

**JULY 10, 2016**

**15th Sunday in Ordinary Time**



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the kingdom of God  
by being Christ  
to the world.



“But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with  
compassion at the sight.” - Lk 10:33

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## **EUCCHARIST:**

**SAT** 5:00 PM

**SUN** 8:00 AM/10:30 AM/6:00 PM

**MON** 8:00 AM

**WED** 9:30 AM

**THU** 8:00 AM

## **PRIEST**

**FR. BILL BURKERT**

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# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

## Parish Support - June 20-30, 2016

Stewardship Offering (Envelopes/Electronic) .....	\$13,859.53
Offertory .....	\$1044.92

## Budget Updates Fiscal Year: July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

Contributions Received .....	\$731,938.73
Contribution Budget .....	\$765,000.00
<b>Difference as of 6/30/16 .....</b>	<b>(\$33,061.27)</b>
Operating Income .....	\$944,218.16
Operating Expenses .....	\$961,245.95
<b>Balance as of 6/30/16 (Tentative) .....</b>	<b>(\$17,027.79)</b>
<i>Budgeted Balance as of 6/30/16 .....</i>	<i>(\$18,850.00)</i>

## Improvement Fund Updates

Beginning Balance 7/01/15 .....	\$97,733.99
Donations .....	\$51,202.29
Expenses .....	(\$45,264.76)
<b>Balance as of 6/30/16 .....</b>	<b>\$103,671.52</b>

## Keep Our Vision Growing Campaign Capital Appeal

<b>KOVG Cash Balance as of 6/30/16 .....</b>	<b>\$169,006.90</b>
<i>Music Ministry Platform Renovation (Spring 2016) .....</i>	<i>\$190,267.00</i>
<i>Expenses already paid .....</i>	<i>(\$23,613.25)</i>
<b>Remaining Project Expenses .....</b>	<b>\$166,653.75</b>

# COMMUNITY LIFE

## Our Condolences

...to the families and loved ones of **Leona Olowiak, Karen Buss**, and all others who have died. Please keep them in your prayers.

## Oktoberfest Artisan Fair 2016 October 14 - 16

Every year, we look forward to bringing interesting, hand-crafted art to Oktoberfest Artisan Fair. We want beauty and quality at a reasonable price. No crafts or desserts, please. We have filled all the jewelry slots. Consider fiber art, photography, sculpture, glass, leather, painting, clothing, toys, and utilitarian art.

So art lovers, when you are strolling through the summer art fairs, keep an eye open for an artist you would like to see at our event. Grab a card, put it in an envelope labeled with Oktoberfest, and drop it off at the Parish Office. You may also contact Tanya Gross at (414) 546-6225 or email at [tanyamg69@hotmail.com](mailto:tanyamg69@hotmail.com).

# CALENDAR RAFFLE 2016

Date	Prize	Ticket	Winner
6/26.....	\$50.00 .....	0191 .....	Craig & Melinda Kulas
6/27.....	\$20.00 .....	0137 .....	Joan Fechtner
6/28.....	\$20.00 .....	1181 .....	Mary Ruffolo
6/29.....	\$20.00 .....	0899 .....	George A. Sladky
6/30.....	\$20.00 .....	0748 .....	Kathleen Hintz
7/1 .....	\$20.00 .....	0876 .....	James Czaicki
7/2 .....	\$20.00 .....	1237 .....	Jean Lovv

## SUN 10

<i>Festival Sign-up</i>	
8:00 am Liturgy	Church
9:00 am Hall of Honor Photo Pick-up	Lobby
10:30 am Liturgy	Church
6:00 pm Liturgy	Church

## MON 11

8:00 am Liturgy	Rm 9
6:30 pm Centering Prayer	Rm 9
6:30 pm Building & Grounds Cmt. Mtg.	Rm 3

## TUE 12

8:00 am Communion Service	Rm 9
3:00 pm Food Pantry	Rm 7
6:30 pm Festival Planning Mtg.	Rm 4
6:45 pm Boy Scouts - Tr. 612	Hall AB

Mercy Moment

“And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because he is a disciple – amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.”

[Mt 10:42]

FORMATION

GIFT and Joy!

It's never too early to register for GIFT: Generations in Faith Together, our primary formation opportunity! This coming year, we will explore many aspects of the joy of the Gospel. You can find out more about the topics as well as how to register by visiting our webpage: http://www.ololmke.org/gift/. New to OLOL? Information about GIFT and how it works as well as sacrament preparation can be found at this same site, or contact Steve Szymanski, Mary Osep, or Nancie Chmielewski at (414) 545-4316.

Healing in Separation and Divorce

The U.S. wedding industry does over \$60 billion in yearly business. That is an incredible amount of money! That industry sells many things including an image of happily ever after. Although a worthy goal, any married couple can tell you that there is no such thing as a perfect marriage! Sometimes, “ever after” becomes the realm of never more. Are you traveling in that land of separated and/or divorced? Please know that OLOL is a safe place for you. We want to offer you a space to talk about and process this new place in life with others who are also in this same life change. We would like to meet with interested people to see how best to be of service. If you would like to chat, share your needs, or maybe offer some mentoring, let's gather on Tuesday evening August 9 at 7:00 pm or Wednesday morning August 10 at 10:00 am in Room 3. We will meet for an hour to find some common needs and times for future meetings. If neither of these times works for you, kindly contact Nancie Chmielewski at (414) 545-4316 x13 or chmielewskin@ololmke.org.

Theology on Tap 2016

Grab a beer. Meet your neighbor. Hear a message.

Young adults (20s + 30s) of any faith (and no faith) are invited to a pub in your neighborhood for community and conversation. Free—this round is on us! Join us at Natty Oaks Pub, in West Allis, at 7:00 pm and bring a friend!

Week 1 (July 11) Topic: Love Local: Help Your Neighbor in Crisis

Job loss. Health emergency. Unexpected disability. Poverty. Many of your neighbors (as in, people who live in your actual neighborhood) face crises like these every year. Your local Catholic Charities outreach specialist helps you be aware and get equipped to help your neighbors access the resources they need.

VIRTUE OF THE WEEK

SERVICE

Using our gifts to be of service is the fullest expression of our lives. Each day, we find a multitude of ways to be useful. First and foremost, we serve our loved ones. We notice what others need, discover their wishes, and respond helpfully.

There are many ways to be of service within the parish using the gifts you have been given. GIFT, Generations In Faith Together, always has a multitude of ways for you to invest. Please check to see if this might be your year to serve with joy.

Please pray for our 10 teens and 8 adults who will serve at Reach Out Reach In all next week. Follow their daily reflections on our website: http://wp.me/P39RwQ-1iK

WED 13

THU 14

FRI 15

7:00 am St. Ben's Meal Prep Kitchen
9:30 am Liturgy Church
10:15 am Faith Group Social Hall C

8:00 am Liturgy Rm 9
9:00 am Stewardship Mailing Prep Rm 4

8:00 am Communion Service Rm 9

## WORSHIP

### The Mass: Part 3 – The Gathering Rite

“Why is gathering so important? I lived in Baltimore...and attended St. Gregory the Great. When I entered for the first time I saw an outrageous idea that really worked. Every row from the back forward was completely empty until every row was completely full. How could this be? Then I saw how: heavy cord from back to front blocking every pew entrance. Ushers were stationed at each pew, drawing people forward, greeting them and seating them in the next available pew.” (Some of you remember that this was practiced here at OLOL when we still had pews!) “The parishioners in Baltimore knew this was important...it made them act like what they are.”

“All of us in the culture know well how to be an audience (in theatres, concerts, tour buses, etc.). But what happens on Sunday when we come through the door and have blessed ourselves with the water that identifies us as persons baptized into Christ, into the Church? We (the congregation, the assembly) ‘congregate,’ we ‘assemble.’ We get ourselves ‘together.’ If I board a bus alone, I probably look for a seat alone. If I board a bus with a friend, we probably sit together, but we don’t need to pay much attention to anyone else on the bus. We ask nothing more from a bus than that it take us from one spot to another. But when we come through the church doors, we have to *assemble* to make an assembly. There are lots of times to sit in church or wherever you are and pray alone. But liturgy is not one of those times. Liturgy is what we do together. It is not a theory, it’s a *practice*.”

“The Church, God’s *holy people*, has to get itself together, to *gather*, to *assemble*. If we work at it, all of us together, maybe we’ll come to a time when we’ll walk through the door, and, without thinking about it, head for the empty place closest to the altar. If we work at it, we won’t have to imagine that ‘We are *One in Christ*,’ we’ll act like what we are. The reason is not that there is some special holiness in getting close to the altar; the reason is that there is the holiness of the Church in getting close to one another and doing this deed together. So, maybe we can begin. Come forward when we arrive. And if a row is empty, don’t sit on the end protecting it—let us take a place in the middle of that row as if inviting others to sit beside us.”

(Gabe Huck, *Celebrations*, May 2016)

## OUTREACH

### Backpacks for Haiti

We are sending 5 people to visit Outreach to Haiti this summer (departing August 2) and would like to send backpacks for the education program there. They currently have over 250 students in their scholarship program, and each student needs a backpack for the start of school in September.

If you are able to donate any backpacks, please bring them to any Mass through July 24 and leave them in the wooden containers in the hallways.

### St. Ben’s Meal Program

We serve at St. Benedict the Moor’s meal program on **Wednesday, July 13**. Please bring fresh cut vegetables, hard-cooked eggs, and bakery to the Parish Office on Monday, Tuesday, or no later than 3:00 pm on Wednesday. To help with food preparation or serving, please call the Parish Office at (414) 545-4316.

You can also make monetary donations to purchase the chicken we serve each month. \$7.00 buys one chicken. Please use your monthly donation slips or go to our St. Ben’s webpage:

<http://www.ololmke.org/st-bens/>

### St. Luke’s Eucharistic Ministry

On the second Wednesday of every month, OLOL volunteers bring the Eucharist to Catholic patients at St. Luke’s Medical Center. We are always looking for new ministers. If you are interested, please contact Joan Hansen at (414) 282-9398 or at [jeffrey\\_hansen@att.net](mailto:jeffrey_hansen@att.net) for more details.

**SAT 16**

**SUN 17**

Festival Sign-up  
5:00 pm Liturgy Church

Festival Sign-up  
8:00 am Liturgy Church  
10:30 am Liturgy Church  
6:00 pm Liturgy Church

## “New” Feature in Stewardship Email

For a few months now, a new addition was added to the email version of the stewardship letter: your envelope/contribution number. It is located with the non-personalized contribution forms that are attached to the email. With this added information, we hope that this will help anyone who has lost the slips from the paper mailing, assist those who have chosen to just receive the email, and encourage others to opt for the email version only by providing all the information you need to print out your own contribution slips. If you have any questions or your account number is not showing on your email version, please contact the Parish Office.



Our festival this year is August 19, 20, and 21. Numerous volunteers are needed to make this a successful event. **Sign-up sheets are now available in the south hallway. Sign up early; sign up often.** In sharing a few hours of your time, you can make a big difference in this event's success!

Cash raffle tickets are also available. Please be sure to take some for yourself and some to distribute to friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers. Please return entry stubs with payment. Additionally, we once again request your support in helping to advertise the festival by placing a festival sign in your yard or at your place of business, if possible. **Raffle tickets and yard signs are available for the taking by the sign-up sheets.**

For full event details, please see the flyer included in the monthly mailing arriving in homes next week or visit the parish website: <http://wp.me/P39RwQ-nH>.

If you would like to become involved beyond assisting at a booth on festival weekend, please join us for our next planning meeting Tuesday evening, July 12. The time and room are noted in the bulletin calendar.

# CONNECT! WITH THE WORD

## MESSAGE FOR THE WEEK - LUKE 10:25-37

In today's Gospel a scholar questions Jesus about how to gain eternal life. In case anyone ever wonders whether heaven is within reach, one only needs to refer to this Gospel. Jesus provides a clear answer that gives us a clear plan of action: We are to love God with all that we are, and also to love our neighbors. Really, it's that simple. When we love God in this way, truly as the Lord of our life, then loving our neighbors becomes the easy part. When our hearts and minds are full of the love of God—who loves all people—then it will necessarily follow that we too will desire to share that love with others and not count the cost. The good Samaritan is an excellent example of this kind of love. Without hope of repayment, he gave of his time and his money to help the poor victim. But in return, the Samaritan will surely “gain eternal life.”

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## SUNDAY READINGS

### Deuteronomy 30:10-14:

What challenges you to carry out God's laws and statutes?

### Colossians 1:15-20:

How would you define Jesus Christ based on this Christological hymn?

### Luke 10:25-37:

How do you think the scholar of the law reacted to Jesus' request, “Go and do likewise”?

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# Connect!

*Uniting* Word & World



## Studying God's Word

- Deuteronomy 30:10-14
- Colossians 1:15-20
- Luke 10:25-37 [105C]

The readings for the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time take up the topic of the Mosaic law. The oral and written traditions associated with the law helped Israel define itself and its relationship with God and neighbor.

The first reading from the Book of Deuteronomy is taken from the final speech that Moses delivers to the ancient Israelites at the end of their forty-year desert wanderings and just prior to their crossing over into the Promised Land (Dt 29:1—33:29). The Book of Deuteronomy is structured around three major speeches by Moses (Dt 1–4; 5–28; 29–33) that offer instructions and warnings for the new generation of Israelites about the embark upon a new life in the Promised Land. In today's reading, Moses offers three pieces of advice to the Israelites. First, never forget to "heed the voice of the LORD, your God." Second, "keep his commandments and statutes that are written in this book of the law." And third, when you sin, "return to the LORD, your God, with all your heart and all your soul." Moses encouraged the Israelites to understand that the law given to them by God was neither "too mysterious" nor too far "remote"; in fact, the law was "something very near" to all believers—"already in your mouth and in your hearts." The central challenge, as Moses saw it, was for the Israelites to actually "carry it out"!

The Gospel readings continue to be taken from Luke's long travel narrative of Jesus' final

journey to Jerusalem. During the journey, Jesus speaks to three different groups of people—his disciples, the crowds, and his opponents (often the Jewish religious leaders, such as the Pharisees and the scribes). The opening words of today's Gospel reading set the stage for another confrontation between Jesus and his opponents: "There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him [Jesus]." The scholar asked Jesus, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" On the surface, the question is deceptively simply to answer for a scholar of the Mosaic law. So Jesus turns the question back on the scholar with his retort, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" Not surprisingly, Jesus and the scholar agree that love of God and neighbor is needed to inherit eternal life. Unable to trap Jesus with the first question, the scholar asks Jesus a follow-up question: "And who is my neighbor?" In response, Jesus tells the parable of the good Samaritan. The parable taught the scholar an important lesson about the Mosaic law: in addition to love of God and neighbor, to inherit eternal life, one must also show mercy, even to the least among us (like Samaritans). The Gospel ends with the test reversed on the scholar as Jesus concludes: "Go and do likewise."

Over the next four Sundays, the second readings are taken from Paul's Letter to the Colossians. This is one of the six "disputed" Pauline letters—scholars debate if Paul himself wrote this letter, or if it was produced after Paul's death and written in his name and authority. Today's reading is actually a Christological hymn that likely existed before the writing of Colossians, probably sung in the very early Christian liturgies. Ideas embedded in the hymn, such as Jesus being "the image of the invisible God" and

Jesus as “the firstborn of all creation,” provides evidence of a high Christology very early on among the first generations of believers: in Christ, they saw the eternal God!

*Dr. Daniel J. Scholz*

## Inspiring Your Homily

Images, stories, memories stay with us. They enrich our life experiences; they form our spirituality. The Hebrew Scriptures capture the stories of faith, the lives of our ancestors, and how they came to know the Lord. St. Paul, too, recognized the power of images and how they formed the faith community of the early church. Jesus knows us, and looking down the centuries, while he looked into the eyes and ears of the crowds of his day, he knew that stories would capture our attention and live long beyond his time here on earth. In this Year of Mercy let us be touched again by the power of God’s face for, as Pope Francis reminds us: God’s name is mercy.

Many years ago I took a group of high school seniors on retreat. After lunch on the first afternoon their assignment was to act out one of the Gospel stories and capture the spirit of what Jesus said. Four guys looked really excited about this process: *not*. With reluctant faces they drew their story from the Gospel of Luke and began to confer about their little performance. They decided to mime their passage. No words needed. I can still see their vignette in my mind’s eye.

A seemingly sad, lonely looking student was playing solitaire rather lackadaisically. Two cards were lying on the floor and so it was obvious that he was never going to win. One young man walked by and ignored him entirely, didn’t connect with him at all. The second guy looked over the card player’s shoulder and made two moves that he had missed. And with a pitying look, he then journeyed on. But the third young man, stopped, picked up the two missing cards, slapped the card player’s shoulder and joined him at the card table. He then called over the two passersby and they all played cards together.

I don’t think Jesus had card playing in mind when he told the story of the good Samaritan but he did see into hearts that are lonely and bodies that are broken. With one simple story Jesus calls us to notice one another. See who needs us. Put your cards on the table and make a difference in this world. This Sunday in the middle of the summer, in the middle of the Year of Mercy, is filled with images and stories meant to stir our hearts and keep us faithful to our call as disciples. Like squirrels storing up acorns for the winter, like people hungry for God, let us store up these kernels of wisdom.

“Moses said to the people, ‘If only you would heed the voice of the LORD, your God’” If only ... how many of us have regretted some of our decisions, actions, choices? “If only” can be a really sad phrase, would-a, should-a, could-a locks us into despair and pain. We can’t go back and change the direction of our life. But we can go forward and change. Moses reminded the people of God that God’s rules for living were not hidden on some far mountain or at the bottom of the ocean. No, they are written on our hearts, for we know them by heart. And if we carry them out, our lives will be good, we will be good. We will always be able to return to the Lord even if we fall because we know where he lives, in the depths of our hearts and souls.

The psalms sing of this goodness, telling us to turn to the Lord in our need and we will live, for God’s words are Spirit and life. The psalms capture the music of our heart’s desire. With a mantra, a refrain, that should echo throughout the upcoming week, we have an encouraging word always with us. These ancient prayers become our prayer so we know we are not alone or lost forever.

St. Paul proclaims with powerful images the person of Jesus Christ. With a few simple words he captures the power of Jesus’ being, the wonder of his story. “Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Is this the image that we find, in ourselves, in our world, in nature? If yes, celebrate that presence of good. If not, are we looking in the wrong





places, are we focused on the negative? Jesus is the beginning and he can be a new beginning for our journey as well. He can bring peace and reconciliation to the whole world and to our heart. The first line of Pope Francis' Jubilee of Mercy letter, *Misericordiae Vultus*, is: "Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy." Jesus won't pass us by. He won't ignore our pain or loneliness. He will bind up our wounds and carry us on his own back.

The parable of the good Samaritan is probably the most well-known of Jesus' stories. It captures Jesus' rendition of the rules, the commandments: "You shall love the Lord, your God ... and your neighbor as yourself... Do this and you will live." If we forget these rules, which the scholar of the law obviously had, Jesus gives us a story to remember. We are reminded to look around and see who needs us. We become a network of care known as church. We can help people pick up their pieces. We can interact with the lonely and abandoned. We can heal the sick with gentleness and care. We can be the mercy that the world needs.

Holding these images and stories in our hearts, we can produce a good harvest of mercy. We, too, can be the face of the Father's mercy.

*Sr. Diane Zerfas, OP*

## Quoting from Tradition

And we indeed are sons of God, but sons because the Son has made us such. For we were once sons of wrath, but have been made sons of God through the Spirit of adoption, and have earned that title by favor, not by right of birth. And since everything that is made, before it was made, was not, so we, although we were not sons, have been made what we are. For formerly we were not sons: but after we have earned the name we are such. Moreover, we have not been born, but made; not begotten, but purchased. For God purchased a people for Himself, and by this act begot them. But we never learn that God begot sons in the strict sense of the term. For He does not say, "I have begotten and brought up My sons," but only, I have begotten and brought up sons. Yet perchance inasmuch as He says, My firstborn Son Israel, some one will interpret the fact that He said, My firstborn, so as to deprive the Son of the characteristic property of birth; as though, because God also applied to Israel the epithet Mine, the adoption of those who have been made sons was misrepresented as though it were an actual birth, and therefore the phrase used of Him, This is My beloved Son, is not solely applicable to the birth of God, since the epithet My is (so it is asserted) shared with those who clearly were not born sons... Therefore the people of Israel is born, in such wise that it is made... For it is a son by adoption, not by generation; nor is this its true character, but its title... Thus to Israel, adopted for a son out of all the peoples of the earth, properly belonged the character of a firstborn; but to Him alone, Who is born God, properly belongs the character of a Son.

*Hilary of Poitiers,*

Book XII, Introduction to the Homilies on the Psalms.

*Translation from The Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Volume 9. Edited by P. Schaff et al.*

*Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.*

*Research by Jay Martin*

## Building Your Liturgy

July 10, 2016

In glancing at today's readings one might think, "Ah, today's liturgy is for the hardheaded and the obtuse!" Then on the second time through, I realize that is me. In the first reading Moses speaks something that every exasperated teacher or parent has frequently said, "If only you would *listen!*" He goes on to remind them it is something very near.

Similarly, in the Gospel, when the scholar gave a pat answer, and tried to justify himself by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus has to break it down and tell the parable of the good Samaritan. I am sure at times Jesus wanted to either shake his head, or shake those around him and say, "Listen!"

In this day and age, when many Catholic teachings are considered countercultural, especially against many of the current social mores and norms, perhaps we need Jesus speaking this clearly and plainly to us. It is too easy to become a cafeteria Catholic, and pick and choose the parts that suit us.

Thankfully, the Collect understands this: "O God, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray, so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ and to strive after all that does it honor." Preface 2 dovetails this in a way as it speaks of the "waywardness that is ours," and Preface 6 puts it all into perspective for us again: "For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care..."

"Christ Be Our Light," or "We Are the Light of the World," "Your Words Are Spirit and Life," "Open My Eyes, Lord," "Seek Ye First," or the beautiful *Oculi Nostris* from Taizé are lovely choices for picking up the image of light and opening our eyes. "The Church's One Foundation" and "Praise to the Lord" are

traditional pieces for the day. Rory Cooney's Psalm 40, "Here I Am," "Center of My Life," and "Whatsoever You Do" might work for your congregation too.

### Planning Your Week

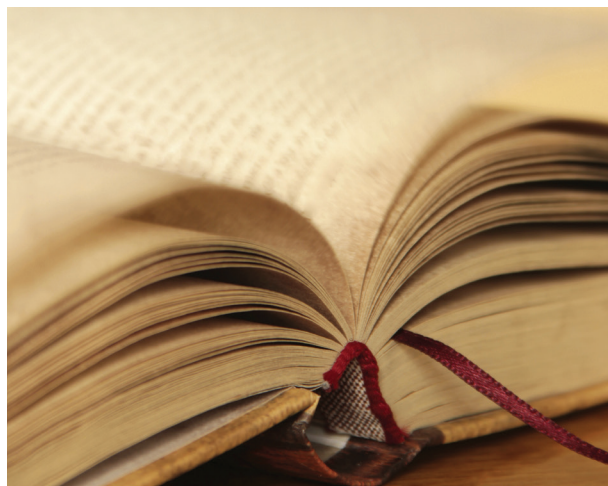
Monday is the celebration of St. Benedict, who is often referred to as the "Father of Western Monasticism." His Rule of Benedict is still used to guide many monks and nuns today. Be sure to offer a prayer for our Pope Emeritus Benedict this day.

Thursday is the memorial of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, who was our first Native American saint. You may want to have a phonetic guide nearby so that someone doesn't make a mess of her name during intercessions.

Here it is halfway through July. How are you doing on your resolutions to take more time for prayer, get out and walk, practice daily, plan fall music early, clean up that pile on your desk, or all those other great promises we make to ourselves? Have you taken or scheduled vacations and retreat? If we don't cross days off on a calendar they tend to just fill up quickly.

Schedule some sort of summer appreciation for your student altar servers and lectors. Mini golf is a great way for kids to get to know each other. It is probably time to have a volunteer wash altar robes again too.

*Jill Maria Murdy*



## Raising Your Prayers

### Introductions

*For the Mass of the Day (to use after the Greeting).*  
The command of God is not found in some list of prescriptions, rules, or regulations but in our mouths and in our hearts. God's command is merciful love and our only task is to carry it out. We do this by keeping our relationships in proper order: our relationship with God, our relationship with ourselves, and most importantly our relationship with our neighbor, which our story of the Good Samaritan so aptly underscores.

### Penitential Act

We go now to the Lord in our need and ask that his kindness come upon us and his mercy turn toward us as we seek forgiveness.  
*(Pause for silent reflection.)*

Christ Jesus,  
you are the image of the invisible God.  
**Lord, have mercy**

Christ Jesus,  
in you all things were created.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus,  
you are before all things and head of the body,  
the church.  
**Lord, have mercy.**



### Prayer of the Faithful

We can never be reminded enough that to love is to show mercy. Love unites all of the relationships in our lives and opens the path not only to our neighbor but to ourselves and to you, our Creator. Listen to the prayers we bring to you today; may they lead us to an inheritance of the eternal life you promise.

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, that as the pope and Bishop of Rome he may continue to see in the parable of the good Samaritan an example for his own ministry, calling all to treat their neighbors with mercy.  
**We pray to the Lord.**

For each of us, that, as people on a journey toward eternal life, we not be distracted by the false security of clinging to rigid laws and ideologies, and remember our greater call to mercy as the way to achieve our goal.  
**We pray to the Lord.**

For people throughout the world who are victims of violence, disaster, abuse, or exploitation, that Good Samaritans throughout the world will actively work to help them and advocate on their behalf.  
**We pray to the Lord.**

For those who have died, that they may be embraced by God's mercy and enter into the eternal life God has promised.  
**We pray to the Lord.**

Heavenly Father, we easily get distracted and lost and find ourselves clinging to things that lead us away from rather than closer to you. Hear the prayers we bring today and by the power of your Holy Spirit may we find the strength to stay focused. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Rev. Mark Suslenko*



## Engaging Your Parishioners

*Reflections to use for your bulletins, website, social media, and more.*

### Message of the Week

*Luke 10:25-37*

In today's Gospel a scholar questions Jesus about how to gain eternal life. In case anyone ever wonders whether heaven is within reach, one only needs to refer to this Gospel. Jesus provides a clear answer that gives us a clear plan of action: We are to love God with all that we are, and also to love our neighbors. Really, it's that simple. When we love God in this way, truly as the Lord of our life, then loving our neighbors becomes the easy part. When our hearts and minds are full of the love of God—who loves all people—then it will necessarily follow that we too will desire to share that love with others and not count the cost. The good Samaritan is an excellent example of this kind of love. Without hope of repayment, he gave of his time and his money to help the poor victim. But in return, the Samaritan will surely “gain eternal life.”

### Questions of the Week

**Luke 10:25-37:**

How do you think the scholar of the law reacted to Jesus' request, “Go and do likewise”?

**Deuteronomy 30:10-14:**

What challenges you to carry out God's laws and statutes?

**Colossians 1:15-20:**

How would you define Jesus Christ based on this Christological hymn?



### Everyday Stewardship

What does it mean to give of yourself completely, without reservation, without fear, and without a concern for the cost? Should it matter if the person who needs us is unlike us in skin color, religion, or nationality? What does real mercy look like?

Jesus answered these questions beautifully in perhaps the greatest of the stewardship parables, the story of the Good Samaritan. Here a Judean traveler has been attacked, beaten, and left for dead on the side of the road. Others see him, but the cost to them to stop and help is too great. It is a Samaritan, one who is despised by most in the area, that stops, and he gives of his time, talent, and treasure to help the poor victim.

Where the Samaritan was going we cannot know for sure, but he stopped to give his time to the beaten man. Using oil and wine, he bandaged the wounds. Not everyone has the knowledge and skills to care for someone in this manner. Here, he gave of his talent. Then he placed the man on his own animal and carried him to an inn the rest of the day. The following day he pays the innkeeper, yet leaves explaining that if the payment is not enough, when he travels back on through he will repay him whatever the cost. Of course, here he shares his treasure.

The sharing of these things is profound enough, but it is the statement of his willingness to pay whatever the balance is that elevates this tale to an ultimate example of stewardship. The Samaritan does not care how high the cost. He will give whatever is needed. This is mature discipleship, to respond to the call of Jesus Christ regardless of the cost. This is true stewardship.

*Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS*