

Mass Intentions ~ October 7-13, 2019

Monday @ 7:30 am — People of the Parish
Tuesday @ 7:30 am — Joan Millington (RIP)
Wednesday @ 6:00 pm — Allen Lee Leger (RIP)
Thursday @ 7:30 am — Fr. Ronald Bandle (RIP)
Friday @ 7:30 am — US Armed Forces (Sp Int)
Saturday @ 5:30 pm — Marie Lodes (RIP)
Sunday @ 8:00 am — Roseanne Elser (RIP)
Sunday @ 10:30 am — Cindy Miller (RIP)

New Prayer Requests

Special Intentions:

Connie Graef
Marge Whitmarsh
Doe Signa, brother-in-law of
Jo Anne Braswell, Bill Morris, Kate Morris
Chris Clements, friend of Jeffrey McIntyre

Repose of the Soul:

Allen Lee Leger, son of Shannon & Doug Falcon



*Altar Flowers this week are donated by Veronica Trout, in loving memory of Bill Trout.
Blessed Mother Flowers are donated by Alice Mitchell, in memory of Kenneth & Tommy Mitchell.*

Sacrament of Reconciliation — Saturday @ 4:30-5:00 pm (or by appointment — call the Church office)
Adoration this week: Monday — Friday, 8 am - 12noon

~ NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

6th Annual Trunk or Treat — Friday, October 25 Friday @ 7:00 pm Ghosts, Goblins, and Super Heroes are in need of volunteer Trunks (tailgates and tents), please sign up on the information table near the offices this weekend.

34th Habitat for Humanity Catholic Build — Saturday, October 26. Our Parish will be building at a new location this year, 534 Cedarhurst Dr, North Jackson. Sign-up for the build and food donations will be held at the information table near the offices before and after all Masses on Oct 12/13 & 19/20. Contact Lonnie Graeber with any questions at l.pgraeber2@comcast.net.

~ reminders ~ reminders ~ reminders ~

Wednesday, October 9th — St. Paul Parish Vigil @ 40 Days For Life in Jackson, 7am-7pm. Sign up to meet and pray for one hour at the Abortion Clinic with fellow parishioners. Contact Linda Granger @ 601-260-5326. To participate on other days, go to www.40daysforlife.com/Jackson-2 to sign up.

Discovering Christ Registration is open online — This 7-Session Series will be held on Tuesday nights, beginning October 22nd. We will gather to share a delicious meal, listen to a dynamic video presentation, and explore answers to some of the most important questions you have about God. Come and discover Jesus personally, experience the love of God the Father, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit. See **ChristLife** under the "Get Involved" and "Registration Forms" tabs.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Offertory Collection for September 28/29:
Regular collection \$19,128.63 Capital Campaign \$14,878.83

To the person(s) who have been rearranging our ministry schedules during the 8:00 Mass —
We invite you to use your skills for the good of the Parish!
Would you like to help move tables and chairs, rather than push pins?
Or, you may wish to join the Art & Environment Ministry to help decorate the church. Let us know!



Contact us: 601-992-9547 www.saintpaulcatholicchurch.com
Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8:00 am-4:00 pm



Our mission is to invite everyone into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

**October 6, 2019
Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

The Inward Journey on the Way to Jerusalem

We are now nine chapters into Luke's Journey to Jerusalem. The second half of this travel narrative teaches about inward renewal. This week, we enter Chapter 17 of Luke's Gospel which gives us insight to how the Disciples were affected by the opposition they faced. Luke 17:1-4 gives the Disciples a stern warning to be aware of the temptation of sin, and to be very forgiving when a brother sins against them. As they, and we, continue it is easy to become complacent. We may think we have arrived. This is it! I know and love Jesus! I am saved!

There is always more. Just like the Disciples, we need a continued deepening of our Faith in God. Today's Gospel picks up with Verse 5. At this point, Jesus' followers were becoming more aware and sought a deeper Faith, a closer relationship with Him. "Increase our faith," they said to the Lord. We want more! To help them grow, Jesus provides another look at the servant. He ends with, "When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants, we have done what we were obliged to do.'"

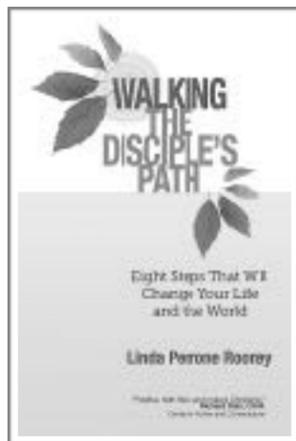
The point is to recognize that our Christian duty is not about us and our worthiness. We do not get to lay claim to the gifts He gives us, wearing them as a badge of honor. God's graciousness is truly unmerited. We are His worthy followers, and we are valuable to His Mission. But, that honor is all gift. We, as responsible stewards, are called to grow His precious gift of Faith. The work is never done. There is always more to do on our inward journey with Him, and our outward journey with our Brothers and Sisters.

The journey is tough. At times, we are met with opposition and we must choose how to respond. Equally important is an awareness of the times when we might become complacent regarding our position in the Kingdom. There are more challenges ahead. Let us continue to study His Word between Sundays, and allow Him teach us and grow us!

A Note from the St. Paul Building Committee:

In the process of fine-tuning the details of our proposed Renovation Plan, there has been a very significant unexpected rise in cost estimates from our original budget of \$4.5 million. The Committee has been prayerfully considering many options, and consulting with architects and engineers to discern the best direction of the project that we may meet the needs of the Parish while acting as good stewards of our money and property. A meeting was held on the afternoon of Sunday, September 29th to review the details with the lead architects, Fr. Gerry, and representatives from the Building Committee, Capital Campaign Committee, and Senior Leadership Team. We will continue to gather information and prepare a report to present the Parish in the coming weeks. We respectfully ask for your continued prayers, support, patience, and trust. May the Lord continue to bless and guide our Parish in this process.

Walking the Disciple's Path – LOVE YOUR ENEMIES



Linda Rooney begins Step Three of our study book with Matthew 5:43-46, 48:

You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be children of your Father in Heaven; for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?...Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

This Scripture passage has had a profound affect on my life! It happened during a staff meeting about three years ago, when we prayed Lectio Divina on this Gospel — Love Your Enemies. When I was a younger girl, and even into college age, I truly did not understand how to turn to the Bible for guidance in my life. I believed on some level that His Word is the Living Word, but I didn't really understand how. I thought it was something like close your eyes, pray, open a Bible, and tah-dah — there is the answer to your problem! God would make sure the right page opened. I knew people who said they experienced that, but I never had. Here is how I experienced the Living Word:

It was a time in my life when I perceived that my friend had begun to see me as their enemy.

For weeks I prayed, “Lord, why are they making me their enemy? What can I do to make them love me again?” I saw this as loving my enemy. But somehow, I knew there was more. There had to be.....this wasn't working!

I was actually dreading the staff meeting that morning because I knew we would be praying this Scripture. I had struggled with it, and was anxious about digging deeper into it. How could I keep loving someone who was causing me such pain? The Lord opened this passage to me, and gave me great insight. His Living Word dropped right into the space where I was living. I heard it so clearly with my heart, “Others do not decide to be your enemy. You choose to name yourself the enemy.” I just may be creating a scenario that isn't accurate!

Jesus, opened up His Word, and opened up my heart that I would see it from His perspective. The enemy is not “out there.” It is within me. Rooney speaks of the way Jesus shows us what to do about those “enemies” who cause us pain. We lift our cross, carry it, endure the pain with Faith, and trust that God will bring goodness from our willingness to carry our cross. His heart knows no enemies. That kind of love is strong because it is so gentle. We are created in His image, and at our core, we are love. We are made by and for love. Rooney calls this “Gospel Love.”

So far, this Study has taught me to *surrender my nets* (Step One), and commit myself to *live as a blessing* (Step Two) so that I can more honestly and earnestly follow Christ.

Step Three focuses on love and prayer. We cannot love our enemies on our own power — only through Him, with Him, and in Him. The book names a great truth.... “God's love does not condemn, but allows for our freedom to choose.” Choosing to love like Him is my powerful choice. It's living in God's love for me. It's imitating Jesus' love for God. He calls me to this and I have to choose it every day, sometimes many times a day. It is not motivated by self-interest, serving my needs and desires. It is not merely a feeling. It reveals God living in me and in the other, all others. It enables me to “meet the difficulties and joys of relationships with peace, fidelity, and harmony.” (pg 44)

Jesus' love stretched beyond Himself: it is big enough, deep enough, and true enough to include all others. He keeps me loving when all else fails, when the other stops loving me, even when it looks and feels like hate. Going back to my “enemy” and my experience — *there was a sudden shift in our relationship. My friend falsely accused me of an incident as if it were an absolute truth. I denied it, and expected the matter to be laid to rest. After all, we had known each other for many years, and had worked together on projects and celebrated family events together. It must simply be a misunderstanding. Instead, my friend accused me of lying! It felt like a line had been drawn, and I was being forced to stand in opposition to my dear friend. This looked like war, not love.*

 *My Cajun self was ready to do battle. If they want to make me the enemy, they had better brace themselves! I come from a long line of strong, faithful Cajun women who love big and stand strong when faced with adversity.*

But, this new insight into loving my enemies causes me to pause. When I'm living in my smallness, I want the love I give to be reciprocated. I even think I deserve their love at times! What I've learned is I can choose to love instead of mirroring that which is not love. Maybe the other person isn't capable of love at the moment. They, too, are created in the image of God. I need to see them through His lens. Where is the good in them? If I see it in them, maybe they will begin to see it in themselves. Otherwise, I risk being consumed with anger and responding in-kind.

I continue to work on surrendering the relationship to God that He will help me act in love, even through the hurt. He continues to teach me to love my enemy, not so much for their sake but for my own sake — that I may live in communion with Him. Withholding love causes me to be resistant, unforgiving and self-absorbed.

This is the ideal way to love our enemies, God's perfect way, as the Scripture verse closes. But, as Jim wrote last week, it's a cycle. It's not easy. I still struggle with the relationship. I have to remind myself that I am loved by God, and I am called to love like God. I have to be aware of the enemy within myself. That means allowing myself to be vulnerable. One of my favorite authors, Brenè Brown, says:

“Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.”

—Monica Walton