



following CHRIST

a seven-week experience

Making myself ACCESSIBLE to God isn't always easy!

Contemplative Prayer. It sounds very simple at first.....be silent and still. I long to be silent and still, and to not always be so busy. I can do this. I can make myself ACCESSIBLE to God.

Then, I give it a try and it feels like the most difficult thing I have ever tried. An attempt at contemplative prayer might be a little intimidating for some at first. We close our eyes, and try to be still, emptying our mind of all thoughts except for those of God. But then, our nose begins to twitch. We start thinking about people we haven't be in touch with. We go over our "to-do" lists, and so on. It can be quite difficult.

Over and over we can lose focus on God; we are taking over the process! We may think, "Should I even try again? Maybe my life/my mind is just too cluttered to be ACCESSIBLE to God." But, many teachers of Contemplative Prayer assure us that even *trying* is a good and positive step to being in union with God. Just wanting to be ACCESSIBLE to Him is indeed a form of prayer. Acknowledging that He is there inviting you, and that you want to accept His invitation is a great start! Fr. Thomas H. Green, SJ wrote, "The very desire for God is a clear sign of His presence."

Writer Charles Wolford understands the complexity of trying to be still after he spent a weekend at Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky, once the home to Thomas Merton, Trappist Monk, famous author and mystic. Wolford was curious about Gethsemani and decided to leave behind the noise of modern life and experience the silence. He had heard that anyone can be a retreatant and stay a weekend (or a full week) at the abbey free of charge. So he emailed them, and was invited to stay there Memorial Day weekend. Wolford writes of his experience in *Louisville Magazine*, August 2016:

"The abbey seemed placed inside a crown of hills that I later learned were the Nelson County Knobs — furred with trees and ringing the horizon. A path led from the parking lot between a yard of tombstones and merged into a plaza that approached the main church, which glowed pale in the evening light. A sign on a wall read: Monastic Grounds. Next to it, a cast-iron gate with letters build into the crest: GOD ALONE."

Wolford was checked into his room at 8:00 pm. This was not a guided retreat so he was left completely alone — "without internet for the first time in as long as I could remember, I had nothing to do."

Within an hour, he had already become restless. "By 9 p.m., I had taken a shower, done 50 push-ups, jotted a paragraph in my journal, read a chapter in the novel I had brought, texted my friends till they stopped texting back, and was sitting at the desk near the window, staring again out toward my car. I had come here, in part, to escape the roar of modern life. But now that I was here, in a enclave of silence, I was almost scared." So he left the monastery for a few hours and drove into town to be with noise and people.

By his second evening there, Wolford was still struggling with the silence and being alone. At one point he wanted to start yelling "to shatter the tranquility that oppressed this building." He resisted yelling, and resisted leaving the premises once again. Instead, he went for a walk, climbed to the top of a hill and observed, "Looking back toward Gethsemane, I knew that something inside me was changing. For the first time since I'd arrived, I was calm. I wasn't thinking about what I was thinking about. I was just there."

When his weekend was up, Wolford had embraced the atmosphere and actually hated to leave. He received these wise words from Brother Paul at Gethsemani, "God is the only thing big enough for our minds, and our minds are not big enough for him. The more you untangle it, the more complicated things are. So what you want to do is enter that simplicity of mind — the simplicity of God." As Thomas Aquinas said, "God is the simplest being of all."

**We don't need to travel to an abbey to be ACCESSIBLE to Him.
Turn off, tune out, be silent, be still — where you are.**

Mass Intentions

August 15 — August 21, 2016

7:30 am Mon.: Mass— Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:30 am Tues.: communion service

6:00 pm Wed.: communion service

7:30 am Thurs.: communion service

7:30 am Fri.: communion service

5:30 pm Sat.: LCpl Philip Clark (RIP)

8:00 am Sunday: Sebastiana Campisi RIP

10:30 am Sunday: John Carter Edwards (RIP)

Prayer Intentions

John Craven
Tommy Autrey
Sharon Bowers, former parishioner

Rest of the Soul
Sr. Lucy Freibert, aunt of Angie Nix

Adoration This Week: Monday-Friday: 8am-Noon;
Wed. 6:30 pm-7:30 pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 4:30-5:00pm or by appt.
Lectio Divina Mondays @ 7pm; and Tuesdays @ 10 am

New Announcements

* **Baptism Prep class- Sunday, Aug. 28th @ 2pm** in the Family Life Center for all those needing to have a child baptized within the next 4 months.

***3rd annual Early Learning Center Golf tournament registration** has begun. Brochures are available in the back of the church or contact the Learning Center office (601-992-2876). This year, there is a raffle sale for a 5 day/4 night stay in Perdido Key, Florida (only \$10 a ticket). Tickets are on sale after all masses beginning this weekend. You may also access more information on the Learning Center website www.saintpaullearningcenter.com.



***St. Dominic's Ministry** will be delivering lunch items to the families of patients in ICU on **August 23rd**. Please sign up in the back of church and have your items to the FLC kitchen by 10am. Thank you for your assistance with this ministry.



St. Paul Youth Band will hold its first practice this Sunday @ 5-6:30pm in the FLC. All 7th-12th grade youth with a heart for music are welcome. Come join the fun— we need you!



SAVE THE DATE: To kick off the new year, the Youth Group will be having a Tailgate Party on Sunday, September 11th from 12:00-3:00 in the FLC. All grades 7th-12th are welcome!



Reminders

***St. Paul Learning Center** has job openings in the afternoons, Monday-Friday. Looking for energetic, cheerful, loving teachers to care and teach in our 2, 3, and 4 year old classrooms. Please call Jennifer Henry or Darlene Scanlon @ 601-992-2876 or email stpaullearningcenter@gmail.com

***RCIA registration** is now available online! Classes will be held every Tuesday @ 6:30pm. The first class will be Sept. 27th. A light meal will be served and presentations will begin at 7pm each week.

See the website for more detailed information on these previously published events.

Sept. 8th and Sept. 13th—Following Christ Sessions begin. Space is still available. Register online now or call the office if you need assistance.

September 11th—PRE and Adult Ed classes begin. Register online before Sept. 1st.

September 14th— Youth Group classes will begin. Register online before Sept. 1st.

Weekly offering for August 7th: \$17,886

Thank You!

*Altar flowers have been donated by Lonnie & Patsy Graeber in memory of Charles & Guendaline Graeber.



*Blessed Mother flowers have been donated by Blake and Ann Wilson.

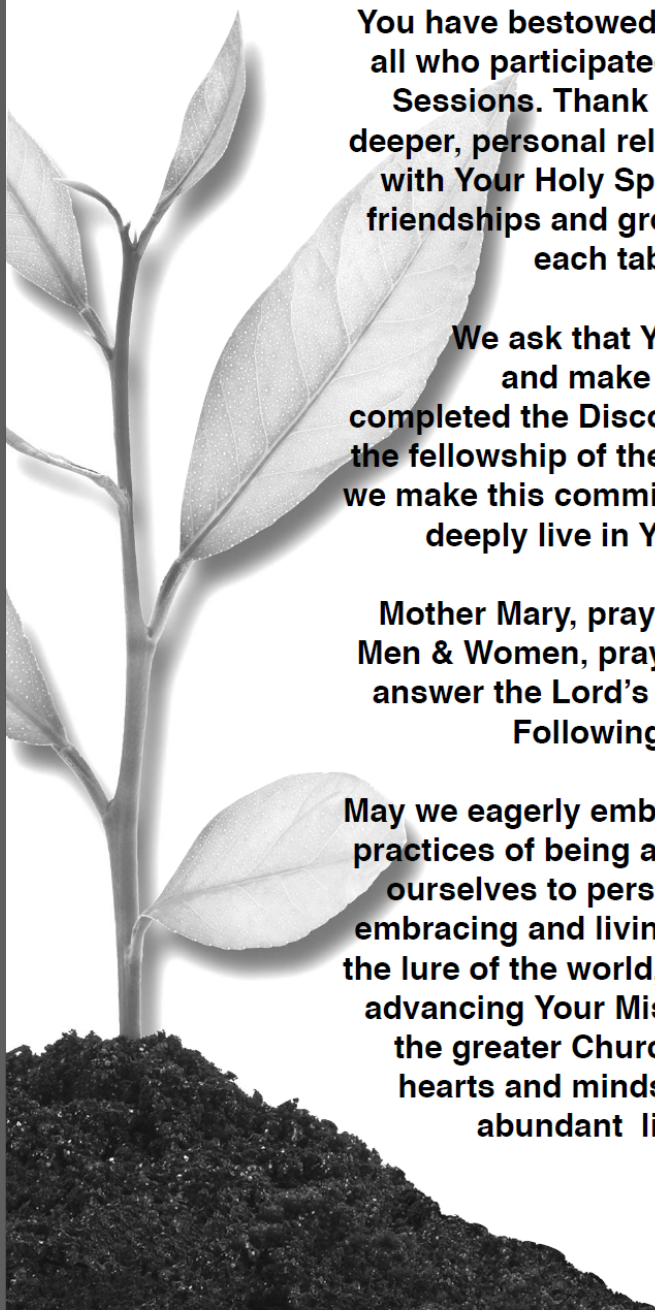
Stop by our bulletin board for more information on these area events

August 20th — Hunger Banquet 7-10 pm sponsored by St. Richard Catholic Church to benefit several local food charities.

September 9-11th — Lectio Divina Retreat at the Dwelling Place in Brooksville. Presented by Mary Louise Jones & Claudia

September 25th — 30th annual St. Joseph Catholic Church GermanFest from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m

Prayer for Following Christ



Heavenly Father,
we thank You for the many blessings and graces
You have bestowed upon our Parish family and
all who participated in our Discovering Christ
Sessions. Thank you for bringing us into a
deeper, personal relationship with Your Son and
with Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for the new
friendships and group support that grew from
each table's experience.

We ask that You continue to grow us
and make us Your own. Lead all who
completed the Discovering Christ Series to join in
the fellowship of the Following Christ Series. May
we make this commitment to follow You, and more
deeply live in You as the Body of Christ.

Mother Mary, pray for us. All Saints and Holy
Men & Women, pray for us. We pray that all will
answer the Lord's invitation to come to these
Following Christ Sessions.

May we eagerly embrace the disciplines and
practices of being a disciple. Help us to commit
ourselves to personal prayer, group prayer,
embracing and living the Sacraments, resisting
the lure of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and
advancing Your Mission for our Parish and for
the greater Church. Continue to renew our
hearts and minds as we move into a more
abundant life in the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

DATES, TIMES, LOCATION

Thursdays 7-9 pm Sept 8-Oct 20
Saturday Retreat Oct 8th

Tuesdays 7-9 pm Sept 13-Oct 25
Saturday Retreat Oct 15

COST/REGISTRATION

Register free online at
saintpaulcatholicchurch.com

Call the office for assistance
@ 601-992-9547

MORE INFO

Open to all who have
completed one of the
7-week Series of
Discovering Christ.

www.saintpaulcatholicchurch.com

Parish Office: 601-992-9547—office@saintpaulcatholicchurch.com

Early Learning Center: Phone: 601-992-2876—www.saintpaullearningcenter.com

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Take a look at our new website. Please be patient as we are adding to it every week.

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and on God's saving justice,
and all these other things will be given
you as well. So do not worry about
tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.
Each day has enough trouble of its own."

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