselves. A spiritual bond grows, and we become food and drink for one another other. In the most complete and perfect way, this happens when Jesus gives himself to us in the Eucharist as food and drink. By offering us his Body and Blood, Jesus offers us the most intimate communion possible. It is a divine communion.



—Henri Nouwen

A DISCUSSION OF “*MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS*” — OCT. 21st:

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. **Please email Fr. John [blazekj@gilmour.org] to join in the Bible Study. We will meet from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. 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, October 11: 28 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, October 12:	NO MASS
Tuesday, October 13:	NO MASS
Wednesday, October 14:	NO MASS
Thursday, October 15: St. Teresa of Jesus	NO MASS
Friday, October 16:	NO MASS
Saturday, October 17: 29 th Week in Ordinary Time	5:00 PM [In-person only]
Sunday, October 18: 29 th Week in Ordinary Time	10:00 AM In-Person & Live Stream

MEN'S DAY OF RETREAT — THURSDAY, NOV. 12th:

Thursday, November 12th from 6:00 PM – 8:15 PM will be the date of our annual Men's Fall Retreat! All men of Our Lady Chapel, Gilmour Academy, and the Gilmour Men's Club and their guests, are invited. We will begin with Mass together in the Chapel at 6:00, and then move to the Lennon Boardroom for a light supper, and our spiritual discussion, led by Fr. John. **There is no cost for the evening, but free will offerings will be accepted.** [Even if you can't make it for Mass, come anyway when you can.] It will be a wonderful evening of spiritual renewal. So, **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Sign up on the retreat sheet which is located on the easel in the narthex of the Chapel, or call [440-473-3560] or email: szaniszl@p@gilmour.org.**



REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet is a harsh one [Matthew 22:1-14]. I think that this is quite intentional. Jesus' ministry is coming to its conclusion, he has already made his solemn entrance into the Holy City, and he sees his time of teaching coming to a close. Over the past several weekends, we have heard Jesus talking about choices that we have to make.

Now we come to the parable of the Wedding Feast. Jesus is making one final plea to win over our hearts. He wants us to make the decision whether to accept him or not. And to do this, Jesus places before us an increasingly stark set of choices. It also becomes more and more obvious as to who each of the various characters in the parables represent.

In the parable of the Wedding feast, the wedding banquet clearly represents the early Church, and the guests are obviously the Chosen People who unfortunately decide not to come to the banquet. A second invitation is issued, but they still do not come; instead some of them even kill the servants who come bearing the invitation. The servants to represent the prophets. The King in his fury destroys those invited and their town. Matthew here is probably referring to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, and the subsequent dispersal of the Jewish people among the nations. Then the King issues his invitation to anyone and everyone. This is clearly God extending the invitation to the Gentile community, and that all people are invited to share in salvation.



A little more perplexing is the reference at the end of the parable to the person without a wedding garment. When questioned by the King, the person remains silent and so the King has him bound and then thrown out of the feast.

There are several theories to explain this. Some writers point out that when a great man — such as a King — invites you to a wedding banquet, he would provide at the door the correct garment for the poorer guests to wear. This man had obviously been given such a garment but must have taken it off and laid it aside at some point. Others do not agree with this idea, but say that anyone going to a wedding feast would wear their very best clothes. Thus wearing a set of what were presumably ordinary clothes is insulting to the King. Either way the point is the same — the wedding banquet is a symbol of the Church, and we realize that when we assume membership of the Church we leave off our old clothes which represent sin and put on the new garment of sinlessness. This guest has either never accepted the Gospel or returned to his sinful ways. Whichever it is, this person does not deserve to remain at the banquet.

Thus, while this parable is addressed to the Chief Priests and elders and demands that they must make a choice as to whether to embrace Christ or not, it also has a message to present day Christians warning us not to revert to our old sinful ways. What then we must understand is that while all are welcome into God's Kingdom, just showing up is not sufficient. No, actual, real change is also required in our lives. When we accept the invitation to become part of God's family, we are expected to leave off old sinful ways and to live a new kind of life according to the laws of God.

Of course, this is not easy, and while we might be full of good intentions and earnestly desire to follow Christ's Gospel of love, we may on occasion lapse and fall back into sinful ways.

This does not mean that we are complete failures — as long as we pick ourselves up again and repent of our sins and once again attempt to follow the Christian way of life. It has been said often enough that the Church is not a club for saints, but a hospital for sinners. None of us are perfect — we

are all sinners. But we are sinners who repent again and again. We are sinners who really do want to follow Christ's way of perfection.

Because we recognize our own failures, we should be even more patient with others, and realize that everyone finds the Christian life difficult. The important thing, though, is to sustain ourselves with regular prayer and worship. It is maintaining our commitment to Sunday mass and to daily prayer that will help us to repent when we fail to keep God's laws.

The worse thing to do is to give up. Just because we commit one sin, we should not think that we are failures and completely written off in God's eyes. The fact is that God calls sinners first to his banquet of love. What we should realize when we sin is that God still loves us deeply — perhaps even more deeply. And maybe coming to this recognition will give us the courage we need to repent and to turn once again to him.

All these things give us cause for rejoicing. This is Good News for the whole world — news that we certainly shouldn't keep to ourselves; we need to share it with others.

Christ told this parable in the days just before his death on the Cross. There is a sense of urgency in his words. He wants his listeners to choose life; he wants his listeners to recognize him for who he is, and he wants them to repent of sin and to commit their lives to following God's laws.

These words of his echo down through the centuries to us now. Although much time has passed, Christ's words are as urgent as ever. He wants us to be ever more conformed to the way of life he proposes in the Gospels. And he tells us that by embracing his teaching we will be enabled to enter God's Kingdom of Love and experience everlasting joy.

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

OUR HOLY CROSS REFLECTION FOR THIS WEEK:

Who Has Your Back? To live the Christian spiritual life is to live a counter cultural life. Jesus' blueprint of that life is summed up in the Beatitudes. It is not what our culture holds up as being successful. Like Jesus' goal, our goal is not of this world. It involves a Christian hope that ends happily even as we experience many challenges and "deaths." Like Jesus we will rise to new life in this world and in the next.

As we live in this world, who has our back? Who and what gives us the support we need to live this counter cultural life? Do we have fellow pilgrims who are journeying with us? This is the grace of living in a Christian community. This is certainly the benefit of those who have been called to religious life. This is also one of the graces afforded to lay people who join religious as Associates. No matter what is going on in the world, that support remains faithful as we witness the lives of those with whom we walk on this pilgrimage to the "new Jerusalem." Prayer, community, and service are qualities that will lead us in the right direction. Jesus said: "Where two or more are gathered in my name, I am in their midst."

- Do you recognize that living a Christian life goes beyond the motive of competition?
- What do you most need to live a Christian Life?
- Who supports you in this quest?

O God, give me the support I need to live a full Christian life.

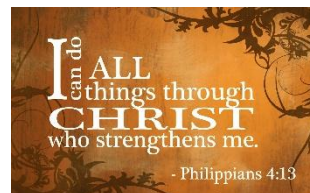
—Brother Carl Sternberg, CSC



IN HIM WHO STRENGTHENS US:

The young man and young woman brought their treasure home — their first, a girl. A few days later, her Mom and sister went home. And there she was — alone with her baby. She never thought she would be so busy. And so tired. But she loved it. After all, this was her baby. Two weeks went by. Between the feeding, changing, holding, napping and crying — the baby's mostly — she has this horrible feeling. She can't tell her husband. She won't tell her mother. But the feeling is more than a thought — it is a reality. She whispers it to herself: "I can't do this."

Her husband has gone back to work. All seems to be going well for him. He loves holding the baby, playing with her, and is really quite good at caring for her — including changing diapers. What he doesn't tell his wife is that he can't stand the reality that he isn't a kid anymore. The baby has brought a new demand into his life. He has to be mature. All those things that he spent so much energy on in college are remote history. Then he wonders if he will be able to provide all his family needs. He wonders if he will be able to pay the bills next month. For the first time in his life, he faces pressure that will not go away after exams are taken. In the middle of the bouncing and holding, a doubt has formed. The doubt becomes a statement that he will not share with anyone. Still it is there. Within himself, he says: "I can't do this."



Another man and another woman. They're married for sixteen years. Children came and grew into play age. Now evenings and weekends are spent going to games and recitals, doing schoolwork, and attending meetings. All seemed well; all seemed normal. Sure their marriage had lost the wonder and excitement of its first years, and they have their disagreements, but they've learned how to work through them. They knew it was wrong to avoid some issues, but each knew that certain topics would bring reactions of upset rather than reason. Still, the other women she knew seemed to have it so much easier. The other men he knew seemed to have much less stress. Then one of the children fell ill — seriously ill. Caring for this child, caring for the others, caring for each other added new levels of stress to their lives. And both the husband and wife said to themselves: "I can't do this."

The priest went from one assignment to another where he felt loved and respected. But those were easy assignments. At first he was a new priest that everyone helped. In those days his own gifts outshone his limitations. He went from place to place as he was assigned — even becoming a pastor of a small parish. And then he was sent to a large parish that had seen three pastors in four years. The people there had enough with new pastors. Many of them challenged everything he attempted. Every program had its detractors. Every homily had its critics. Every week brought new unsigned mail that he refused to read, but whose existence still upset him. He kept plugging along, telling himself that he was sent to the parish for a reason that God knows and he might never know. Still as one battle followed another, the thought began to clarify itself. For the first time in his life he wondered, afraid even to state it. The thought kept coming to him, though. It was a simple thought, a horrible thought, one he never expected. The thought was: "I can't do this."

And the gay man or woman who are trying to live chaste lives in the middle of a society that tells them that they should turn from morality, and the college students who try to live their faith in spite of all the times that they are told that all they avoided in high schools is acceptable in college, and the single man or woman who hold on to morality with both hands — all of these and so many more are tempted to say: "I can't do this."

"I can't do this." No, you can't young mother, young father, older husband and wife, established priest, gay man, gay woman, college student, single person. No, you can't do it. At least, you can't

do it alone. But you are not asked to do it alone. You are not alone. You entered the marriage hoping to have a family with God as its center. You work hard to teach your children to make Christian choices. You chose the priesthood to serve God. You made a determination to live chastely — gay man, woman, college student, single adult. And you are not alone. God is with you.

Listen to what St. Paul says in his letter to the Church at Philippi. They are some of the most reassuring words in scripture [Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20] — “I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.”

Alone, I am not that good — neither are you. But we are not alone — we have Jesus Christ. He gives us the Power of His Spirit to conquer what might seem insurmountable. The Power of the Cross is given to us to wage war on any evil that attacks us.

I can do it. You can do it. We can do all things in Him who strengthens us.

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

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, October 17th**.

ALTAR SERVERS and LECTORS:

We continue to be in need of servers and lectors. **Any student who is in the 3rd [and up] grade is invited to become an altar server; any student who is in the 5th [and up] grade is**

invited to become a lector. 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]**



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!



DO YOU REMEMBER THE ROYAL WEDDING?

Do you remember watching the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton a few years ago. After watching that lavish display, how could anyone ignore or reject an invitation to such a significant event? The key to understanding Matthew's parable [22:1-14] revolves around a proper understanding of Jesus' first words — "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to..." At the heart of this conversation is the biblical phrase "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven". What we have to remember is that neither of these phrases refers to the eternal life that we're expecting to experience after our physical death. Rather the phrases refer to God working effectively in our lives right here and now — long before we're escorted through those pearly gates.

It's relatively easy to appreciate why someone would ignore or reject that kind of an invitation. At the very beginning of his public ministry, Jesus tells us that accepting this invitation entails repentance — a complete change in our value system. What we once thought important, we now push to the periphery of our lives; what we once thought insignificant is now front and center in everything we do.

As we hear over and over in the gospels, a sign we're working on this repentance is when people have become more important for us than our careers, wealth, institutions, or even laws. Lots of people simply aren't willing to take such a drastic step in order to experience God's presence in everyone they meet and everything they do.

In the 50 year interval between the historical Jesus telling this parable and Matthew's writing it down for his readers, things happened which were eventually integrated into the original narrative. The church, for instance, had suffered persecution at the hand of some of their fellow-Jews, and Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. At one point someone even joined this story of a rejected wedding feast to another parable which revolved around someone flaunting the dress code for such an important occasion.

Yet Jesus' basic message still remains — those who should have been the first to hear and respond to the good news of God's kingdom among us ignored it. An unexpected and unprepared people were the fortunate individuals who eventually accepted it. This was a powerful message for Matthew's Jewish/Christian community which was dealing with an influx of Gentiles into the church. Some among Matthew's readers would have put these non-Jews into the same category as the sinners and outcasts of the historical Jesus' day and age — the people who came to the feast.

The belief that experiencing God's kingdom right here and now is part of God's plan of salvation. This is obviously what Paul is referring to in his letter to the Church at Philippi when he reminds us that when we take the steps necessary to cross into the kingdom of heaven, our entire outlook on everything changes. As Paul puts it: "In every circumstance, and in all things, I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me." Paul is not focused on the things most people judge as essential to their well-being. Paul's value system has shifted 180 degrees.

Jack Shea once remarked that Jesus was concerned with answering just three questions: [1] "What do you want out of life?"; [2] "Where do you get it?"; and [3] "How much does it cost?" The answer to the last question probably stops a lot of us from even exploring the first two.

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



FAITH IN THE STORM — WHEN BELIEVING ISN'T EASY:

I recently turned the big one-eight. Looking back on this past year, I know the Lord helped me through many tough moments, and through them I learned one really important truth — the only way that we're going to survive is if Christ is at the center of our lives. What this means is this — [1] trusting in Him every second of every day; [2] giving Him everything; and [3] letting Him be in control. Charles Spurgeon once wrote: "If Christ is not all to you, He is nothing to you. He will never go into partnership as a part Savior of men. If He be something, He must be everything, and if He be not everything, He is nothing to you."

That may seem harsh, but Christianity isn't a nonchalant commitment — we're either "all in" or "all out". Of course God will always love and support us no matter where we are in our walk with Christ. Perhaps you've never been to church. Maybe you go to Confession every weekend. We are all at different points in our spiritual journey. Sometimes our faith is easy — like when we are linking arms with thousands of other teens at a LifeTeen conference, or when we are on retreat singing *Oceans*.

However, sometimes living our faith is really hard.

I'm almost finished reading a book entitled: *It is Well* by Chris Faddis. This is probably one of the most profound books I have ever read. Chris Faddis tells of the battle that he and his family went through in dealing with his wife's cancer and her journey from earth into heaven. This book has completely changed the way I view my faith. I suggest you read it.

I don't want to spoil it for you, but in order to get my point across, he talks about "life in the storm." No matter who we are, at some point in our life we will all be caught in a storm. Nonetheless, as Angela, her husband, and her kids show through their lives, we must trust and have faith in God no matter what.

There have been some tough moments this year. In these moments, the Lord called me to have faith even though I'm not sure where He is leading me. Last Fall, I missed about two days of school from what I believe to be some kind of an anxiety attack. I felt very detached those few days, but I had no idea why I was experiencing these strange feelings. For a while I had a difficult time shaking these feelings. And to make matters worse, I began struggling with even more anxieties — anxieties about past worries, college decisions, the future, and even my faith. I wrestled with these anxieties for a while, and though I have certainly been able to manage them better, this is something that I still struggle with today.

Often I wonder why did this happen? I felt fine in the beginning of the school year. I've had worries like this in the past — but nothing that has trapped me as much as these anxieties did. After praying and reflecting on this question a great deal, I strongly believe that this was Jesus telling me to wake up.

Before, I had trouble making Christ a priority in my life — and yet wanted a relationship with Him so badly. Throughout this past year, I have literally given everything to Jesus. Praying got me through the tough days, and relying on the support of my family helped when I was really struggling.

I know that God does not want me to be anxious all the time — God never chooses to inflict



suffering on us. **I also know that Jesus used this experience — this cross — to help me grow closer to Him, to show me His love, and to show me what it means to live with true blind faith.**

Maybe you are going through something really tough right now. Maybe you need greater faith to ease your anxieties about something going on in your life — that college admission letter, or that math test tomorrow. Whatever your anxieties, remember what the prophet Jeremiah said: “Blessed are those who trust in the Lord. They are like trees planted by water that send out their roots by the stream. They do not fear when heat comes — for their leaves remain green; nor are they anxious in the year of drought, for they do not cease to bear fruit” [Jeremiah 17:7-8].

This is harder than it sounds, but trust me — and, more importantly, trust the Lord — it’s worth it.

—written by Cassie Brouillard, a teen who writes for Life Teen

JOY OR MISSED OPPORTUNITY:

Matthew’s Gospel [22:1-14] compares the kingdom of heaven to a king who prepares a sumptuous banquet to celebrate his son’s wedding. When the invited guests refuse to come, the king sends his servants to invite everyone they find on the streets — filling the banquet hall with guests. In this part of the parable, Jesus uses the scriptural image of a lavish banquet to suggest the ultimate triumph of God’s abundant grace. The prophet Isaiah had first spoken of such an image when God would provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines [Isaiah 25:6-10]. For Jesus, this great feast represents not only a final victory of divine grace, but also a present reality filled with opportunities for spiritual growth. God’s healing, reconciling and liberating grace is available now. The reign is already here in our midst. Open to all, the kingdom is filled with resources for personal growth, deeper relationships, and societal transformation.

It is possible, however, as the parable suggests, to refuse the invitation to the feast — to miss the opportunities to cooperate with God’s grace, to ignore the immense resources available in the kingdom. A woman, who was forced by circumstances to divorce her insensitive, self-centered husband, spoke truly when she said that he missed a great opportunity to get to know a good person who loved him. A retired accountant has passed up all the adult religious education opportunities provided by his parish on the assumption that his grade school understanding of the faith is good enough for him. A woman who quit school to get married at a young age and has raised four children wants to go back to finish her college education, but can’t summon the courage to give it a try. An attorney has maintained his habit of attending Sunday Mass, but has done little to make it a more fruitful experience. These examples can prompt reflection on ways we have missed opportunities to tap the spiritual resources so abundantly available in the kingdom.

The parable also suggests the good news that God is a gracious host who wants everyone to share in the blessings of the banquet. Our God wants all people to be saved and to participate in the feast of grace already present in our daily experience. Where God reigns, there are always new opportunities for spiritual growth. For example, spouses can help each other come closer to Christ by praying together. Individuals can find deeper meaning in their daily work by viewing it as their contribution to the spread of the kingdom in the world. American students can gain more from their collegiate experience by befriending international students. Worshipers can get more out of the Sunday liturgy by reflecting on the scripture readings ahead of time. Parishioners can gain a deeper understanding of their faith by attending parish-sponsored religious education programs for adults. The Gracious Host has indeed prepared a lavish banquet for all of us. We can always find new ways of drawing on that abundant resource.

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

INVITATION TO THE GOOD LIFE:

What's the difference between an invitation and a call? We might be invited to the game on Sunday, to a party, or even to be godparent to the child of a friend. When does an invitation — “Will you marry me?” — become a call? How do we know our “calling in life?” These are some of the questions that spring from Jesus' story of the king who got stood up when he threw a wedding party for his son.

First of all, the setting. Matthew makes the king the protagonist in this story. Think about this: While you might wiggle out of a neighbor's invitation to a baby shower or potluck, in Jesus' day, an invitation from the king required acceptance — to do otherwise implied insurrection.

So, here we have this king all ready to show off his wealth and generosity by throwing an impressive feast for his son — probably the crown prince. This is no small affair. When the menu includes calves and fattened cattle, we're talking about 750-pound calves and cattle that weigh about twice that much — not counting vegetables and wine! It's hard to calculate the insult resulting from making such preparations only to have the people you want to impress decide that they've got something better to do. You can bet that they weren't thinking that the king was going to rule for long — nor that his heir would become a person of great power. Brushing him off showed that they were counting on a change of regime.

The king was not to be deterred. If the “right people” weren't going to be with him, he would find others and make them right. That's a description of salvation and a retake on Isaiah 25's mountaintop banquet for “all peoples.” These stories portray God's future as a blowout feast for everyone humble enough to accept the fact that they can never deserve the invitation and who, at the same time, know that the invitation itself makes them worthy.



What if we thought about the images of these feasts as call stories? Most of the vocation stories we hear stress the leaving everything to follow. The fishers left their nets and boats, the women who followed Jesus left their reputations and gave from their own wealth to follow. Jesus himself warned that each would need to take up their own cross.

Nevertheless, the Gospels never present the reign of God as an experience of fast and abstinence. Jesus himself admitted that others called him a glutton and a drunkard [see Matthew 11:19]. Jesus was never accused of being too strict or ascetic!

What if we thought of our calling — our vocation — as an invitation to “the good life” in the sense of a life of fulfillment, joy, celebration, commitment, laughter and love? Isn't that what the folks who filled the king's banquet hall found?

We might think of this party as a mirror of the sacraments of initiation — Baptism, confirmation and Eucharist — symbolized by the acceptance of the invitation, the wedding gown and participating in the feast. Here, “the bad and good alike” can enjoy everything the king has prepared for them. You can imagine them dancing and singing, going back for seconds — or thirds — and popping petit fours into their mouths each time they glide past the dessert table.

This is our invitation, our vocation. All it costs, as in Isaiah 55, is the willingness to participate fully: to accept the invitation, put on the attitudes symbolized by the wedding dress, and then fully enjoy what is offered.

Let's go for it!

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

MEALS IN SCRIPTURE:

Meals obviously play a big role in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. They appear in all three of the Scripture Readings for this 28th Week in Ordinary Time. But our sacred authors look at them from three different perspectives.

Isaiah's image is often proclaimed at funerals [Isaiah 25:6-10]. Isaiah isn't talking about heaven. The concept of an eternal reward awaiting us after our physical death wouldn't enter mainstream Jewish thought until about 600 years after his prophetic ministry. Isaiah is simply looking forward to an ideal age when there would be no death — when that “veil” which entraps all people will finally be destroyed. When that day arrives, everyone will gather on Mt. Zion — the mount on which Jerusalem's temple is built — for the most terrific banquet anyone could ever imagine. Yet I presume Isaiah knew such a day would never arrive during his lifetime. It was just his “when-my-ship-comes-in” dream — an expression of his faith in God's eventual care, no matter when and how it would appear.

Still, meals — and especially banquet type meals — were significant events in the biblical world. That seems to be why the gospel Jesus uses the metaphor of a big feast when he's trying to explain his insight into the “kingdom of heaven.”

Before this story appeared in Matthew and Luke's gospels, scholars believe it was originally included in a now-lost collection of Jesus' sayings which they refer to as the “Q.” Both evangelists changed it around a little to fit their unique theologies. Luke, for instance, who seems to have had problems with “Mrs. Luke,” leaves out the meal's wedding aspect, and also adds another excuse for not attending [see Luke 14]: “I've just married a wife, and therefore . . .” But in either case, gospel readers are reminded that lots of people miss the boat when it comes to recognizing God working effectively in their lives.



By the way, don't worry about the poor guy who was just walking down the main street, suddenly pulled into a wedding banquet, and then thrown out into the “darkness outside” because he's not wearing the proper clothes. Matthew has obviously meshed two separate stories into one, simply because they had something to do with wedding celebrations. The second story has nothing to do with the first.

Ignoring the second story, Jesus' message is clear: “Many are invited, but few are chosen.” Matthew's readers can prove the point by just looking around. Few people are willing to die enough to themselves to actually experience God in their everyday lives. Though they're probably longing for such a heavenly encounter, they easily can find excuses for not following through on such a demanding invitation.

On the other hand, Paul of Tarsus is one of the few who has actually accepted the invitation. He's stepped into a life he could only have dreamt about before he came face to face with the risen Jesus on the Damascus road. By forming the giving relationship with others which that invitation requires, he discovers his value system has drastically been transformed — even about such basics as food. As he tells his Philippian Church: “I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need” [Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20]. He has a new focus in life — a focus which actually brings life, no matter the circumstances he experiences.

It's more than interesting what people are able to do when they start to experience the risen Jesus among them — especially in the needy people among them. “I can do all things in him who strengthens me,” Paul proclaims. But he would have accomplished nothing had he found an excuse to ignore God's invitation.

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

INCOMPLETE WTHOUT THE EUCHARIST:

You know when you find something and you can't imagine your life without it? For some of you that one thing is a relationship with a good friend, pet, or a cell phone. This is a story about that — the one thing in my life that I can't live without.

I grew up in Marietta, GA, and my family was not particularly religious. We went to a Methodist church on Christmas and Easter, and on a handful of Sundays. At that point, the only thing that would make me appear to be a Christian was the fact that I celebrated Christmas — or rather I celebrated receiving video games and wool socks.

I had friends who were involved with Young Life, and they invited me to different events with them. I had other friends who went to the youth group at a Baptist church, and I would go with them to events. My sister, who was in college at the time, invited me to go to the church she was attending — North Point Community Church — on Sunday mornings when she was in town. Looking back at that point in my life, I can see that God was quietly saying: “Follow Me” through all my friends and my sister.

There was a point at the end of my sophomore and into my junior year of high school that I had begun to feel restless. It was the kind of restlessness that I could feel deep in my bones – kind of like being stuck in between two big guys on a five-hour flight — not fun. I couldn't tell why I felt that way, but I just knew that I did.

There was this girl Katie who sat next to me in homeroom. We became good friends because we had a lot of the same classes, and we were forced to sit next to each other because her last name came after mine in the alphabet. She would occasionally invite me to come to XLT with her, and I would politely turn her down or say: “Yeah ... that would be fun” — but actually have no intention of going. After a few weeks of her persistently asking, I finally committed and told her that I would go.

At first it was nothing that I hadn't seen before — praise and worship, and a message. But, then something happened that I had never experienced. It made me uncomfortable because I didn't understand it. It was the Eucharist. I sat there watching the whole auditorium kneeling before the Eucharist in adoration. My initial thought was: “I don't know what that is, so I will sit here pray quietly to myself.” I didn't want to kneel. The floor was hard. Leaving XLT, I had the feeling of being out of my comfort zone.

I went with Katie the next week — and then again the following week. That piece of bread had the attention of a whole auditorium of people — it had to mean something. Unknowingly, I followed her to a moment with Christ that would change my life. Before Adoration, the priest described what we were about to encounter. While I was sitting there, for the first time in my life I allowed myself to be found by God. And for the first time, I told him where I was. I heard him speaking in His quiet voice: **“Stop looking. You are home”**.

This was that moment, when I found something that my life would be incomplete without. I can no longer see how a life can exist without the Eucharist being at the center of it. Having a spiritual life without the Eucharist at the center is like eating cookies without milk, or trying to drive a car with no gas in the tank — it doesn't work.

When I was a senior in high school in 2003, I was received into the Catholic Church on Easter because of the Eucharist. There is not a day that goes by without the Eucharist being on my mind, challenging me, and slowly molding me into the person I was created to be. The Eucharist is the one thing I am incomplete without.

—taken from the writings of Bradley Opitz, an associate of The Bible Geek



WORTHINESS FOR THE WEDDING BANQUET:

A woman decided that she was going to have a dinner party for a good number of her friends. So, she spent most of the week cleaning, baking, cooking, and preparing the table. And when everyone finally arrived and sat down to eat, she turned to her six-year-old daughter and said: “Honey, why don’t you say the blessing?” “Mommy,” she said, “I don’t know what to say.” “Just simply say what you hear Mommy say.” So, the little girl bowed her head and said: “Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all of these people to dinner?”

Like the woman in the story, you and I can occasionally have regrets about the invitations that we offer. But that is not the case with our God. For our God is a God of invitation — a God who is constantly inviting all people into relationship, inviting all to share in divine life and love.

Matthew’s Jesus portrays this God of invitation [Matthew 22:1-14]. It also tells us something important about ourselves and our own worthiness to accept God’s call. The king in the parable is constantly inviting people to come to the wedding banquet of his son. But, no one wants to come. Finally, in frustration he says: “Look, the dinner is ready., but those who were invited were unworthy.” What does it mean in the world of this parable to be “unworthy”? It is simple. Unworthiness consists in refusing the invitation.

Underlying this parable is a fundamental, theological belief that the invitation of God is supreme. It is really the only thing that matters. Our worthiness, our successes and our failures do not count as much as God’s call. Therefore, worthiness does not result from all the good things that we have done, but simply from our willingness to say “yes” to the invitation. Unworthiness is not determined by the mistakes and sins that we have committed, but simply our stubbornness in refusing to come to the wedding banquet.

The parable is very clear on this. Look who ends up at the wedding banquet: everyone that the slaves can bring in off the streets — the good and the bad alike. The point here is that our moral condition is secondary to God’s invitation. The banquet is ready and God wants us to come.

Now, this insight can clarify a number of misperceptions that we can have about the Christian faith. At times we may think that faith is about us being good. But it is really about God being good. At times we may think that faith is about us making the choice to love God. But faith is really about God making the choice to love us. All the good things that we do, all the wonderful qualities that we have do not make us worthy of that love. All the mistakes we have made, all the sins that we have committed, do not disqualify us from the invitation that God is offering.

God invites us, and worthiness depends upon whether we say “yes” or “no” to that invitation. To say this in another way, **God does not love us because we are good; we are good because God loves us.** We are good because we have said “yes” to God’s invitation and despite any of our successes or shortcomings, we have chosen to come to the feast.

Clearly, once we have said “yes” and accepted the invitation, we try to live a moral life. We try to do good and avoid evil. But, all of us know that our success in that area is rather uneven. Yet, our success or failure is secondary to God’s invitation. It is God’s call that counts.

So, never think that God loves you because you are good, because you come to church, because you give to charity, because you are a good parent or spouse or friend. All of these things are commendable. But, God’s love for you is prior to, and greater than, any of your achievements. None of the good things you do have any claim on God’s love. Because, before all of them God freely chose to create you, to save you in Jesus Christ, and to call you to eternal life.



Never believe that God has stopped loving you because you have sinned, because you have failed, because you have cheated or lied, because you have hurt other people, because you are prejudiced or selfish. God's love is prior to, and greater than, any of your sins or failures.

Our God is a God of invitation. God invites us all into relationship, into the divine life. Our worthiness depends only on our willingness to say "yes". So, let us say "yes." Let us forget all of our successes and failures, all of our virtues and vices. Let us simply say "yes" to God's love. The wedding banquet is prepared. Come to the feast.

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

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.



EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

We are beginning the process of discerning those in our chapel community who feel called to Eucharistic Ministry. 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. If you are interested, please give your name to Fr. John, or call the Chapel office.



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.

Total Offerings:	Saturday [9/26/26]	-----	\$ 115.00
Total Offerings:	Sunday [9/27/26]	-----	\$ 500.00
Total Offerings:	Saturday [10/3/26]	-----	\$ 45.00
Total Offerings:	Sunday [10/4/26]	-----	\$ 635.00

THE ROAD TO HOLINESS:

Jesus' parable of the wedding feast is a very interesting one [Matthew 22:1-14]. We can easily see who the various characters represent — the host is God the Father, the Son is Jesus, the servants are the Prophets, and the banquet is the Feast of Heaven; the people to whom the first invitation is given are the Jews; but when they fail to come to the wedding, for whatever reason, the invitation is then opened up to the Gentiles.

However among scholars, there are conflicting views about the wedding garment and what it represents. But the vast majority of scholars agree that what the garment represent is this: although the invitation to God's Kingdom is now open to people seemingly chosen at random — good and bad alike — there are some standards, and failure to meet those standards results in the ungrateful guest being cast out.

For the past several weeks, the parables have been addressed to the Chief Priests and the Elders of the People — and so is this one. All these parables are meant to highlight the fact to the senior Jewish leaders that they have effectively misused the privileged relationship that God had given them; thus, through the sacrifice of Christ, the invitation was now to be extended to the whole world.

Those first invited to the banquet have various excuses — “one went off to their farm, another to their business, and the rest seized the servants, maltreated them, and killed them.” The invitation so graciously given has been ignored — the messengers of God have been maltreated, and even killed. It is unbelievable that those who hear God's invitation should be so preoccupied with their own affairs that they reject it. Even more unbelievable is that some of them turn on God's Prophets to attack and kill them.

Of course, this rejection of God's messengers is not something confined to the past — it is just as much present today. The people of today's world are far more preoccupied with making money or indulging their own desires rather than ensuring their entrance into the Kingdom of God. This is an ever present problem for humanity. We have a kind and gentle God who does not force himself upon us, but simply invites us to share eternal life with him. The initiative as to whether we take up his offer is completely left to us. The problem is that we are so preoccupied with other things — so distracted with the things of this world — that most of us don't even hear the gracious invitation of our Creator God.

However, we — the members of the Church — have heard the invitation. We have understood God's plan for us, and we are glad to follow him and we choose each day to embrace the life he has prepared for us.

We should note that those who come in the second batch of guests are not necessarily any better than the members of the first group. The main thing is that they have taken up the invitation — they have responded to the call of God. Like those in the first group, we still do get distracted from time to time. We still fall into sin and frequently forget the correct direction of travel; but hopefully because we have initially responded to God's invitation we will soon come to our senses and return again to the



path of fidelity.

But what about that wedding garment — what is that all about? Once we set out on the road to salvation, we need to equip ourselves with whatever is necessary to be good citizens of the Kingdom of God. What this means is that we must assiduously acquire the virtues. The living out of the virtues is an essential requirement of anyone who wants entrance to the Kingdom of God. It is these virtues that are represented in the story as the wedding garment.

And the virtues spring out of our baptismal commitment — it is there that we are born as children of God; it is there that we seek to live the virtuous life. What are these virtues that we need to live — goodness, purity, hope, perseverance, temperance, prudence, courage, justice, fidelity, patience, self-control — just to name a few.

These are all the qualities that enhance human life. The opposite to a virtue is a vice — something that breaks us down or perverts our true nature. Vices are negative traits — things which are immoral or sinful, and which breakdown our character. Examples include lust, avarice, envy, anger, gluttony, sloth, and pride.

It is important to understand that both virtue and vice are habitual aspects of our nature. This means that the more we do a certain thing, the more it becomes part of our character — it becomes more easily repeatable and eventually defines who we are. The way to human completeness is to acquire good habits rather than bad habits, for those whose lives are given over to negative habits are on the road to destruction. Good habits lead us to wholeness.

Have you ever heard this saying — as a tree leans, so shall it fall? The more you fill your life with all that is good, true, and beautiful, the more likely you are to end your life living in this way. And for the Christian this means ending up living eternal life in bliss with the saints in the Kingdom of God.

The equation is simple. The choice is ours. We are all invited to the wedding banquet, but we must not neglect to put on the wedding mantle of the virtues so that we are fully accepted into the Kingdom of Heaven and all the joys it promises.

And so resolve today to live a life that is true, good, and holy. Resolve to shun evil and all that is destructive to your human nature. Let us pray that by following the right path we end up as members of God's Kingdom enjoying eternity with the one who understands us better than anyone.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., 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: Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1; Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday: Galatians 5:1-6; Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday: Galatians 5:18-25; Luke 11:42-46

Thursday: Romans 8:22-27; John 15:1-8

Friday: Ephesians 1:11-14; Luke 12:1-7

Saturday: Philippians 3:17-4:1; John 12:24-26

29th Week in Ordinary Time: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b; Matthew 22:15-21

GIFTS ON GOD'S TERMS:

Wedding registries. Christmas lists. Return policies. Gift cards. No one can deny that these modern conveniences make our lives easier. What do they all have in common? Personal preference. In each of these things, we have a say over the gift we receive. It's something to which we've become accustomed. But does God work that way?

The Scripture Readings for this 28th Week in Ordinary Time can seem incongruous — even jarringly so. Both Paul and Isaiah are optimistic, hopeful, and filled with confidence in God's bounty. Isaiah speaks of "rich food and choice wines," death destroyed, and sorrow wiped away forever [Isaiah 25:6-10]. Then comes the famous Psalm 23, where having the Lord as our shepherd means we "shall not want." Finally, Paul, in his letter to the Church at Philippi, gives an assurance that, as God provided for St. Paul's needs, so too will God provide for the Philippians — and for us [Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20].



In Matthew's Gospel, the parable of the wedding feast is filled with things that ought to make us uncomfortable. A fabulous banquet invitation refused for no evident reason. The brutal murder of the king's servants and the king's retributive punishment. And while things seem to improve at a "come one, come all" style banquet, the parable still ends with a party-goer cast out for improper attire [Matthew 22:1-14]. How do we reconcile all of this?

In an era of online grocery delivery and the growing "internet of things," it's becoming increasingly easy to expect to experience life on our terms. God, however, doesn't seem to operate that way. In Jesus' parable, the king holds out an invitation, only to have it repeatedly rejected. Is the gift so unimportant? We should hesitate to judge those in the parable too harshly — modern church attendance numbers tell a similar story.

When the invitation is accepted, Jesus highlights not the grateful guests, but the under-dressed. Why? He took the gift of the king, but he didn't truly receive it. His casual, offhand manner at the wedding conveys that he didn't really understand the importance of the invitation in the first place.

This parable raises important questions. Is it that difficult to humble ourselves? Is it that difficult to receive a gift on God's terms rather than our own?

The abundant gifts God offers can make people uncomfortable. Sanctifying grace? That comes through weekly reception of the sacraments. Abundant life in heaven? That requires an adherence of our hearts to the challenging ethos of the Gospel.

In Paul's acceptance of God's providence, he clearly states that he has lived in both "humble circumstances" and "abundance," that he has been well-fed and gone hungry. For him, the gift of God wasn't the ongoing fulfillment of wants, but perfect fulfillment of needs. This attitude requires humility — the ability to recognize the potential of providence in every situation, even if the gift doesn't perfectly match our preferences.

We need to allow God's word to challenge our perception. God's abundance is waiting for us, but it might not look like we think it will. Let's pray for the inner transformation we need so that, when the invitation comes, we'll find ourselves ready to embrace it.

—taken from the writings of Anna Carter, which appear on the internet.

PRAYER:

Experiencing the unconditional love of God is what prayer is all about.

—Ronald Rolheiser

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 recovering from surgery.
- For Sarah Finucane ['08], sister of Katy Finucane ['06], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- 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 Lois Grano, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Maren Monitello, daughter of Bob and Linda Monitello, who is going through difficult times.
- For Vivian Klick, mother of Linda Monitello, grandmother of and Anthony ['17] and Angeline ['19] who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Gabriella Kowardy, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Ryan Andino, a member of our music ministry, who awaits treatment for a foot injury.
- For Terry Tintor, who is battling blood cancer.
- For Brother David Martin, C.S.C., who is recovering from foot surgery.
- For Archie Callicott, who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Matt Haberman, father of Dorm Proctor, Brianna, Melannie ['27], and Gabe ['28] Haberman, who is recovering from surgery.

PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Geoff Morton ['55], brother of Chris ['56] and Michael ['61] Morton.
- For Brother Donald Shapker, C.S.C.
- For William Haas, grandfather of Sophia ['26] and Samuel ['29] Haas.
- For Eileen Turoff,
- For Pavo Pavic.
- For Luke Durst
- For Lynne Wright
- For Bryan Ponader
- For Frank K. Pines, father of Frank Pines ['11]

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For a woman having a difficult pregnancy.
- For Father Snell Nord, C.S.C., who is being held captive in Haiti
- 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

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer for God's Grace ~

**We call upon you
in a special way.
It is through your power
that we were created.
Every breath we take,
every morning we wake,
and every moment of every hour,
we live under your power.**

**Touch us, again, with that same power.
Recreate in us new life.
Fill us with the healing power
of your Holy Spirit.
Cast out anything
that stands as an obstacle
to our becoming the person
you want us to be.**

**Keep us strong —
physically,
emotionally,
intellectually,
and spiritually —
so that we may serve you,
and the human family,
for the rest of our lives.
Amen.**

The Campus Ministry Office is located in Our Lady Chapel.
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