Parish Registration – Welcome new members! Please register by calling the parish office. Parishioners who are moving are asked to contact the office to update their information.

Baptism – Baptisms may be scheduled at any time. Please call the parish office to make baptismal arrangements.

Funerals – Please call the parish office to schedule funerals prior to publishing any information.

Matrimony – Call the parish office to meet with a priest. Diocesan regulations require a minimum of 6 months preparation time.

Care of the Sick – Notify the parish office of those who are hospitalized or homebound. Arrangements can be made for pastoral visits, the Sacrament of the Anointing or the Sick. We can also bring Holy Communion to the homebound.
Third Sunday of Easter

In today’s Gospel the risen Lord appears to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He had already appeared to them in the upper room in Jerusalem—twice—but they still didn’t recognize him until he led them to catch a miraculous number of fish. We too may not recognize the risen Lord in our lives, yet we know he is present—as we gather together, in the Eucharist itself, in those whom we love, in the stranger in need. Let us pray for God’s grace in recognizing the risen Lord in our midst.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, April 30th - 4:15 PM † Zigmunt Ramos
Fr. Bill O’Donnell, C.P.P.S

Sunday, May 1st - 8:30 AM † Dr. Edward Ferreri
Fr. Joe McNulty

Sunday, May 1st - 11 AM † Richard Revelt
Fr. Ben Jimenez, SJ

Monday, May 2nd - 5:30 PM † Lydia Smith
St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Tuesday, May 3rd - 5:30 PM † Helen Gebura
Sts. Philip and James, Apostles

Wednesday, May 4th - 5:30 PM † William Bailey

Thursday, May 5th - 5:30 PM † Lottie Gembus

Friday, May 6th - 5:30 PM † Leo and Dorothy Bender

Saturday, May 7th - 4:15 PM † Gertrude and Henry Senyak
Fr. Ben Jimenez, SJ

Sunday, May 8th - 8:30 AM † Sr. Marietta Starrie, CSJ
Fr. Bill O’Donnell

Sunday, May 8th - 11 AM † Loretta Dulik
Fr. Joe McNulty

An Easter Prayer

Dear Lord,

May I realize afresh today what Your death and resurrection mean for me. Forgiveness, freedom, and the ability to walk with You through this fallen world into eternity. May I always find my satisfaction in You and Your willingness to offer Yourself to me.

In Jesus’ Name, Amen

READINGS FOR THE WEEK


Tuesday: 1 Cor 15:1-8; Ps 19:2-3, 4-5; Jn 14:6-14

Wednesday: Acts 8:1b-8; Ps 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a; Jn 6:35-40

Thursday: Acts 8:26-40; Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; Jn 6:44-51

Friday: Acts 9:1-20; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 6:52-59

Saturday: Acts 9:31-42; Ps 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17; Jn 6:60-69

Sunday: Acts 13:14, 43-52; Ps 100:1-2, 3, 5; Rv 7:9, 14b-17; Jn 10:27-30

Welcome!

No matter what your present status in the Catholic Church, no matter your personal history, age, income, background, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or spirituality, or marital situation. No matter your own self-image of holiness or virtue. You are invited, accepted, and respected here at St. Augustine Parish.

Loving God,

For all who feel on the margins,
but who are at the center of your heart,
we ask you to open our hearts.
Help us to become a church and a nation where:

All lives have dignity,
All people are loved
And all are welcome.

Amen

He Is Risen
Love without Measure...

I was honored to have a professor in Old Testament Studies who was considered to be one of the world’s foremost internationally recognized biblical scholars. His name was Carroll Stuhlmueller. He was a priest and member of the Passionist Community. By my judgment a gentle and wise man of heroic holiness. In courses I took from him in mostly Old Testament subjects, I was amazed that he never brought an English translation of the bible with him to class. But he did bring three copies of the bible, one in Greek, one in Aramaic, and one in Hebrew. He would translate for us in real time, and I was awed at his genius and the witness of his faith. However, seeking the easier way, I judged that learning biblical languages was not necessary because I had several good English translations. Boy, was I wrong.

One example of my mistake can be found in the powerful lesson in today’s gospel. But it is difficult to spot because of the English translation of the Greek text of the scriptures. In English we use the one word, “love,” for a number of different circumstances. But in Greek there are different words for different kinds of love. The Greek word *agape* describes the highest kind of love, a self-giving love, a creative love, a love that is similar to the love of God. But Greek has another word, *philia*, to describe to describe ordinary human love, the kind of love that we give to one another. Now there is nothing wrong with *philia*. Human love is good thing. Human love between spouses, partners, family and friends is truly holy and blessed by God. But it does not compare in the Greek mind to the exalted status of *agape*.

Three times in today’s gospel Jesus ask Peter, “Do you love me?” And three times Peter responds, “Lord you know that I love you.” But we cannot hear in the English translation that two different words are being used here for love. Basically, what Jesus is asking of Peter is the highest form of love, *agape*. But what Peter is offering in return is ordinary human love, *philia*. If I were going to push this translation to catch this nuance it would go something like this. Jesus asks, “Simon, son of John, do you love me with the highest form of love?” Peter responds again, “lord I love you with ordinary love.” By this time it has become clear to Jesus that although he is asking the highest form of love from Peter what Peter is offering in return is only ordinary love. This sets in context for the important lesson that is present in this gospel. Jesus asks a third time, and this time he does not use the word *agape*. This time he uses Peter’s word from love. A third time Jesus says, “Simon, son of John, do you love me with ordinary love?” And Peter says, “Lord you know all things, you know that’s the way I love you.” Then Jesus says, “Feed my sheep.”

This is a very comforting for us as we look at our own inadequacies. But from another perspective it is a challenging message because the greatest commandment of the fourth gospel is that we are to love one another as Christ loved us. And if Christ has loved us even when we don’t rise to the highest level of his expectation, then Jesus is asking us to love one another in that same way.

How much frustration do we have in our life because the people in our life are not the people we want them to be? We want our leaders in the church and in the government. We want our leaders in the church and in the government to be wise and to anticipate problems and to solve them before these problems hurt us. But very frequently those leaders fall short. They get behind the curve, continually play catch-up or they appear confused and inadequate for the challenges we face. We want our spouse or partner to be more understanding and attentive. But we often experience them as harsh or preoccupied. We want our boss to be creative and flexible. But many times all that is asked of us is attention to routine detail. If only our children would be more motivated; if only our parents could be less stubborn; if only our friends would do the same. In matters large and small the people in our lives often fall short of who we want them to be. And the message that comes to us from Jesus’ action with Peter is that we are still to accept them for the people. We are to love them for the goodness that they offer us rather than criticize them for the goodness that they lack. Now this does not mean that Jesus asks us to put up with anything, or that we should not hold people accountable, or that we should not challenge people to grow. But it does tell us that when people love us, there is wisdom in accepting that love even it is second best.

There is a line from an old film, *Sunday, Bloody Sunday*. I would imagine that some will remember it. In the film one lover tells another: “I know I am not giving you what you want, but I am giving you what I have.” In a way, that is what Peter says to Jesus in today’s Gospel. “I’m not giving you the love you want but I’m giving you that love I have.” Jesus accepts the love and commissioners Peter to feed his sheep. Jesus does that because that is way that Jesus loves us. That also is the way he wants us to love one another.

Now the lesson that emerges from this interplay of Greek vocabulary is that Peter falls short of Jesus’ expectation. But Jesus accepts Peter any way and makes him the shepherd of the sheep. Jesus wanted the highest form of love from Peter, but peter could only offer a lesser kind of love. But Jesus settles for second best. He still commissioners Peter to be the leader of the early church. Of course Jesus is showing that God loves us. God always calls us to more, always call us to a higher level. But when we fall short, when we cannot reach that highest level, God accepts us anyway. God still commissions us to be disciples.
Augustine Rainbow Camp

With summer quickly approaching, we are excited to begin staffing for the 2022 camp season! We are looking for hardworking, responsible, and fun-loving individuals, ages 16 and older, to help us create an outstanding experience for our campers this summer! If that sounds like you, or someone you know, please contact ARC@StAugustineCleveland.org to receive an application. Working at camp is a great opportunity to have fun while building leadership skills, adding quality work experience to a resume, and to give back to the community! We look forward to hearing from you!

The Great Month (August)

We are looking for volunteers to participate in the planning of the annual Great Month. If you are interested in participating in the planning and execution of the event, please contact Bob Duda at (216) 781-5530 ext. 31 or by email at BDuda@StAugustineCleveland.org.

Thank you for supporting this annual parish celebration.

Rest in Peace!

Two children, a four-year-old and a six-year-old, gave their mother a houseplant for Mother's Day. They had used their own money, and she was thrilled. The older child said with a sad face, "There was a bouquet at the flower shop that we wanted to give you, but it was too expensive. It had a ribbon on it that said, 'Rest in peace.'"

A parent, particularly a mother, gets little chance to rest in peace this side of Heaven. Parenting is intensive leadership, 24 hours per day. The Bible describes parental leadership as follows: "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Our Scripture for today is about leadership. In John's Gospel, chapter 21, the risen Christ meets the disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. He cooks breakfast for them. Afterward, he turns to Simon Peter and asks him the same question three times: "Simon, Son of John, do you love me...?" Each time, Simon Peter answers yes. Then three times Jesus commands him to shepherd the sheep of his flock; that is, the people of the infant Church.

Let us compensate for our moments of weakness by genuine acts of love, compassion, and service. Peter was called upon to prove his love: "If you love me, feed my sheep." The same Risen Lord reminds us: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). What do our present actions and activities say about our love for Christ? The Risen Jesus accepts our apology, dismisses the charges against us, exonerates us of guilt, and forgives all our weaknesses. He continues to challenge us to demonstrate our love for him by faithfully, freely, feeding his sheep entrusted to our care.

Full-time Parish Receptionist

We are seeking to hire a full-time Monday thru Friday Parish Receptionist. The ideal candidate would enjoy working with the public and have office experience. For more information, please contact the parish office at (216) 781-5530 or BDuda@StAugustineCleveland.org.

Via Lucis

Stations of the Resurrection

Fr. Joe McNulty will lead us in Via Lucis, also known as the Stations of the Resurrection, each Friday during the Easter Season.

The Via Lucis is a form of devotion, encouraging meditation upon the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and some of the Resurrection appearances and other episodes recorded in the New Testament.

Please note that Stations will begin at 5:00 PM prior to daily mass.

The Love Confessed and the Love Expessed

Three little boys were debating whose mom was the most loving. The first little boy said: "My mommy loves me because I gave her a quarter, but she gave it back, saying 'Go and buy a piece of candy.'" The second little boy argued that his mother loved him more because "If I give her a quarter, she gives me back two quarters for two pieces of candy." The third little boy, seeing the direction of the debate, scratched his head and said, "Well, my mom loves me more because she would keep the quarter and then tell me how much that quarter will help her pay the bills." The love confessed and the love expressed can take many different forms and not all of them are pleasant.

Today's Gospel passage describes a triple confession of love by Peter rewarded by the Risen Lord who then commissions Peter. One of the features of the stories about the appearances of Jesus after his Resurrection is that they nearly always end up with Jesus commissioning someone. Jesus appears for a purpose. The presence of Jesus is strongly linked with the sense of calling. Peter denied Jesus three times on the night of Jesus' arrest (18:17, 25, 27), and repented; now, Jesus is offering him three chances to redeem himself. So, Jesus first dealt with Peter’s sin and then commissioned him to work on His behalf. Jesus asks twice if Peter loves him with the deeper, stronger, and more sacrificial kind of agape love and not mere phileo love involving brotherly love or friendship. In any event, "the one thing about which Jesus questioned Peter prior to commissioning him to tend the flock, was love. This is the basic qualification for Christian service. Other qualities may be desirable, but love is completely indispensable (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-3).” (Paul Avent, Study John's Gospel, Volume II). By this triple confession, Peter is restored to the leadership position from which he had fallen by his triple denial. Furthermore, it is proclaimed that he is indeed a pastor, who is to show his love for Christ in feeding Christ’s sheep, a recycling of denial into affirmation. Peter’s rehabilitation is a celebration of Divine Grace. As the shepherd appointed by the True Shepherd, to do as He did, to care for the sheep, Peter also symbolizes leadership. “Feed My lambs,” will continue to be the agenda of the post-Resurrection Church until the risen Lord appears in glory.
St. Augustine Signing Choir
Signning Choir practice will continue this Wednesday, May 4th at 6:30 PM. Anyone interested in joining the choir, with or without signing experience, is invited to attend their next practice in Walsh Hall. More information can be obtained by calling the parish office at (216) 781-5530 or by email at SigningChoir@StAugustineCleveland.org.

How to live to be 100…or More!!
One of the most beloved entertainers of all time was the comedian George Burns. He died in Beverly Hills on March 9, 1996. He was 100 years old. When he was in his nineties, he wrote a book entitled How to Live to Be 100… or More. In the book he has a chapter with the heading, “Stay Away from Funerals, Especially Yours.” George Burns said, “If you look in the obituary column in the morning, and your name isn’t there, go ahead and have breakfast.” He said that if he ever looked in the obituary column and found his name was there, he would go ahead and have breakfast anyway because he said, “I’m not leaving on an empty stomach.”

Now, that kind of sense of humor kept George Burns young at heart for all of his 100 years. But the fact is that we are all going to die…and even more painful is the fact that people we love are going to die…and that can fill us with despair.

Today’s Gospel describes how the Risen Lord transforms the despair of his apostles into hopes and dreams. The Risen Lord is present in our pain and suffering: Acts 9:1-13 tells us how the Risen Lord transformed the life of Saul by pushing him down onto the Damascus road and making him temporarily blind. The same Jesus often visits us in the form of accidents, illnesses, the loss of dear ones, pain and suffering, and problems in relationships. When Cardinal Bernardine was hospitalized for the surgical removal of his gall bladder and one of his kidneys to arrest the growth of pancreatic cancer, he said: “Cancer augmented my faith in the presence of the Risen Jesus as actively involved in my life. I could experience Him in the hospital room more than any time in my busy pastoral life.” Bishop Desmond Tutu who was losing the battle against prostate cancer, spoke of how the disease had given him new ears, and new eyes, to see things and hear things he had so taken for granted – the love of your spouse, the Beethoven symphony, the dew on the rose, the laughter on the face of your grandchild.

Co-Ed Volleyball League
Plans for our volleyball league are moving forward. Keep an eye out for more information on when an informational meeting will take place.

To register as a player and/or coach, please visit, www.staugustinecleveland.org.

Pray the Rosary
We invite you to join us every weeknight (Monday thru Friday) at 6 PM in the church as we pray the rosary. If you are unable to join us in person, we encourage you to join us on livestream.

Spring Concert
The St. Augustine Signing Choir proudly presents a Concert of Love Through Song and Sign.

Attendees are asked to bring sports or art supplies for Augustine Rainbow Camp.

Everyday Stewardship
Have you ever opened a gift and wondered what the giver was thinking? I won’t call out any of my family or friends here, but suffice to say, I think we have all been the confused recipient of a sweater that wasn’t our size or a gift card to a store where we don’t shop. But we smiled all the same and said how much it meant to us, because we know that when it comes to gifts, it’s all about the gesture.

Suffering is a lot like that - the gift you never asked for, and don’t really want to receive. Sometimes we look at suffering and, like the apostles who see Jesus as a stranger on the shore, we don’t recognize it for what it can be. We don’t appreciate the catalyst suffering can be for change, for growth, for grace. What was the gift that you received in disguise? Was it a relationship that confounded and frustrated you? Was it a job that tested your spirit? An obstacle that stopped you dead in your tracks? A rejection that threatened to break your spirit? If I go back and look at the worst gifts I’ve ever gotten, chances are that I didn’t like them because I didn’t know what to do with them. They were more fitted for someone else’s interests, someone else’s life. It’s the same with suffering. We’re tempted to cast suffering aside when it comes our way because it doesn’t fit the person we are. Suffering is made to fit the person God knows we have the ability, with His grace, to become. Hang onto that suffering. Unlike the misshapen sweater, it really will come in handy.

Parish School of Religion (PSR)/CCD
Our Parish School of Religion classes will continue this Monday, May 2nd at 5:30 PM.

Inspiration for the Week
What prevents us from seeing the Lord? We are not used to seeing Jesus in the ordinary, everyday events of our lives. We expect some kind of startling, extraordinary revelation to occur that definitely and unmistakably sends a signal that God wants our attention. We don’t expect a visit from Jesus while we are having breakfast, doing the dishes, running after the kids, negotiating a deal at work, or taking a shower! Sometimes when God simply stands on the shore of our lives casually looking for us, we don’t recognize him. Did we ever stop and think that God is really and truly interested in the routine, run the mill events of our lives? So, “what did you do today?” God may ask. Maybe we don’t think that God is concerned about such things, or we are so consumed with life’s demands that we give it little if any thought. Perhaps we are determined to achieve our own success, desire to control things ourselves or not really sure what God cares about. God is there. One day, out of the blue, God will get our attention and ask, “Do you love me?”
Back from the Brink into New Life!
Brother Andrew from the Missionary Brothers of Charity tells the following story. One day Mother Teresa received a letter written by a man on the day of his intended suicide. He wrote that, on the preceding afternoon, he had worked out all the details for what seemed to him a perfectly “rational” suicide. And then, quite by accident, he came across Malcolm Muggeridge’s biography of Mother Teresa. Bored and with nothing else to do, he started to read it. As he read, he found that book, or rather that life, giving him a new interest in life, and, as he finished it, he moved back from the brink of suicide to begin life anew. The example of Mother Teresa, until then unknown to him, had given him hope. This man had discovered that his boat was empty. But by the example of a living saint, he realized that it could be full.

Today’s gospel episode from chapter 21 of John’s Gospel shows Peter returning to his old way of life, trying, perhaps, to forget the disastrous events of the crucifixion of his master. Six other apostles join him: Thomas the doubter, the two hotheaded sons of Zebedee, the faithful and loyal Nathaniel, and two others who are not named. Although John mentions that “it was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead” (v. 14), this is actually the fourth appearance. The first was to Mary (20:11-17). The second was to the disciples without Thomas (20:19-23). The third was to Thomas and the disciples (20:26-29). This post Resurrection appearance of Jesus reminds us of an earlier incident in his ministry, namely the call of Peter and the other disciples after their night of fishing in the Sea of Galilee. (Fishermen often worked at night in order to be able to sell the freshest possible fish at the market in the morning). In both instances, Jesus asks the disciples to cast their nets into the sea a second time. In both cases they catch a large number of fish, and in both incidents Jesus invites Peter to follow him. “The Fathers and Doctors of the Church have often dwelt on the mystical meaning of this episode: the boat is the Church, whose unity is symbolized by the net which is not torn; the sea is the world, Peter in the boat stands for supreme authority of the Church, and the number of fish signifies the number of the elect. (The Navarre Bible: Text and Commentaries).

Cursillistas will gather for Ultreya on Saturday, May 14th at 10 AM in Walsh Hall. Cursillistas are invited to gather, pray, and share personal stories about living a life in God’s Grace on the second Saturday of every month.

St. Augustine Food Pantry
Thank you to Deacon Chris and the many volunteers who continue to work in the St. Augustine Food Pantry located on the first floor of our former school building.

We will be having an official opening in May with regular hours to serve those in need. In the meantime, we will continue to meet the needs of those who come to us seeking assistance on an as-needed basis.

For more information, please contact the parish office at OutreachMinistry@StAugustineCleveland.org or by calling (216) 781-5530.

Family Perspective
Jesus invited the disciples to “Come and have breakfast.” At this beach breakfast and the Last Supper Jesus teaches us meals should be more than eating. Family meals are opportunities to share prayer, listen to each other’s stories, understand and support one another.

Beatitudes- Special Religious Education
St. Augustine Church, in partnership with Catholic Charities Disability Ministries, offers “The Beatitudes” for children with disabilities. This special religious education program helps prepare children with disabilities for the sacraments and other aspects of faith formation. Instruction is tailored to each individual and their strengths, in order to help them express their love of God and come to a better understanding of their faith. For more information, please contact Terry Hogan at thogan@ccdocle.org or call (216) 781-5530 ext. 29.

Stewardship of Treasure
We are deeply grateful for your generosity in your weekly contribution to St. Augustine Parish. Your kindness and support enable us to provide for the needs of our parish and community. The collection for the weekend of April 24, 2022, was $1,996.00. Thank You!

Synod on Synodality
Thank you to all who participated in the recent Synod on Synodality Listening Sessions. Our Synod Process at St. Augustine is now complete.

The Report to the Diocese of Cleveland has been completed and submitted as required by the Diocese. The Diocese will now take the various reports from the parishes throughout the Diocese and compile a Diocesan report to be sent to the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops and eventually to Rome.

Copies of the St. Augustine Synod Report are available in the Parish Office or on the Parish Website at www.staugustinecleveland.org/parishnews for your review.

Any comments may be directed to Pat Takacs or Bob Duda by note to the parish office or by email to staugch@earthlink.net.

Again, our thanks and gratitude for your participation.
On the Lighter Side

One day after hearing a priest preach a rather long homily, Padre Pio was asked by the preacher what he thought of his sermon. He replied, “Good, but if you kept on much longer you’d be talking to yourself.” 😊

Sunday Thought

Nothing is free of the shadow of the Cross not even Easter. In this week’s Gospel, Jesus tells Peter that at the end of his life his hands will be bound and he will be led away to be killed for professing his belief in Him. Easter is invaluable for strengthening our faith for those times when we will have to stand up and possibly suffer for our belief in Jesus. It is not always easy to see where our faith is challenged by our culture. We must become more aware of the contradictions between them. This is particularly the case in areas of human life and social justice. Living as we do in a consumer society, economics often dictates what is right and what is wrong. What will be the profit, or what will be the loss? The Church teaches that no amount of money equals the value of one human person. For thirty pieces of silver, Jesus’ life was considered expendable. Do we sellout our religious beliefs to suit our comfort or our security?

Following Jesus will often require us to suffer some disadvantage in doing what is right. There always exists the possibility though, that having been bound for just a moment may be what frees us for all eternity.

Say It in Sign

Our sign language class for beginners will continue this week on Tuesday from 7 PM to 8 PM in the Deaf Center. If you were unable to previously register for this session, please know that we will be offering another session in the future. For more information, please contact Bob Duda at (216) 781-5530.

This Week’s Events of the Parish

**Monday:**
- Mass: 5:30 PM (Church)
- Parish School of Religion: 5:30 PM (School Building)
- Rosary: 6 PM (Church)
- AA Meeting: 7:30 PM (Mylott Hall)

**Tuesday:**
- AA Meeting: 9:30 AM (Walsh Hall)
- Mass: 5:30 PM (Church)
- Rosary: 6 PM (Church)
- Signing Hands: 6:15 PM (Walsh Hall)
- Sign Class: 7 PM (Deaf Center)
- AA Meeting: 7:30 PM (Mylott Hall)

**Wednesday:**
- LINKS: 3 PM
  - Mass: 5:30 PM (Church)
  - Rosary: 6 PM (Church)
  - AA Meeting: 6 PM (Mylott Hall)
  - Signing Choir Practice: 6:30 PM (Walsh)

**Thursday:**
- Mass: 5:30 PM (Church)
- Rosary: 6 PM (Church)
- Boy Scouts: 6:30 PM (Second Floor)
- AA Meeting: 7 PM (Mylott Hall)

**Friday:**
- LINKS: 3 PM
  - Stations of the Resurrection: 5 PM (Church)
  - Mass: 5:30 PM (Church)
  - Rosary: 6 PM (Church)
  - AA Meeting: 7:30 PM (Mylott Hall)

**Saturday:**
- Mass: 4:15 PM (Church)
  - Incarnate Word Academy First Communion

**Sunday:**
- Mass: 8:30 AM and 11 AM (Church)

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H: Homilist
**Thank You Catechists and Volunteers**
As we celebrate National Teacher and Support Staff Appreciation Week this week, many thanks to our PSR Catechists and volunteers for your weekly commitment to our PSR Program. They make a difference at our parish, and we are so grateful for the work that they do! Every week our catechists & support team help and guide our students receive the Catholic education and faith guidance they need. *We appreciate their dedication!*

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**Stewardship Reflection**

*Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a third time, 'Do you love me?' and he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'* (JOHN 21:17)

How often do you actually say the words “I love you” to Jesus, to family members, or to friends? We are made to be in relationship with God and each other. Sincerely telling someone that you love them is the best gift you can give them because it comes from your heart. You are giving them the gift of yourself. We all crave love. Tell someone you love them every day.

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**“We Can Be God’s Future Saints”**

Members of the Cleveland Catholic Deaf Community welcomed Fr. Mike Depecik, OSFS, a deaf priest from the Archdiocese of Detroit, at their most recent Deaf retreat on April 30th.

Fr. Mike reminded both deaf and hearing participants that we are called to live holy lives and that one way to do that is by forming a friendship with God that is encountered daily.

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**A Vigil for Forgiveness**

Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and said to Jesus, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." John 21: 1-19

After much thought and prayer, she decided to volunteer. Cynthia Rios-Myers decided to go to pray for one hour outside of an abortion center near her home in San Diego. As so many others in her parish and community had done, she would stand alone on the sidewalk, quietly on the corner, carrying no sign or other visual expression of protest. She would simply pray the rosary. This was deeply personal to her - because many years before she had been one of the women she was now praying for. Ms. Rios-Myers writes of her vigil in the magazine Commonweal [February 12, 2016]:

"I knew that, in their own minds at least, the girls entering the clinic were not doing any evil; they were frightened, and perhaps desperate. I know these things, because many years ago, I visited an abortion center. Twice . . . I was eighteen and involved with a bad man whom I could not say no to. I didn't yet know that abuse is not always delivered by punches, kicks and slaps. All I knew was that my relationship with him was devouring my soul, and I had to end it. I terminated my first pregnancy, and that should have been lesson enough. But it wasn't. I stayed with the bad man and got pregnant again. He blamed that one on me. After my second abortion, I got away from him, but the damage was done. The guilt and horror of what I'd done turned part of my soul black; I'd carry that forever.

"Standing outside the abortion clinic, I prayed for specific things. I prayed for the souls of the babies whose lives were ended. I prayed for the women who had the abortions. I prayed for women in relationships that cost them their happiness, safety, and their sense of self. I prayed for myself, too . . . I know that women seeking an abortion don't need me to hold a sign saying that they are doing evil things.

But maybe if they see me praying, they'll pray themselves. Maybe some of them will think about the Blessed Virgin Mary and how hard her unplanned pregnancy was. Maybe they'll think of her son and see him in their own unborn children. I can't undo what I did, but I can at least share my story, and stand for an hour, and pray, for whoever needs my prayers. So that is what I will continue to do."

No one is beyond forgiveness and reconciliation with God. Today's Gospel is a beautiful story of such redeeming forgiveness. The Risen Jesus asks Peter three times - the same number of times that Peter denied him - to profess his love for him. We can hear the pain and hurt in Peter's voice - but also his conviction - in his response after Jesus asks Peter a third time if he loves him: "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus is not taunting Peter here but calling Peter to move beyond the past and to take on the challenges of apostleship. In forgiving Peter as he does, in affecting reconciliation with Peter, Jesus transforms Peter's regrets and shame into understanding of and commitment to the Gospel the fisherman has witnessed. In her witness and prayers at the clinic, Cynthia and those of like heart mirror, not the judgment of Jesus, but the forgiveness of Jesus to move beyond the past to the possibilities for resurrection and restoration. Their prayer expresses their belief that these women and their families can move on from this tragedy to a new perspective and appreciation of God's gift of life. The Easter Christ calls Peter and his brothers and now all of us to take on his work of reconciliation: to possess - despite our doubts and disappointments - the heart of the Risen Jesus to forgive and seek forgiveness, to be the means of enabling God's mercy to be realized in our own families, neighborhoods, and communities.