

Our Lady Queen of Peace

4696 Notre Dame Lane, House Springs, Mo 63051 636-671-3062

www.olqpparish.org

January 29, 2012



PASTOR

Reverend Michael Murphy

ASSOCIATES

Reverend James Beighlie, C.M.

Reverend Donald F. Molitor, Retired

DEACONS

Reverend Dr. Thomas Gerling

Reverend Mr. Paul Turek, Sr.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Mr. Bob Ellison

GRADE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/PRESCHOOL

Ms. Renée Chauvin

PSR COORDINATOR

Mrs. Debra O'Donnell

YOUTH MINISTER COORDINATOR

Mrs. Terry Ostlund

PARISH COUNCIL

Sandee Burkemper

Joanne David

Vicki De Long

René Heibeck

Dave Mills

Denise Ortmann

Rich Ortmann

Linda Weber

Parish Office

671-3062

School

671-0247

Cafeteria

375-5335

SCHEDULE OF MASSES

Saturday Evening

5:00 pm

(Rosary before Mass - Fatima Prayers included on 1st Sat.)

Sunday

7:30, 9:30, 11:30 am

Holy Days

as announced

Weekdays

8:00 am

PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS

Tuesday after 8:00am Mass

ROSARY FOR VOCATIONS

2nd Monday of each month after 8:00am Mass

ROSARY FOR PEACE

Every Monday evening at 7:30pm

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

First and third Sunday of the month after 11:30am Mass

Make arrangements by calling Parish Office

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Saturday 4:00 - 4:45pm or by appointment

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

As soon as marriage is contemplated, contact one of the parish priests.

Welcome to Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

We rejoice to have you with us, whether a long-time resident or newly arrived in our parish! Please fill out this form and return it to the Parish Office or place it in the Sunday collection basket if you would like to be a registered member of our parish. If you have recently changed your status, married, moved out of your parents' home or graduated from college, you need to re-register. Please help us keep our records in order.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ Phone _____ # of people registering _____

email address _____

Please circle one: New Registration Address or phone number change Moving out of parish

Upcoming OLQP Parish Events**2012****February**

- Sat 11 **Knights Valentine Dance, KC Hall**
 Sat 25 **Daughters Antique Appraisal, Cafeteria**
Bluegrass Concert, Northwest High School

March

- Sun 18 **Red Hat Bingo, KC Hall**

April

- Sat 28 **Daughters Tailgate Sale**
Athletic Association Trivia Night, KC Hall

May

- Mon 7 **Confirmation**
 Sat 19 **Preschool Graduation**

June

- Sat 9 **OLQP Picnic**

July

- Sun 15 **Hope Builders**

August

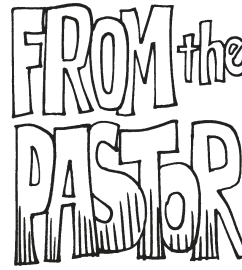
- Sat 18 **Daughters Tailgate Sale, OLQP**

September

- Sat 22 **PSR Chili Supper, Cafeteria**
 Sun 23 **Quilt Social**

October

- Sat 6 **Hoedown**
 Sat 13 **Harvest Moon Auction, KC Hall**
 Sun 14 **Fall Festival, Cafeteria**
 Sun 21 **Daughters Fashion Show**



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And the Survey says.....

According to our records, we have around 1,187 registered households in Our Lady Queen of Peace parish. And yet, on average, only 250 envelopes are being used weekly. Of course, not every household uses envelopes, which makes it difficult to determine how many active parishioners we have. We are guessing that there are 600-700 families on our register that we never hear from. Some parishioners have died, some have moved and some only joined the parish so that they could get married or have their child baptized or get their children in school or the PSR program.

In order to update our records, the Parish Council, Finance Committee and various committees on our Mission Advancement team have decided to develop a survey and contact every household in the parish. To accomplish this task we plan on using the parish email list (with hard copies in the pews), a parish mailing and phone calls. I've noticed that there is a lot of data that is incomplete and/or has changed over the years on our registrations forms. Within the weeks to come we will begin to contact each family to update our records and obtain demographic information that will be useful in planning for the future. More information will become available in the upcoming weeks.

Fr. Mike

BINGO

Every Friday Night
Knights of Columbus Hall
Doors open at 4:30 pm
Bingo starts at 6:45 pm
Hope to see you there!

School News

Over the Christmas break the old computer lab was magically transformed into a new computer lab! Thank you, Home and School, Fr. Beighlie, auction workers and attendees, parents and students for all the hard work that went into this monumental endeavor. OLQP now has a computer lab that it can be proud of and it will serve our students well!



The old computer equipment has been distributed throughout the school and classrooms. Fr. Beighlie is now busy getting all of the "old" equipment up and running again. What would we do without Fr. Beighlie??

The first semester of school is now behind us, and the students are gearing up for the second semester. Time flies when you are working hard and having fun.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Thank You Very Much!!

Thanks to the 10 adults who helped with our Confirmation Retreat on Monday, January 16th. We had a great attendance of 57 out of 60 youth which brings me to thank the parents who are supporting your teen as they journey toward Confirmation.

Thanks to Ann Kenney and her mom who made 'disciple' crosses for each of us on retreat.

Thanks to the high school teens and three adults who helped with the care of 39 children during the Knight's of Columbus Mouse Derby on January 14th.

Thanks to everyone who helped support fundraisers for the Pro-Life March.

Thanks to our new leadership team for the high school youth.

Thanks to all of you who save your aluminum cans and precious metals for our monthly collection that helps us raise much needed funds for Youth Ministry. A special thanks to Ken Bohnert who has been dropping off his trailer and taking our collection to the recycling center for the past decade.

Thanks to every adult who volunteers and supports our youth in any way.

High School Teen News

Possible discussion you may hear in the Church lobby area:

Youth Group Member - "Did you know we have IT?"

Person 1 - "Have what?"

Youth Group Member - "IT!!!"

Person 1 - "We have IT?"

Youth Group Member - "Exactly!!!"

Person 1 - "I'm confused?"

Youth Group Member - "Maybe you need IT to help!!!"

After a long debate – The Youth Group has changed their name!! At first we thought the name JAM was going to work, but the group has come up with and voted on a new name:

"The IT Group"

What is IT? "IT" stand for "Inspired Teens": and after attending one youth group meeting, you'll see that name clearly hits the mark.

To become part of "The IT Group" - all you need to do is show up on Sunday evening and you're in.

Tag - You're "IT" - Every Sunday night at 6 pm. All teens in 9th - 12th grade are welcome to join us!

Bring a friend, we'll see you there! Once we get at least 28 teens to attend...John gets a "PIEING"!

John and Sue Whitehead
314-954-7461

Terry Ostlund, Youth Minister
314-566-8363

RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RCIA classes meet weekly at 7:00 pm in the Cafeteria meeting room.

All parishioners or guests are invited to sit in on any of our sessions when the topics being discussed might interest them.

For any questions or further information please call Deacon Paul, 314-954-0378, or email

deaconpaul@olqpparish.org.

Schedule of Topics:

- Jan 30 - The History of the Church
(The Church's long history up until the present time and what it means to us today)
- Feb 6 - Christian Moral Living and Social Justice
(What the Catechism says about the Ten Commandments and how it effects the way we are called to live)
- Feb 13 - Life Ethics and The Dignity of Life
(What the Catechism and the Church says about Human Life from beginning to end)
- Feb 20 - What is Lent
(Our Lenten traditions, symbols and call to conversion)
- Feb 27 - Saying Yes to Jesus
(Discussion of our relationship with Jesus)

Catholics Come Home

"We are Catholic. Welcome home."

The advertising campaign phase of this initiative has come to a close, but the real work for local Catholics is just beginning. In addition to the daily commitment required to live and grow in our own faith, it is important that we invite others to share it.

"Evangelization" might sound scary, even a little bit "weird" in a society that isn't very friendly to religion, and the topic might seem out of place in a pro-life newsletter. However, they are very much related, and both essential to living as Catholics.

As the Catholics Come Home (CCH) commercials described, for centuries, the Church has established hospitals, orphanages, and schools; cared for the poor; and contributed to scientific research that improves daily life and health. These traditions illustrate that the Church's teaching on the dignity of every human person is not new or politically motivated, it simply reflects who we are. "Living the holiness of Christ gives witness to... the fullness of human dignity," said Msgr. Mark Rivituso, Chair of the CCH initiative for the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are also fundamental for Catholics, which is why an essential part of the work of the Respect Life Apostolate is reaching out to men and women who are hurting after abortion through Project Rachel and Project Joseph. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, individual counseling, spiritual direction, group support and retreat opportunities, men and women find Christ's healing and mercy, sometimes after years of pain, and are overjoyed to hear that there is no such thing as an "unforgiveable sin."

If you or someone you know has been directly hurt by an abortion, or simply questioned or disagreed with the Catholic Church in any area of its teachings on the dignity of human life - assisted suicide, embryonic stem cell research, contraception, artificial reproduction techniques, or others - the Respect Life Apostolate hopes this newsletter, our website, and other resources available through our office and staff will help bring each of us closer to Christ and help His Church feel more like home.

OLQP Athletic Association News

Baseball, Softball and T-Ball Registration

The OLQP Athletic Association will be having baseball, softball & t-ball registration after all the Masses on the weekend of January 28th & 29th.



Parish Corner

Every week a different organization is featured in the bulletin.

OLQP Catholic School

As Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish was established and new parish buildings were still being planned, a temporary school location was located at the historic home of the House Family in old town House Springs back in 1959. In April of 1960, ground was broken for the new church and school. Due to construction issues, the opening of the 1960 school year was delayed, but the school was opened with two self-contained, dual classroom buildings. The new church was used for the first time by school children on Palm Sunday, March 25, 1960. Our Lady Queen of Peace School continued to grow steadily through the decades. The school now has four buildings and two modular buildings which accommodate 12 classrooms, a preschool, a library, a computer lab, a faculty room, and offices. The school currently has 183 students, eleven full time teachers, five part time teachers, a full time learning consultant, a full time secretary, and a full time principal.

Thank You!

We would like to thank Hood's Discount Home Center and Kelly's Flooring for donating materials needed to prepare our Fryer Trailer for the Fish Fries and Parish Picnic.



St. Vincent De Paul

We have received so much from the good Lord that we wish to encourage others to experience His love for them through our ministry of assistance.

OLQP Parish Email List

Subscribe to our **Parish Email List** and receive:

- Parish News
- Event Calendar & Reminders
- Death Notices
- Holy Day & Holiday Mass Schedules
- Event Cancellation Notices
- Urgent Messages
- And so much more!

It's easy and safe to subscribe and unsubscribe.

This email list is for parochial use only and will not be sold or shared with anyone!

Go to www.olqpparish.org and submit your name and email address in the form on the bottom of the home page

OR

Email your name and email address to: frbeighlie@olqpparish.org

New Young Adult Group At OLQP

Our Lady Queen of Peace has begun a young adult group. If you are out of high school and/or you are twenty something you qualify as a young adult. Saturday, February 4th, we will attend the 5 pm Mass (at OLQP). After Mass we will meet in the meeting room off the Cafeteria for pizza and salad followed with ice skating at Steinberg's. If it is raining we will go bowling. Your cost for the evening is \$12.50. This covers skating and pizza. If you would like to join us please email Terry at terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org so she can order enough pizza. Bring your friends and join us for a fun evening.

Looking For A Few Good Nurses...

To assist with blood pressure screenings on the 3rd weekend of the month (not December or June) after Masses. If you are interested please call Fran, 636-375-3774, or come down to the Cafeteria meeting room on Hospitality Sunday after Mass for information.

The Church Lobby

Having your organization in the Church lobby with all your fundraisers is a great opportunity for parishioners to help support your cause. Please call the Parish office to schedule your time in the lobby. This will ensure that we do not have too many at one time and we can announce before Mass who and what is in the lobby on a particular weekend.

Thank you so much in your help with this important communication so we all know what is happening and we can be prepared to show our support.

Parish Office

Thanks To Our Sponsors

We wish to thank **Fenton Auto Salvage**, for being a sponsor for our bulletins. Please remember to patronize our advertisers when in need of their type of service. Because of our sponsors we do not pay for our bulletins to be printed.

Marriage Preparation Program
"Today and All the Days of Your Life"
 This program is for engaged couples and will fulfill the Archdiocesan requirement for a marriage preparation program. The program will be offered starting February 12th through March 4th. The sessions will be facilitated by Deacon Tom and Margaret Gerling. To register or for more information please call Deacon Tom or Margaret, 636-671-0627.

Red Hat/Ladies Bingo and Luncheon Sunday, March 18 Knights of Columbus Hall

(doors open at noon, lunch served at 1 pm)
 The charge is \$30 per person and includes lunch, drinks, 9 Bingo cards and a dobber.
 There will be Basket raffles, 50/50 and LOTS OF FUN!
 For reservations or any questions please contact Tom or Trish Guethle, 274-2062.

Archdiocese Tribunal

The Archdiocese Tribunal has scheduled some quick start nights for people who are interested in an annulment in the Church.

Sacred Heart (Crystal City) will host one of these evenings on Monday, February 6th, at 7 pm. It will be held in the school cafeteria on Breierton Lane which is diagonal from the Church.

God won't ask...

What kind of car you drove, but He'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.

The square footage of your house, but He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

About the clothes you had in your closet, but He'll ask how many you helped to clothe.

What your salary was, but He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.

What your job title was, but He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

How many friends you had, but He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.

In what neighborhood you lived, but He'll ask how you treated your neighbors.

Seven Days of Inspiration

Take one a day...
and feel great all week!

Say an extra prayer
tonight. Someone
needs it.

Awaken a dream.

You know so much.
Share it!

It's the perfect
time to take time
for you!

Storms always pass.

Your efforts will be
rewarded.

Every time we
perform an act of
kindness, it begins a
chain of goodwill.

**Blue Grass Concert
Saturday, February 25, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Northwest High School Lecture Hall**

This event is sponsored by Community Churches and the Knights of Columbus. Freewill donations will be accepted. Proceeds will benefit the Pregnancy Care Center in Cedar Hill and Crystal City. Please invite your friends and SUPPORT LIFE.

For any questions and more information please contact Tom Guethle, 274-2062 or Mike Heller, 274-2733.

Sandwiches, chips and soda will be available for purchase.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Our next Eucharistic Adoration is
Wednesday, February 29,
from 1:00 – 8:00 pm.

Come visit with Jesus. He is waiting for you in the Eucharist. His love flows from Him, saturating you completely. In the stillness of the sanctuary, in the Presence of Christ, offer your heart.

2011 Contribution Statement

If you would like a 2011 Contribution statement please send a note (marked "Linda") to the Parish office, you may put it in the collection basket or call the parish office, 636-671-3062.

Thank you,
Linda

St. Louis Review Subscription

The cost for a year subscription is \$23. Please let the parish office know (yes or no) if you wish to receive the St. Louis Review. If you do not receive the envelope packet (which has the envelope provided) you may write a note (with your name and address) and add it to the collection basket stating "yes" or "no" for the Review.

Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Linda

Our Gifts to God and Parish**Special Collections**

St. Louis Review	\$	393.00
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New Building Fund

Lavender Envelopes	\$	415.00
Total Received to date	\$	716,803.61

Offertory

Sunday Envelopes	\$	10,590.00
Sunday Loose	\$	531.00
Above and Beyond	\$	186.00
Candlemas	\$	20.00
First Offering	\$	53.00
Present and Future	\$	20.00

Total Offertory	\$	11,400.00
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Offertory Goal	\$	14,000.00
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Thank you for your generosity.

1,187 registered members

243 online, loose checks and envelopes this week

As of January 23, 2011

Contributions Year To Date	\$	366,819.10
Projected Year to Date Budget	\$	420,000.00

Scrip Gift Cards

Sales	\$	765.00
Profits/tuition reduction	\$	40.65

Scrip Gift Cards are available in the Parish Office from 8 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday and every weekend after Mass.

Stewardship

"Brothers and sisters: I should like you to be free of anxieties." 1 Corinthians 7:32

How many anxieties do we bring upon ourselves by constantly worrying about attaining ever more material possessions? Yet, God tells us that only the hand that is open to give can also be open to receive His peace and joy. A heart or a hand clenched in anxiety and greed can never truly receive anything.

*Absent from the body present with our Lord.
In your kindness pray for the repose of the soul*

Erma Slack, sister of Pat Hoskins

Ted Boller, brother-in-law of

John and Judy Holmes

Steve Eder, of our community

*May God welcome them home, fill them with peace,
and bless those who will miss them.*

Parish Activities

Mon	Jan 30	PSR, 6:15 - 7:30 pm RCIA, 7 pm, Cafeteria meeting room
Tues	Jan 31	Devotions after 8 am Mass Quilters, 9 am - 3 pm, 6 - 8:30 pm History Class (Fr. Don), 7 pm, Cafeteria meeting room Rosary for Peace, 7:30 pm, Church
Thur	Feb 2	Choir Practice, 7 pm, Church Daughters of Isabella, 7:30 pm, Cafeteria
Sat	Feb 4	1st Saturday Mass, 8 am, Church
Sun	Feb 5	1st Sunday Breakfast serving after 7:30 and 9:30 am Masses Youth "IT", 6 - 8 pm, Cafeteria meeting room

Mass Intentions

Mon	Jan 30	8:00 am	Jeanette Ellison
Tues	Jan 31	8:00 am	Hubert Taylor
Wed	Feb 1	8:00 am	George Gunter
Thurs	Feb 2	8:00 am	Ray Brune
Fri	Feb 3	8:00 am	Virginia Hilgert
Sat	Feb 4	8:00 am	Deacon Tom Murphy
		5:00 pm	Oscar Buchheit
Sun	Feb 5	7:30 am	Ray Brune
		9:30 am	People of the Parish
		11:30 am	Jim Vess, Sr.

February 4th and 5th**Special Ministers of the Eucharist**

5:00 pm	Jan Hussman, Peggy Mikko, *Barb & *Joe Nenner, Michael & Joyce Ruopp, S. Tenny
7:30 am	*Mary Bjornstad, Mary Copeland, Ruth Haen, Michele Huff, Jo Jahnsen, Marie Strayhorn, *Linda Weber
9:30 am	*Margaret Gerling, Dan & Kim Horn, *Don Moeller, Jan Schultheiss, Maria & Paul Stonecypher, Jo Ann Vess
11:30 am	*Sandee Burkemper, *Deb Pigue, Lynette & Patrick Rawlins, Sharon Schmidt, Connie Stubits, Denise Witt

* You are responsible to clean the vessels after Mass

Proclaimers

5:00 pm	Larry Bottchen, Richard Ortmann
7:30 am	Ken Bohnert, Terry Soer
9:30 am	Bruce Gallion, Maria Webb
11:30 am	Christine Janos, Judy Janos

Servers

5:00 pm	Allyson & Kaitlyn Bridges, Sara Eimer
7:30 am	J. Duff, Darby O'Donnell, Sabrina Otzenberger
9:30 am	Hanna Osborne, Kimberly Queen, B. Turney
11:30 am	Allie & Nicholas Gal, Benjamin Pigue

Ushers

5:00 pm	Don Brooks, Bill & Donna Clifton, Ken Ganey, Ralph Munzlinger, Helen Stewart
7:30 am	Gerald Bachmann, Doug Bjornstad, Carl Boyer, Jeff Eschbach, Larry Lammert, John J. Nahlik
9:30 am	Terry Filicsky, Ray Graf, Butch Mattingly, Sam Pierceall, Jeff Queen, Ralph Schultheiss
11:30 am	John Holmes, Don Reno, Jim Robertson, Al Schuld, Benny Slodkowski, David Witt

Please pray for
(parishioners are in bold)

Frieda Siebel-Spath	Maryann Barnett
Vi Hoeft	Carl Boyer
Maria Webb	Jeff Niemann
Mary Bequette	Vince Rocchio

Kayle Thompkins, daughter of Joan Thompkins
Elija Weatherly, friend of Patrick Rawlins
Trudy Girard, sister of Lynette Rawlins
Holly Smith, daughter of Lynette Rawlins
Rachel Preston, granddaughter of Lynette Rawlins
Louise Gunter, mother of Lynette Rawlins
Jim Rawlins, husband of Lynette Rawlins
Reese Gunter, great niece of Lynette Rawlins
Hilda Bowler, mother of Dave Bowler
Ken Lewis, friend of Ken and Jan DeClue
Tilly Nowicki, friend of Ken and Jan DeClue
John Acton, brother of Richard Acton and Laura Huss
Allen Chott, nephew of Judy Mottert
Haley Weis, great granddaughter of Carol O'Shea
Buck Thomas, husband of Donna Thomas

~those serving in the military, the homebound, shut-ins of the parish and all in nursing homes. To add a name please call the Parish Office, 671-3062. Names will be removed after 3 weeks.

Parish Office email
parishoffice@olqpparish.org
OLQP Web Site
www.olqpparish.org
submit articles for bulletin
olqpbulletin@yahoo.com
Deadline Friday at 4:30 pm
(9 days before publication)



Cathy Morlock,
Debbie Stephens
and Chyree de Roode

**5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B**



THEME: The world is what it is. Embrace life fully.

We proclaim the Christian message as a message of joy and hope – and it is. But there is often the temptation to deny the reality of present experience, to explain it away, to look for false joy in the middle of suffering and pain. For some, it is almost as if the only valid experience for a Christian is a “happy feeling.” We want to explain suffering and sorrow and hardship away as a good thing, an opportunity to experience God’s healing. We basically tell those who are suffering, “Don’t feel that way.” We don’t allow them to work through the pain, we don’t travel with them, we want to assure them that, as Christians, everything is wonderful when it’s not. This wasn’t the approach of Jesus and it can’t be ours either. At root, it is unhealthy and hurtful.

THE READINGS:

FIRST READING: Job 7:1-4, 6-7

The problem of suffering, especially the suffering of the innocent, has plagued people of faith from the dawn of time. We want to know why, why, if I have lived well, do I undergo so much pain? What did I do to deserve it? Why does God cause it? Why does He allow it? Our first reading is from the Book of Job, a long Wisdom

meditation on suffering. The basic structure of the book is made up of a long series of speeches between Job and three of his friends, followed by a conversation with a young newcomer to Wisdom thinking, and finally an appearance and word from God. In the long round of conversations and speeches, the reader of the book is drawn in and made to feel the agony of Job. We’re discouraged and even angered at the pious platitudes and facile answers of Job’s friends. He’s suffering because he has sinned and just won’t admit it. He’s suffering because he has committed an inadvertent sin of which he is not aware. He’s suffering because God is disciplining him to keep him from sinning. He’s suffering because God knows what He’s doing even if we humans do not. Through it all, Job maintains his innocence and proclaims, “I hurt!” In the end, God comes on the scene and announces that Job is the only one who has spoken correctly.

In the end, the Book of Job deals with the fact that the natural order and the moral order are not the same, that in the world of daily life “stuff” happens. It happens not because we deserve it, it just happens. Job is correct in feeling his pain. Job is correct in raging against it. Job is correct in maintaining his innocence. The voice of God, in the Book of Job, says, “Job, I don’t like this, either, but I’m with you as you suffer. It may not make it easier, but at least you aren’t alone. I care.” That faith statement validates Job’s experience. That faith statement doesn’t advise the sufferer to pretend that the suffering is passing or insignificant. That faith statement allows us to embrace and deal with life as it is and to find hope that we are not alone, that we are cared for, that we are loved – no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in – without being pressured to say we have happy feelings about where we are in our life at any given moment.

SECOND READING: I Corinthians 9:16-19

The second reading is taken from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians. As has been noted, the Corinthian community was plagued with division, division caused by a variety of preachers proclaiming different understandings of the Gospel message. For Paul, as a trained Rabbi in the Jewish tradition, God is one and the message of the Gospel, the proclamation of Jesus Christ as God’s Messiah, is one. There are not different Gospels for different people.

At first glance, Paul’s claim that he has become all things to all people sounds like an impossibility. No one can fully embrace and understand the experiences of others. Yet, what Paul describes is a model of ministry. In his model, he tries to meet people where they are. With the sorrowful, he shares sorrow; with the weak he does not offer his presence from a stance of power; with the suffering he is compassionate. In all situations, he embraces the lived circumstances of the people he meets and offers the one Gospel – in Jesus Christ,

God has come into our midst and cares for us as we are right now. In Jesus Christ, God is with us and we are not alone. We don't have to walk our journey of life alone. We are cared for and loved – no matter who we are, no matter how weak or powerful we are, no matter how fortunate or troubled we are. He does not present the Gospel, the Christian message, as a quick fix for the problems of present life, but as an assurance that, in the greater scheme of things, the present moment matters, the present moment does not need to be escaped for the sake of some “happy feeling” or “good experience,” the present moment can be embraced as an opportunity to meet our God.

GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:29-39

The Gospel reading comes from the initial stages of Jesus' public ministry in Mark. We need to recall last week's reading when Jesus drove out a demon in the synagogue to see the tight structure Mark uses to characterize Jesus' ministry at its inception.

- A. The casting out of one demon
 - B. The cure of one sick person (Peter's mother-in-law)
 - C. The sick person serves others
- B. The cure of many sick people

A. The casting out of many demons
This repetitive structure is called a chiasm. The focus is the middle element. The “casting out of demons” functions as a characterization of Jesus' ministry as the work of God standing against evil in the world. It is in the context of working against evil that Jesus heals the sick. Evil, then, is to be understood as anything that hurts people. Having experienced the care of Jesus, Peter's mother-in-law immediately cares for the needs of others and, it is suggested in the structure, this is what can be expected of the many who experience God's care. For Mark, this is the role of a disciple. This is how we follow Jesus – by being present to others in their needs, by being present to others in whatever circumstances they find themselves.

I once encountered a young couple who had just suffered the death of their newborn child. The hospital chaplain tried to console them by telling them that God had a new, little angel. It didn't help. I once met a young girl who was recovering from extensive abdominal surgery and was in great pain. Her father had experienced the same surgery and was telling all about how he knew how she felt and his pain went away. I finally said to her, “But that was his pain and this is yours.” She seemed to relax some and find some relief at that, in just having her hurt recognized. I once was seriously ill and had someone tell me how wonderful it was that I had the chance to experience God's healing. I didn't find it all that wonderful.

Jesus met people where they were. He didn't perform magic tricks. He didn't deny people their feelings and experiences.

He was present to them and, in that, made God present to them. Paul became all things to all people. He followed the example of Jesus and was present to people in whatever they experienced. He brought the Gospel to people as they were. Job raged about his hurt and about the facile attempts to explain it away and God said that only He spoke correctly. In my approach to others, can I meet them where they are? Can I accept their pain and suffering and just be present to them? Can I be a means of God's presence and love to them? Or do I need to deny their experiences with pious platitudes that make me feel better?

FOR REFLECTION:

- How do I understand and reconcile the Christian message of joy and hope with the reality of suffering in the world? How well do I embrace and live the present moment when that moment is filled with sorrow or pain?
- When confronted with the suffering of a friend or loved one, how much am I like Job's friends? Do I look for a reason for the suffering? Do I try to explain it away? How do I handle my own suffering? What do I expect of God when I'm sick or hurting?
- For me, is the message of the Gospel one? Do I look for different Gospel messages for different situations in my life? When things are going well in my life, do I expect God to leave me alone to manage my own affairs and then expect God to make everything all right when things go badly?
- Can I find in my experiences a connection with other people or do I use my experiences to set me apart from others? Do I use my experiences to explain away the experiences of others or can I be content simply to be with others in their experiences? Do my experiences lead me to serve others?
- As a disciple of Jesus, what do I see as my role in combating evil in the world? Do I agree that ultimate evil is what hurts people? In my efforts to stand against evil, do I cause more pain?



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
FREE THROW CHAMPIONSHIP**

**Sponsored by:
High Ridge and House Springs Knights of Columbus**

Free to all boys and girls ages 10 to 14

Monday: January 30th, 2012

6:30 - 8:30 pm

Cedar Springs Gymnasium

6922 Rivermont Trails

House Springs, MO

All contestants are recognized for their participation in this event.

All boys and girls entering this event will need the following: Proof of age (picture ID card or birth certificate) and written parental consent forms that are available upon request. Entry forms can be picked up in advance or parents can fill them out at the door. For more information or questions please call:

Jim Reiter, 636-376-8247 or Brian Schwantner, 314-968-4100

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C H U R C H N A M E :

Our Lady Queen of Peace
4696 Notre Dame Lane
House Springs, MO 63051

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

636-671-3062

CONTACT PERSON:

Linda Berg

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Have a beautiful day!!

Linda