

# Our Lady Queen of Peace

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

[www.olqpparish.org](http://www.olqpparish.org)

February 9, 2014



## 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

Mr. Curt Baker

## PSR COORDINATOR

Mrs. Debra O'Donnell

## YOUTH MINISTER COORDINATOR

Mrs. Terry Ostlund

## PARISH COUNCIL

Bailey Alexander, Thomas Broadbent, Cathy Carley,  
Joe Corio, Bev Gregory, David Holmes, Mary Luebbert,  
Dave Mills, Donna Otzenberger, Jan Schultheiss,  
Tim Webb,

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 Saturday)	
Sunday	7:30, 9:30, 11:30 am
Holy Days	as announced
Weekdays	8:00 am

## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed for prayerful Adoration the last Wednesday of each month from 1:00 to 8:00 pm.

## PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS

Tuesday after 8:00am Mass

## ROSARY

Monday through Friday after 8:00 am Mass  
For vocations 2nd Monday of month after 8:00 am Mass  
Before 5:00 pm Mass on Saturday evenings

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

First and third Sunday of the month after 11:30 am Mass  
Make arrangements by calling Parish Office

## SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

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

## SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

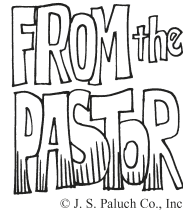
As soon as marriage is contemplated, contact one of the parish priests.

## Welcome to Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

Registration forms may be found on our website ([olqpparish.org/parishregistration.htm](http://olqpparish.org/parishregistration.htm)), in the Church lobby or you may stop by the Parish Office to fill one out. If you have recently changed your status, married, moved out of your parents' home or graduated from high school, you need to re-register. Please help us keep our records accurate.

**Upcoming OLQP Parish Events**

<b>2014</b>		
<b>February</b>		
Sat	22	Daughters of Isabella Antique Tea
Sun	23	Knights of Columbus Washer Tournament
<b>March</b>		
Sun	16	Red Hat BINGO, KC Hall
Wed	19	Protecting God's Children Workshop
Sun	30	Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary Craft/Vendor Show
Mon	31	Parish Mission Begins
<b>April</b>		
Sat	12	Parish All Day Confessions
Sun	20	Easter
Sat	26	Daughters of Isabella Tailgate Sale
<b>May</b>		
Sun	4	First Communion
Wed	7	Confirmation
<b>June</b>		
Sat	14	OLQP Picnic
<b>July</b>		
S/T	7-11	Hope Builders Week
<b>August</b>		
Sun	24	KC Ladies Auxiliary Quarter Auction



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**Cross Catholic Outreach**

Next week, *Fr. Robert Sherry* will visit our parish and speak at all the weekend Masses on behalf of *Cross Catholic Outreach*. Cross Catholic Outreach


works on behalf of the poor in developing countries and it also works to establish meaningful ties between parishes in America and the priests and nuns working in the Church overseas in the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Central and South America. Rather than taking up a second collection, Cross Catholic Outreach educates people on the reality of poverty in the world and then asks them to make a commitment to sponsoring a family in a third world country after thoughtful and prayerful consideration. Fr. Sherry will be making brochures available after the Masses with more information.

Also, I am looking for anyone who would be able to pick Fr. Sherry up from the airport on Saturday and/or return him to the airport on Sunday afternoon. Please contact me if you are able and willing to do this.

**One More Year!**

Mr. Curt Baker has agreed to stay on as the principal of our school for one more year. Curt has done a wonderful job as principal and he also teaches Social Studies to the upper grade students. Last year at this time, our parish was facing a huge financial challenge. I'm happy to report that our situation this year has improved DRAMATICALLY! Mr. Baker has played a role in this improvement and we are very grateful.

~ fr. mike



On Monday, February 10, we will meet for lunch at O'Charley's (Gravois Bluffs) at 1:00 pm. Hope to see everyone.

**Parish Activities**

Mon	Feb 10	PSR, 6:15 - 7:30 pm RCIA, 7:00 pm, Parish Office
Tues	Feb 11	Perpetual Help Devotions after 8:00 am Mass Quilters, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, 6:00 - 8:30 pm
Thur	Feb 13	Choir Practice, 7:00 pm, Church Home and School Meeting, 7:00 pm, Cafeteria Home and School Child Care, 6:45 pm, Cafeteria Meeting Room
Fri	Feb 14	Happy Valentines Day!!
Sat	Feb 15	Blood Pressure Screening after Mass, Cafeteria Meeting Room
Sun	Feb 16	Hospitality Sunday

**Please be aware that  
our office sometimes closes  
in the event of bad weather.**

**“Protecting God’s Children”  
March 19, 6:30 pm  
OLQP Cafeteria**

It is the policy of the Archdiocese of St. Louis that all clergy, employees and volunteers whose service in the Church brings them into contact with children must have a regular background check conducted through the Missouri Family Care Safety Registry and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for those who have lived outside the state of Missouri. They must also attend a “Protecting God’s Children” Workshop and sign a “Code of Ethical Conduct”. Any parents interested in volunteering to work with the school for any activity (class parties, field trips, coaching, boy or girl scout leaders) must be in compliance with these rules.

All participants must be pre-registered on the Archdiocesan website before attending the workshop.

Any questions or for more information please contact Jan, [parishbookkeeping@olqpparish.org](mailto:parishbookkeeping@olqpparish.org) or 636-671-3062.

**Youth Council News**

**High School Youth Group  
Sunday, February 16th, from 6:00-8:00 pm**  
The next High School Youth Group meeting will be Sunday, February 16th, from 6:00 - 8:00 pm in the Cafeteria. Please join us for crazy ping pong. Our topic for the evening will be “staying focused on Jesus, when life gets crazy”.

**Junior High Youth Retreat Rescheduled  
“Answering the Call to Discipleship”  
Saturday, March 1 – Sunday, March 2**  
The Junior High Retreat for the 7th and 8th grade youth is being held at Camp Trinity in New Haven. We will meet at OLQP on Saturday, March 1st, at 8:30 am and carpool to Camp Trinity. We will return around Noon on Sunday, March 2nd. All interested junior high youth can get a permission slip at school, PSR or by contacting Terry. Reservation deadline is Monday, February 24th.

For more information about any event please contact Terry Ostlund, [terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org](mailto:terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org) or 314-566-8363.

**OLQP Grade School Open House  
Open To  
Preschool – 8th Grade Families  
All parish and non-parish  
families welcome**

**Thursday, February 13, 2014  
5:00 – 6:30 pm**

Have you given any thought to life beyond the Preschool years?

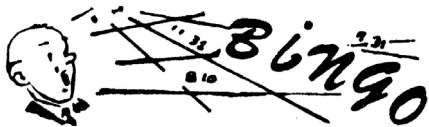
Please join us for an informative evening to see what OLQP can offer your child from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

If unable to attend, call 636-671-0247, to schedule a tour at your convenience.

“Small Environment ... Big Impact”



**Knights of Columbus  
12th Annual Washer Tournament  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
February 23  
Starts at 1:30 pm  
Last sign up at 1:15 pm  
Open to general public**  
Any questions or for more information  
please call Ferenc, 636-274-1406.



**Every Friday Night  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
Doors Open at 4:30 pm  
Bingo starts at 6:45 pm  
Everyone welcome!**

**We would like to thank  
Bach Construction,**  
parishioner Domenic Bach,  
for advertising in our parish bulletin.  
Because of their generosity we do not  
pay for our bulletins to be printed.  
Please patronize our advertisers and  
thank them for supporting our parish.

**Archdiocesan Financial Assistance  
Application Due Date: March 15, 2014**

(This money is available as a result of the  
"Returning God's Gift" Campaign)

The Catholic Education Office will be using the FACTS  
CO. to input the data of those families applying for the  
Archdiocesan financial assistance programs for the  
2014-2015 school year. Families must complete the FACTS  
Grant and Aid application when applying.

- Applicants must be Catholic and must be registered at the parish.
- Students must be Catholic and attend a Catholic Archdiocesan or Parochial Elementary School or an Archdiocesan or Parochial High School.

Private Elementary and Private High Schools are not eligible.

- Applications must be obtained from the parish bookkeeper where the family is registered.

Families meeting the above requirements may apply online for the CFTA Funds beginning in late December at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com) or obtain a paper copy from the bookkeeper or the school office.

Information and documentation required for these programs include:

1. An application completed online or a signed and completed paper application.
2. Payment of the \$30 application fee made payable to: "FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment". Please do not send cash.
3. Copies of your 2013 Federal tax forms including all supporting tax schedules.
4. Copies of your 2013 W-2 forms for both you and your spouse.
5. Copies of supporting documentation for Social Security Income, Welfare, Child Support, Food Stamps, Worker's Compensation and TANF.

Failure to submit all of the required information by the deadline date may result in your family not receiving financial aid or limit the amount given due to incomplete information.

**Spring Craft / Vendor Show**  
**Sunday, March 30th, Noon - 5:00 pm**  
**Knights of Columbus Hall**

Spring is just around the corner so why not spend the afternoon with family, friends or neighbors and come to where the fun is!

To rent a table as a vendor/crafter and for general questions please contact:

Krista Gross, 636-274-1968 or  
 email: [gross123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gross123@sbcglobal.net)  
 Jane Saggio, 636-671-2939  
 or email: [janesaggio@yahoo.com](mailto:janesaggio@yahoo.com)

**Antique Appraisal and Tea**  
**Saturday, February 22**  
**Noon to 3:00 pm**  
**OLQP Cafeteria**

All are welcome to attend the Antique Appraisal and Tea. An appraiser will appraise items brought in by attendees. We will be serving a light lunch and refreshments to all. Please call, Jan, 636-677-9093 or Debbie, 636-399-2066, to make advance reservations (\$15 for advance reservations) or \$20 at the door.

Daughters of Isabella donates monthly to St. Vincent de Paul and the Peace Pantry. We also donate regularly to the parish, Veterans, Women in Transition, Birthright and the Pro Life Trip to name a few of the charities we support.

**SVDP Youth Thank You!!**

We would like to thank our parishioners for donating \$985.91 for the "Souper Bowl of Caring" last weekend!

**Please Recycle Paper**

**D**id you know that our parish has a paper recycling program called the Paper Retriever? You can recycle all of your newspaper, magazines, shopping catalogs, office and school papers and mail 24 hours/7 days a week right here in our green and yellow bin (located by the school).

This is an easy way for you to recycle your paper every week and help us raise money for the parish. By recycling paper, not only do you save water and energy, but our parish earns money for every pound of paper you help us collect.

Please put all of your magazines, mail, newspapers and office papers in the green and yellow bin; please do not include cardboard, plastic (of any kind) or phone books!

Remember to add recycling to your errand route and bring your paper to help our parish and the environment.



**St. Vincent De Paul**

We help those in need with your contributions to St. Vincent de Paul. Thank you for helping us help those in need.

Our expenses for fourth quarter of 2013 are as follows:

<b>October</b>		
Prescriptions	\$	88.95
Misc.	\$	50.00
Water/Gas	\$	50.00
Ameren	\$	<u>250.00</u>
		\$ 438.95
<b>November</b>		
Prescriptions	\$	52.00
Misc.	\$	275.00
Water/Gas	\$	150.00
Ameren	\$	<u>450.06</u>
		\$ 927.06
<b>December</b>		
Prescriptions	\$	211.00
Misc.	\$	1,634.38
Water/Gas	\$	0.00
Ameren	\$	<u>300.00</u>
		\$2,145.38
		<u>\$3,511.39</u>



### **Fundraising Idea Help the Parish/Help Each Other**

Greg Benefield, a semi-retired Jack-of-all-Trades Handyman, has approached the Fundraising Committee with an exciting idea.

Beginning on Monday, February 3, we will be offering chances on 8 hours of general maintenance and repair labor for \$5 a chance. When 100 tickets are sold a winner will be drawn. The winner will receive a total of 8 hours of general maintenance and repair work and \$100 to help defray the cost of any materials needed. The parish will earn \$400, the donated labor fee of \$50 per hour.

PLEASE NOTE: Winners are limited to a maximum of 8 hours labor. For projects that need more time the winner is responsible to make other arrangements for finishing the work.

Greg is willing to contribute 8 hours of labor each month. His contribution could serve the needs of 12 families in the parish and add nearly \$5,000 to parish revenues each year.

For more information on the services Greg can provide or to join him in providing services to the parish, please call Jan in the Parish Office, 636-671-3062.

### **OLQP Night With the Blues Tuesday, April 1, 7:00 pm Scotttrade Center**

Back by popular demand on Tuesday, April 1, we will have another OLQP Night with The Blues! The game is against Philadelphia Flyers. Sections reserved are 332-333. The game starts at 7:00 pm. This is the same day as "Faith Night" with many Churches from the St. Louis area attending. Everyone is invited to attend a prayer service at 4:45 pm. Come and enjoy a fun night with fellow parishioners, teachers and students and show your OLQP spirit! The tickets are \$20 each, payment of cash or check (payable to OLQP). OLQP School will receive \$5 for every ticket sold. Tickets will be available after Mass on February 22nd and 23rd, March 1st and 2nd or in the School Office.

Any questions or for more information please contact Rita Rixford, 314-698-6287 email [ritarixford@gmail.com](mailto:ritarixford@gmail.com) or the School Office, 636-671-0247.

*The more you love God  
the more you will be able  
to love each other.*

**Youth Breakfast  
February 9th  
after 7:30 and 9:30 Mass  
Menu: Sausage, Eggs, Hash  
Browns with Biscuits and  
Gravy  
Adults \$6.00  
Children under 12 \$3.00  
Proceeds aid the youth  
going to the Steubenville  
Conference this coming July.  
Thanks for your support!!**

### **Retrouvaille**

Retrouvaille (a french word meaning rediscovery) is a program to help couples heal and renew their marriages that offers tools needed to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. It has helped thousands of couples with marital problems, even couples who are separated and divorced. For more information call 1-800-470-2230 or visit [www.HelpOurMarriage.com](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.com).

### Recovery Retreat at White House

All men currently in AA are invited to join us for a weekend recovery retreat at White House Jesuit Retreat in South County. The retreat begins the evening of Thursday, August 14th and concludes the afternoon of Sunday, August 17th. This new retreat was just added to our annual schedule due to the overwhelming demand our existing recovery retreats have seen. Come experience the peace and tranquility of White House this summer! If you would like information about attending this retreat or another, please email [joep@whretreat.org](mailto:joep@whretreat.org) or call 314-416-6400.

### LENTEN & SUMMER RETREATS AT THE MARIANIST RETREAT CENTER:

Four inspirational retreat opportunities are scheduled at the Center as follows:

#### Palm Sunday Weekend Retreat April 11 – 13, 2014

Father Tom Santen, Pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Manchester is the Presenter for the weekend. His Theme is "Journeying With Christ To Jerusalem: Praying The "Psalms Of Ascent". Psalms 120 – 134 are the psalms the pilgrim Jews prayed on the journey to Jerusalem.

#### Good Friday Retreat, April 18, 2014 Conducted by the Retreat Center staff, Sr. Paulette Patritti, OP and Fr. Jose Ramirez, SM.

The theme is "The Mystery of the Cross".

#### Praying Our Dreams:

#### Finding The God Within Us, May 30 – 31

Conducted by Sister Olga Wittekind of the Oldenburg Franciscan Retreat Center in Indiana. This two-day retreat deals with becoming more complete and individuated, discovering our archetypal dreams.

#### Directed Retreat July 13 – 20, 2014

A quiet, private retreat. Each retreatant has one of the Directors which they meet with each day: Sr. Janet Dohr, CPPS, Sr. Paulette Patritti, OP, Fr. Jose Ramirez, SM, Sr. Anne Simms, OP, Father Joseph Uvietta, SM. Participants can sign up for 3, 4, 5 or the full 7 days.

For registration or more information, please call the Retreat Center (Sabrina), 636-938-5390.

### Seven Days of Inspiration

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

#### Day 1

Enjoy all the beauty  
that surrounds you  
each and every day.

#### Day 2

Snowflakes are one  
of nature's most fragile  
things, but just look what  
they can do when  
they stick together!

#### Day 3

Instead of counting  
the minutes, make every  
minute count.

#### Day 4

One by one we can  
be the better world  
we wish for.

#### Day 5

There is no cosmetic  
like happiness!

#### Day 6

Angels are never  
far away!

#### Day 7

The greatest healing comes  
from friendship and love!

#### Parish Office email

[parishoffice@olqpparish.org](mailto:parishoffice@olqpparish.org)

#### OLQP Web Site

[www.olqpparish.org](http://www.olqpparish.org)

#### submit articles for bulletin

[olqpbulletin@yahoo.com](mailto:olqpbulletin@yahoo.com)

**Deadline Friday at 4:30 pm  
(9 days before publication)**

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

Our next Eucharistic Adoration is  
Wednesday, February 26,  
from 1:00 – 8:00 pm.

Come visit with Jesus; He is waiting for you  
in the Eucharist. In the presence of Jesus,  
offer your heart.

**St. Louis Review Subscription**

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 included) 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  
Parish Office

**2013 Contribution Statement**

If you would like a 2013 contribution statement, please send a note (marked Linda) to the Parish Office (it may be placed in the collection basket, mailed to the Parish Office, or use the mail slot in the Parish Office door).

Thank you,  
Linda

**Our Gifts to God and Parish**

778 registered members  
205 online, loose and envelopes used this week  
Thank you for your generosity!!!

**Special Collections**

Sr. Louis Review \$ 120.00

**New Building Fund to date** \$ 763,636.88

**Offertory**

Sunday envelopes \$ 14,825.26

Sunday loose \$ 465.00

Above and Beyond \$ 20.00

Candlemas \$ 376.00

First Offering \$ 25.00

Parish Enrichment \$ 592.00

**Total Offertory** \$ 16,303.26

**Offertory Goal** \$ 13,200.00

**As of February 3, 2014**

Contributions Year to Date \$ 412,713.64

Projected Year to Date Budget \$ 409,200.00



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**Stewardship****Start With Prayer**

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:16

The generosity of being a good steward of your gifts has a positive effect on people and it is contagious! Good works encourages more good works. Let your light shine! Be careful to recognize that God is working through you and don't put yourself above the people you have been called to help.



**Please pray for those who are ill**

(parishioners are in bold)

<b>Audrey Hastings</b>	<b>Paul McDonnell</b>
<b>Marie Ulrich</b>	<b>Greg Hirtz</b>
<b>Ellen O'Brien</b>	<b>Maryann Barnett</b>
<b>Wally Freihaut</b>	<b>Alice Boeger</b>
<b>Danielle Enghauser</b>	<b>Anna Ade</b>
<b>Jackie Nappier</b>	<b>Andy Nappier</b>
<b>Bob Ellison</b>	<b>Dave Mills</b>
<b>Kay Hoffman</b>	<b>Reagan Mraz</b>
<b>Trish Guethle</b>	<b>Frank Saggio</b>
<b>Dale Ottomeyer</b>	<b>Alice Wood</b>
<b>Charles Bacher</b>	<b>Jim Soer</b>

Dorothy Grither, mother of Ron Grither  
 Haley Reed, granddaughter of Walter and Judy Janos  
 Charles J. Hendricks, brother of Bernice Grimwood  
 Tom and Carolyn Hoffman, relative of Lee and Kay Hoffman  
 Ann Hoffman, niece of Lee and Kay Hoffman  
 Nancy Malpocker, niece of Lee and Kay Hoffman  
 Nancy Hoffman, relative of Lee and Kay Hoffman  
 Lorayne Mills, mother of Dave Mills  
 Loren Love, father of Greg Love  
 Allen Chott, nephew of Judy Mottert  
 Robert Bokern, brother of John Bokern  
 Carol Brennan, sister of Katie Tutass  
 Dave Landers, brother-in-law of Bernie Henning  
 Joe Politte, brother-in-law of Ken DeClue

~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.

**Mass Intentions**

Mon	Feb 10	8:00 am	Martha Ruoff
Tues	Feb 11	8:00 am	Reverend Jim Marshall
Wed	Feb 12	8:00 am	Arleen Simino
Thurs	Feb 13	8:00 am	Jean Davis
Fri	Feb 14	8:00 am	Salvatore Randazzo
Sat	Feb 15	5:00 pm	Otto Riney
Sun	Feb 16	7:30 am	Janell Hewitt Scott
		9:30 am	Otto Riney
		11:30 am	People of the Parish

**February 15th and 16th****Special Ministers of the Eucharist**

5:00 pm	Bev Gregory, Maryann Turek, John Holmes, Christine Camden, Jeff Grimes
7:30 am	Mary Bjornstad, Linda Weber, Carl Boyer, Mike Ruopp, Joyce Ruopp
9:30 am	Tom Gerling, Margaret Gerling, Barb Perez, Helen Salamone, Jo Ann Vess, Joanne David
11:30 am	Carol Freihaut, Andrea Lawson, Denise Witt, Sharon Schmidt

**Proclaimers**

5:00 pm	Tim and Mary Heeley
7:30 am	Frieda Siebel-Spath, Dave Mills
9:30 am	Dale Andrews, Bruce Gallion
11:30 am	Gary Freihaut, Carol Freihaut

**Servers**

5:00 pm	Madison Gross, Madelyn Hicks, Emma Robinson
7:30 am	Billy Block, Cameron Gerber, Colleen Kenney
9:30 am	Olivia Berry, Michael Reiter, Samantha Tarter
11:30 am	Kaitlyn Esch, Jaden Nash, Gracie Scanga

**Ushers**

5:00 pm	Helen Stewart, Dixie Garrett, Darleen Allmeroth, Ralph Munzlinger, Don Brooks, Ken Ganey
7:30 am	Tim Webb, Jerry Terry, Butch Mattingly, Ed Kelemen, Doug Bjornstad, Steve Morlock
9:30 am	Terry Filicky, Ray Graf, Sam Pierceall, Jeff Queen, Ralph Schultheiss, Tom Broadbent
11:30 am	Cristina Duncan, J. Younkings, Gary Freihaut, Becca Mose, Jim Robertson, Al Schuld

**Pray for the Deceased**

*We offer sympathy and the assurance of our prayers to the family of Shirley Fischer, aunt of Pat Hanes*



**February 14**  
 Marie Strayhorn,  
 Debby Maloney-Reeves,  
 Denice Bufka,  
 Bob De Long  
 and Mary Ann Whitecotton

## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Cycle A

**THEME: Choose life.**

A constant theme throughout scripture is the conviction that we are free to choose, free to choose to love God and each other or to choose to pursue isolated and selfish interests. We are free to choose liveliness, connectedness with the world around us and our brothers and sisters with whom we share God's creation, or to be dead to one another. This theme pervades narrative traditions, legal pronouncements, the writings of the prophets, the Gospel stories of Jesus and the letters of Paul. The choice is ours. Choose life.

**THE READINGS:****FIRST READING: Sirach 15:15-20**

The first reading, from the Book of Sirach, comes from very late in the formation of the Old Testament, from a time when Wisdom had come to be identified with God's word, especially His word in the Torah. These words, from the Book of Sirach, are reminiscent of the words of Moses to the people in Deuteronomy and Joshua's great address to the people at the end of the story of Israel's taking the land. A driving force in all the Torah is that all which God does for His people, He does to give us freedom, freedom to serve Him. We do not have a God who coerces devotion, but a God who loves first and invites us to love in return. For the writer of Sirach, this is God's Wisdom, a wisdom we can learn, embrace, and live. To recognize that we are loved and to choose to love in return, that is to choose liveliness; that is to choose life.

**SECOND READING: I Corinthians 2:6-10**

The second reading is taken from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. Wisdom and learning was a critical issue in the Corinthian community and divisions grew in the Church depending on whose presentation of Wisdom people chose to follow. Against these claims of wisdom, Paul preached the Wisdom of God and God's Wisdom centered on Christ crucified, a stumbling block for the Jews and pure folly for the Gentiles. Yet, God's wisdom was about love and sacrifice for the sake of others; it entailed setting aside what appears to be wise and prudent by worldly standards for the sake of commonality and community, being one in Jesus Christ who makes us one with our God. Real glory and power, in Paul's teaching, isn't about following strict precepts of the law, but about following a way of love and service that fulfills the spirit of God's will for His people. Therein lies wisdom; therein lies life.

**GOSPEL READING: Matthew 15:17-37**

The Gospel reading from Matthew is a continuation of the Sermon on the Mount. This block of material in Matthew shows definite signs of having been influenced by Israel's Wisdom Traditions. Today's reading begins the Great Antitheses (You have heard... but I say to you...) The key idea in the Gospel reading comes in the words, "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Matthew's Gospel presents Jesus primarily as a teacher, a teacher like the Pharisees, the heirs of Israel's Wisdom traditions, a teacher like Moses, the giver of the Law, but more. As God's son, as Emmanuel (God with us), Jesus differs from the Pharisees who regularly cited the authority of Rabbis of old. He teaches on His own authority (... but I say to you...) He teaches, not a set of precepts to be followed, but a way of righteousness, a way of working for right relationships. He teaches a way that demands freedom, that demands understanding, that demands choosing how to live to fulfill all righteousness, to maintain all right relationships. The material in the Great Antitheses is drawn from Israel's legal traditions, several of the statements coming from the Ten Commandments. These are presented as guides setting people on a path, giving them a direction, not as ends in themselves. These guides are timeless – not one letter will pass away, but they are timeless in setting an ever valid direction that each generation, each person in each generation must decide how to travel. We can choose life.

**FOR REFLECTION:**

- The Exodus story and the events at Sinai begin a theme that runs through Scripture that God frees us to serve Him. If God gives me freedom to serve, how free am I really? How do I understand "freedom to serve?"
- In what ways is choosing not to love a choosing of death? If I choose not to love, how are others dead to me? If I choose not to love, how am I dead to others?
- To paraphrase Paul, to be powerless is to be powerful. When am I most powerless? When I am powerless, how do I make sense out of Paul's seeming contradiction? In what does real power consist? Do I have this power?
- How do I understand the Ten Commandments, the Laws of the Church, Christian moral and social teaching? What path do these teachings set me on? Can I be sure that I am doing what is right and good simply by keeping the commandments? What responsibility do I have to decide for myself what is right and good?
- These notes have stressed that we can choose life. What, exactly, does that mean to me? Is my ability to choose life a matter of individual choice or does it involve more? Does it involve community?