



The greatest tragedy is not death, but life without purpose.

Mass Intentions ~ April 16-22, 2018

Monday @ 7:30 am — Eugene & John Gooch (RIP)
Tuesday @ 7:30 am — Nolen Hughes (RIP)
Wednesday @ 6:00 pm — Mayrene Messer (RIP)
Thursday @ 7:30 am — HE & Roselyn and Jon Pickett (RIP)
Friday @ 7:30 am — People of the Parish
Saturday @ 5:30 pm — Marie Lodes (RIP)
Sunday @ 8:00 am — Jim Peacock (RIP)
Sunday @ 10:30 am — Joan Goodman (RIP)

Adoration this week: Monday-Friday, 8am-12noon
Reconciliation: Saturday, 4:30-5:00pm

New Prayer Requests

Special Intentions:

Lillian Lalo and baby, daughter-in-law of Michelle Lalo
Martha Collins, mother of Karen Cox

Rest of the Soul:

Mary McAleese, sister of John McAleese
Vincent Muffuletto, brother of Ron Muffuletto
Byron Thomas Hetrick
Tommy Autrey, husband of Dot Autrey

see full prayer list on our prayer board & website

More on our website www.saintpaulcatholicchurch.com Church office @ 601-992-9547



Altar Flowers this week: In Memory of Joshua Michael Vaughan, son of Michael & Toni Vaughan
Blessed Mother Flowers this week: In Memory of Juliet Canizaro Sanderson, donated by Kevin Sanderson & Family

~ EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

- Apr 14/15 — Second Collection for Education of Future Priests**
- Apr 18 — All 6th Graders are invited to a sneak peek of The Big Deal!** Join us for dinner @ 6:00pm, games, praise & worship songs, and Club Talk. Come and see what your Wednesday nights will be like for the next six years! Parents, please pick up your 6th grader at 7:45 pm in front of the Family Life Center.
- Apr 22 — First Communion Mass during 8:00 am Mass**
- Apr 24 — St. Dominic Ministry — sign up now** to provide lunch items to families of ICU patients
- Apr 29 — High School Senior Recognition Mass during 10:30 am Mass followed by a special luncheon** in the FLC. Please RSVP by April 20th to rel.edu@saintpaulcatholicchurch.com
- May 3 — Confirmation Mass @ 6:00 pm**
- May 5 — Following Christ Retreat**
- May 20 — Pentecost Sunday 10:30 am Mass & picnic on the hill** (No 8:00 Mass, 5:30 Vigil in the Church)

MORE LOCAL EVENTS

- Mom's Day 5K on May 5 — co-sponsored by the St. Paul Women's Guild** supports Birthright of Jackson, a pregnancy center helping girls and women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. Run, Walk, or Stroller Stroll in honor of these moms! Register at www.raceroster.com More info at www.birthright.org/jackson
- Fr. Cosgrove needs more pilgrims** for his 12-day tour of Salzburg, Munich, Vienna, Liechtenstein, & Lucerne, June 23-July 4. Cost is \$4,600 which includes airfare from anywhere in the U.S. The deadline to register is April 25. You may register at www.proximotravel.com; or by calling Proximo Travel at 855-542-8001; or by calling Fr. Cosgrove at 601-481-5700.



April 15, 2018 — Third Sunday of Easter

Church — Hospital — School



Thank you for your very generous response in joining this dialogue! I have received some fabulous thoughts and reflections — they are probing, challenging, thoughtful, and insightful, exploring many aspects of this subject. I look forward to hearing from many more of you as we continue this dialogue. There has been a request to have an open dialogue/discussion one evening on the subject — an opportunity to converse with others and share/listen to other's opinions. Be sure and let me know if you would be interested in participating in such a dialogue. I will be happy to set it up one evening in May, after we have heard from many of you, as you stimulate the discussion! — Fr. Gerry

Instinct (read: self-preservation) tells us to hide our wounds.

I am a cat-lover, and God has used my love and insight into my relationship with my own two pets to teach me things on many different occasions. It is often difficult to perceive a wound or sickness in felines, that is, until it becomes serious or life-threatening. Many times, they are able to take steps on their own to get well, but they also need our help with many things. The reason that cats instinctively hide wounds and illnesses so well is that, in the wild, letting others of their species know their weaknesses opens them up to being driven from available shelter and food sources.

Unfortunately, this primal instinct to shield themselves from being ostracized by their kindred also tends to keep them from revealing their ailments to care-takers who would be able to help them get well more quickly and effectively. So it is with us. We hide our weaknesses from people to keep from being perceived as "different." We are afraid of being shunned. The very way that we often try to protect ourselves from further pain often keeps us from revealing our wounds to those who may be able to help us move toward true healing. May God help us to realize who He has placed in our lives for the purpose of helping us with things that we are unable to effectively manage ourselves. — Elizabeth Lee

Dear Fr. Gerry,

Here is a reflection on the quote the church as a hospital.....
This is a topic that can be addressed from many perspectives and books can and have been written on aspects of the quote. It was a struggle to address the topic with an overview and specificity. I know it didn't do it justice.
While I didn't include it in the reflection I recall sitting in Church before morning Mass about 10 years ago. I had been exploring some alternative healing therapies, this one using a computer that could "read" the body's electromagnetic energies, etc and produce a diagnosis. I had experienced a session, which was unsettling on a number of levels, and supposedly Yale was going to be doing some research into the science and usefulness of the program. I sat there reflecting on the use of such a technique, my interest in exploring alternative options and having some belief and faith in their effectiveness vs my belief in the effectiveness of the Eucharist as a healing agent. I do believe in the True Presence, so why was I more willing to put my faith in being healed in a computer program over putting it in Jesus in the Eucharist? After much prayer and reflection it occurred to me that the computer program does not demand anything from me. I am in control. I use it or not. I can believe it or not. It either works or not. It does not ask me to change. Jesus, on the other hand, is open for a relationship. It is a two way street and frankly I was afraid of what Jesus would ask of me. What would I have to give up, or change, in order to be healed. It was interpersonal and complex. The computer was impersonal. I still struggle with the complexity of a relationship with Jesus. Perhaps the good news is that I don't look for instant healing of physical ailments as much. I struggle more with healing the relationship with Jesus while I cling to my fears. I am still afraid of what Jesus will ask of me, in spite of having deep healing experiences in which Jesus gave me truth and freedom and only asked me to accept both as a gift. I have learned that this deep healing occurs one belief and one incident at a time. So while I experientially know the truth those parts of myself that live in the lie cannot appropriate that truth experientially. It is just head knowledge to them, and they cling to their fears. It is far easier to try to do this- heal, obtain salvation, be good, on my own efforts than it is to "Let go and Let God." Letting Jesus heal is both the scariest and the most liberating thing I have done. Lots of healing to go!

I suspect that my experience is not unique and that most of us prefer a safe God that we can control or at least contain through our prayers, liturgies, and sacrifices. We really do not want a wild Holy Spirit that challenges our comfort. That may be the greatest impediment of all.

May the Holy Spirit enfold you, protecting you as needed, nourishing your spirit and give you rest. Keeping you in prayer. — Cheryl Marsh

[See Cheryl's full reflection on the inside pages of this bulletin.]

Reflection on quote from: **Holy Island, A Lenten Pilgrimage, by James W. Kennedy**

The Church, which is often describes as a hospital, contains too many patients who fail to get well. The Church, often described as a school, contains too many pupils who fail to learn. Is this then the Church's witness to the world, sick and ignorant disciples who know not the Christ whom they claim as Lord?"¹

Why are disciples/patients sick and ignorant not knowing the Christ they claim as Lord? As a Christian, a healthcare provider for 50 years and partially in healing ministry for over 25 years, I would like to tackle this question in two parts. First, I want to address the idea of church as a hospital. Second, I want to address why patients/disciples fail to get well. In reading Kennedy's essay that contains the reference to church I understand him as meaning the church on the parish level; the parish being a microcosm of the universal Church. Therefore, I understand him asking specifically why parishes are not places of healing and learning.

Jesus' mission was to preach the Good News to the poor, to set the captives free (deliverance), to heal (physically and spiritually) and to forgive sins. Healing and deliverance were integral to his mission. He preached the Kingdom of God and demonstrated its breaking into the world through healing, deliverance and forgiveness. His disciples and the early Christians did the same. While Jesus sent out first the 12 and then the 72 to preach, heal and deliver, it is apparent that their ministries exploded after Pentecost when they received an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the charismatic gifts. For all new Christians, not just the Apostles and initial disciples, these gifts were considered ordinary and usually accompanied by external signs. They expected to be empowered. This Holy Spirit power enabled them to go out preaching the Good News, healing the sick and driving out demons. This empowerment appears to have been prevalent until about the 4th century where there is documented evidence that spiritual leaders were turning away from the charismatic gifts. Physical healings and deliverance became less frequent. About the same time physical illness, once seen as something to be alleviated, became something heroic, yet tragic, to be endured and offered up as a sacrifice. The expectation of and desire for physical healing through prayer waned. Two thousand years later preaching is the ministry of the ordained, driving out demons is the ministry of the exorcist and healing the sick for all practical purposes is a secular ministry. Healing through prayer is considered miraculous, rare and in need of scientific proof. Healing prayer within mainline Christianity is primarily written, ritualized and sacramental. Healing is a lost charismatic gift. Gifted healers and healing ministry do exist, primarily peripheral to traditional Christian practices and are frequently met with resistance, scorn and outright disbelief. The label fanatic is often used to describe Christians who do express the charismatic gifts.

Francis MacNutt in his book *The Healing Reawakening*, calls the loss of the charismatic gifts, especially healing, the "nearly perfect crime." He provides an informative overview of the loss of the charismatic gift of healing within the context of Church history and the world events that shaped it. It is an interesting, sad and yet understandable story within the broader context of Church and world history. None the less it is a loss.

Throughout history God's people have hungered for physical, emotional and spiritual healing and deliverance, seeking out holy people, relics and shrines in addition to the sacraments and ritual prayer. Even these healings were considered to be the exception and not the expression of a charismatic gift. With little evidence of physical or emotional healing from the sacraments and prayer, the church leaders slowly pivoted from physical healing to spiritual healings. From saving the whole person to saving souls. Understandable yet regrettable. At times church leaders were, and still are, openly antagonistic to the expression of charismatic gifts, teaching they were needed for the early church but died with the end of the Apostolic era.

The Holy Spirit, keeps breaking into history, empowering individuals and groups in the charismatic gifts while mainstream traditions and spiritual leaders worked diligently to put out these fires. MacNutt describes the most recent waves of Holy Spirit renewal. The first wave was with the Pentecostals in 1906. The second wave was the Charismatic Renewal. The third, current wave of renewal is among the Evangelicals, called the Neo-charismatic. Each wave of renewal was, and still is, met with skepticism and resistance. And yet this is a story of hope and promise as the Holy Spirit is relentless.

If the Church today is referred to as a hospital as Kennedy states, then it is a specialty hospital dealing in

spiritual healing. Spiritual healing is safe. You can't see or measure it in the same way one can document a physical healing. Christians needing physical and emotional healing are referred out to mainstream medicine, or peripheral healing prayer groups. Most Christians and churches do not feel empowered by the Holy Spirit to use the charismatic gift of healing. So as a hospital, the church/parish is not fully operational.

As to why disciples/patients remain sick, there is no one simple answer. Even the most gifted healers will say there is mystery as to why some people are healed and others are not. What everyone teaches is that healing though prayer ministry is a process. For some people it is an instantaneous event, but that is the exception and not the rule. There are multiple impediments to healing. MacNutt in his book *Healing*, describes two arguments that rose up over the course of history to change the good news of healing to a return to the acceptance of suffering. The first argument relates to God claiming that God ordinarily does not want to heal. Suffering and sickness are his will for most people and the proper attitude is acceptance, not prayer for healing. This is your cross to carry and it will lead you to heaven. The second argument relates to us. God does occasionally heal the sick, but my prayers are not good enough because I am not holy enough; or I should be spiritually superior to seeking prayer for healing. These beliefs are reinforced in our culture, church and social environment. They are often core beliefs that remain untouched by intellectual knowledge. Only the truth, spoken by the Holy Spirit can change a core belief.

In addition to our beliefs about healing and redemptive suffering as well as our prejudices against healing, healing ministry and expression of the charismatic gifts there are other blocks to individual healing. While not an exhaustive list these obstacles include not asking for healing, sin, unforgiveness, false beliefs about suffering, prayers that are too vague, demonic interference, curses, generational bondage, now is the right time, the person praying is not the right person, refusal to see how God uses medicine and medical treatments to heal, failure to preserve health, the social environment (family, friends, work, environment) preventing healing and a false attachment to suffering.

What I have learned through my own experience with healing prayer is that God is loving, generous and VERY patient. Jesus is a perfect gentleman. He will not violate my free will, even when I beg Him to. He will not take something from me, even when I offer it on an open palm. He waits until I let go of whatever I am clinging onto. When I am willing to face my fears and beliefs one at a time, the Holy Spirit will "speak" truth in that particular circumstance. Once I know the truth on an experiential level my core belief changes and I experience freedom in that area. Physical symptoms have been eliminated or diminished as a result of change in core beliefs.

I had a hunger to be healed. I also had a natural curiosity as to why people were not healed. I was acutely aware of the limits of traditional and alternative medicine. I purposely sought out persons gifted in healing ministry, a community to support my desire for personal healing and ways to integrate healing into my professional practice, as well as knowledge about healing. I was blessed to find all three. Since my professional work has been in the field of mental health my primary healing experiences, both as being prayed for and praying for others has been related to emotional and spiritual healing. I know that when I talk about my own healings, the testimony of other's healing or what I have witnessed I am met with skepticism if not outright disbelief. You can clear a room pretty fast when you start talking about God healing his people.

After reflection on the church/parish as a hospital and patients/disciples who remain sick, I have to conclude that what is needed is another Pentecost, another outpouring of the Holy Spirit empowering us with the charismatic gifts. The Holy Spirit could come again as it did that first Pentecost; however, both church and disciples have erected numerous barriers to receiving and using the charismatic gifts. The Holy Spirit could just blow those away, yet God will not violate our free will and will not force God's self on us. The invitation, as well as challenge, is offered. Do we want fully operational church/hospitals? Do we want to remain sick patients/disciples? Are we willing to do the hard work necessary let go of our fears and barriers and let the Holy Spirit empower us with full expression of the charismatic gifts? —Cheryl Marsh

1. Kennedy, James W. *Holy Island, A Lenten Pilgrimage, The Fifth Wednesday, The Life of Fellowship*, p 106 Forward Movement Publications, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1968