

# Our Lady Queen of Peace

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

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

July 1, 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

Thomas Broadbent, Jacob Bufka, Sandee Burkemper,  
Joanne David, Bev Gregory, René Heibeck, Dave Mills,  
Denise Ortmann, Rich Ortmann, Rebecca Pigue,  
Jan Schultheiss, 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

### July

- Mon 9 Vacation Bible School starts - ends 7/12
- Sun 15 Hope Builders
- Mon 23 Athletic Assoc. Soccer Camp - ends 7/26

### August

- Sat 18 Daughters Tailgate Sale
- Sat 18 Knights Fairmont Horse Races

### September

- Sat 22 PSR Chili Supper, Cafeteria
- Sun 23 OLQP Quilt Social, Knights Hall

### October

- Sat 6 Hoedown
- Sat 13 Harvest Moon Auction, Knights Hall
- Sun 14 Fall Festival, Cafeteria
- Fri 26 Trunk or Treat
- Sun 28 Daughters Fashion Show, Cafeteria

### November

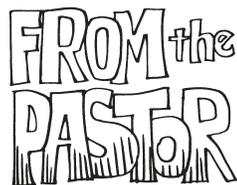
- Sat 17 Grief Support Retreat
- Thu 22 Thanksgiving

### December

- Sat 8 Immaculate Conception
- Tue 25 Christmas

don't think they're good for you.' And he says, 'Why are you restricting my access to cigarettes?' I'm not restricting his access to cigarettes. He's free to spend his money to buy them. I just don't think I should have to give him more money to buy them." This is not a fight about contraception; it is a fight for religious freedom. Never before has the U.S. government forced the Catholic Church to provide a product that violates its religious beliefs. The fear is that, if this mandate goes into effect, it will only be the first of the things we are told that we must or must not do.

Archbishop Carlson has declared a "Fortnight of Prayer and Fasting" that will culminate on the 4th of July when we celebrate the incredible freedom that we have as a nation. During this time there are some things that we can do to participate with purpose. First, become INFORMED as to what the real issue is and do not rely just on what the media or government claims the issue is. There is a lot of information available on the archdiocesan website ([archstl.org](http://archstl.org)) and in last week's issue of the St. Louis Review. Second, pray for our church and our nation to do what is right. Third, understand that health care reform is absolutely necessary to help the poor and many other people who do not have access to what many of us take for granted. It is just a matter of presenting it in a way that does not violate the religious beliefs or moral integrity of religions in the United States. Finally, we do not always like or agree with our government leaders and we know that our country is not perfect but the United States of America and the democracy that we enjoy is one of the greatest things that has happened in the history of the world. Let's celebrate our nation's independence with a special awareness and be grateful for the freedom that we have. God bless America!



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### Give Me Liberty or Give Me.....??

OK, I won't go that far, but it is easy to get caught up in the hype and fervor of the "Religious Liberty" debate without understanding what is really going on. Over the past week I have had conversations with people who are upset that the church is denying women the right to contraception. That is NOT the case. The church has consistently opposed the use of contraception on moral grounds for almost two thousand years, but it has not stopped or denied anyone from using them! This is obvious since some polls say up to 80-90% of Catholics choose to ignore this teaching of the church. The problem is that the United States Government has passed a law that will force the Church to pay for something that it has consistently held immoral since the church's foundation in the first century. The St. Louis Review used this analogy: "Suppose my son asks me to give him an extra \$5 a week so he can buy cigarettes. I say to him, 'No, I

### 4th of July Celebration

Speaking of Independence Day, we will celebrate Mass at Chapel Hill Mortuary in Cedar Hill on Wednesday, July 4th, at 9:00 am. There will not be a Mass at 8 am in the church.

### Sign Update

Now that we have raised the money for our sign, we are looking for the best place to put it. A mockup has been placed along the fence line. We will tinker with the location until an efficient spot is found. The height of the actual sign will be higher. More information will be available in the upcoming weeks.

Fr. Mike

## *Youth Council News*

Youth Council Co-Presidents are Rebecca Pigue and Jacob Bufka, our Parish Council youth representatives. Our next meeting is Tuesday, July 10th, at 6pm.

### **Hope Builders Thank You!**

Thanks to everyone who generously donated to our Hope Builders service week collection last weekend at all the Masses. Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to prepare for our service week, July 15th through July 20th.

### **"IT" Group News:**

**Never been to Youth Group? We meet every Sunday night from 6 pm - 8 pm in the Cafeteria Meeting room. To become part of "The IT Group" – all you need to do is show up and you're in. All teens in 9th – 12th grade are welcome to join us!**

**Youth representatives are Christine Gregorc and Alicia Whitehead.** Thanks for all of those that joined us for our Youth Group Breakfast. With everyone pitching in, it makes it easy to raise funds for our events. **We are all set for our summer retreat! We will be leaving this Friday, July 6th, after the 8 am Mass.** For those signed up and attending the retreat, please plan on arriving for Mass at 7:45 am. Bring a sack lunch for that afternoon. For those of you not going, please keep us in your prayers as we enjoy a retreat weekend. Join us tonight in the Cafeteria meeting room for another exciting IT Group meeting. We will be having a relaxing evening just to get together, discuss any last minute items for the retreat and just hang out. **No meeting next Sunday, July 8th!!!**

**We'll use this time to enjoy the evening with the family after a great weekend retreat.**

**Parents:** Feel free to keep up with all of the IT happenings online. Join us on Facebook:

**[www.facebook.com/groups/olqpyouthgroup/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/olqpyouthgroup/)**

John and Sue Whitehead  
314-954-7461

**Junior High Youth Group:** This group is for those entering 7th and 8th grade in the fall. Our representatives are Ben Pigue and Darby O'Donnell. Mark your calendars for a day filled with fun and community service on Tuesday, July 24th. We will meet at OLQP at 7:50 am and return by 5 pm. We will attend Mass together, then make lunches for the homeless, go on a picnic and bowling. For more detailed information email **[terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org](mailto:terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org)**.

### **St. Vincent de Paul Youth Group News:**

**St. Vincent de Paul Youth include junior high youth, high school youth and young adults through age 20. Youth representatives are Joey Schlote and Dylan Vancil.** They are currently planning an obstacle course on the morning of Saturday, July 21st, to raise funds for the needy in our area.

**Faith Sharing Group News:** This group is open to junior and seniors in high school that wish to learn more about our Catholic faith in a faith sharing format. This is a youth led faith sharing with adult support. Youth representatives are Donald Morris and Grace Shannon. They are currently studying the *Catholicism Series* by Rev. Robert Barron. Please join us on Thursday, July 12th, on the lower level of the school building with the basement from 7-8:30 pm.

**Venture Crew News:** is a youth led co-ed scouting group for high school youth and young adults through age 20, under the Boy Scouts of America. Youth representatives are Mary Ostlund and Ashlyn Mattingly. We just returned from an awesome week at summer camp, repelling, skiing, tubing, horse back riding, target shooting and sleeping under the stars.

### **Boy Scout News:**

**The Boy Scouts meet every Tuesday evening in the Church cafeteria. Our youth representative is Ryan La France.** They have close to fifteen scouts attending summer camp at Famous Eagle at S-F Scout Ranch in the beginning of July.

**Young Adult Group News:** is for those out of high school and/or in their twenties. Our representatives are Phoebe and Olivia Heibeck.

Our young adults are busy being active members of our parish in a variety of ways. For example, three young adults volunteered at the Peace Pantry on June 20th, two young adults were chaperones at Venture Crew Camp and three young adults are helping with the retreat at Camp Trinity for our high school youth. All young adults of the parish are invited to join us for an outdoor movie night on Wednesday, July 11th, at 8 pm on the parish grounds. Mark your calendars now and join us on Wednesday, July 11th.

For more information call Terry Ostlund, 314-566-8363, or email **[terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org](mailto:terry.ostlund@olqpparish.org)**.

*Precious Metals Collection  
next week, July 7th and 8th.  
Thanks for your support.*

# Summer Fun at OLQP

Saturday, July 21st, 2012

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

## Jogging for Jesus 5K Run/Walk

Come jog for Jesus around the church and school grounds at 8:00 AM. The cost for each participant is \$10.00.

The first 150 finishers will receive a medal.

All proceeds will benefit the Home and School Association. Fill out and return registration forms by Tuesday, July 17th.

## Obstacle Course

The St. Vincent DePaul Youth will be hosting an obstacle course for children 5 and older on the upper fields.

The cost per participant is \$2.00 and can be paid that day.

They will also be offering free babysitting for children under 5.

This event will run from 8 - 9:30 AM.

## Concession Stand

The OLQP Youth Group will be serving food and drinks for purchase during these events.

**For More Information Contact:**

April Pieper at 636-305-2774 / [apieper@live.com](mailto:apieper@live.com)

Cathy Carley at 314-315-6506 / [catherinecarley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:catherinecarley@sbcglobal.net)

# Jogging for Jesus

## 5K Run/Walk

Saturday, July 21st, 2012

8:00 AM

**Registration Deadline: Tuesday, July 17th**

**Return Registration Form and \$10 Entry Fee To:**

**Our Lady Queen of Peace Church**

**ATTN: April Pieper**

**4696 Notre Dame Lane**

**House Springs, MO 63026**

**Waiver of Liability:** In exchange for participation in the activity of "Jogging for Jesus 5K Run/Walk" held at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church/ School on July 21st, 2012, I will assume full responsibility for personal injury to myself and further release and discharge OLQP for injury, loss, or damage arising out of my use of or presence upon the facilities of OLQP whether caused by fault of myself, my family, OLQP, or other third parties.

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Age on Race Day \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Parent or Guardian

(if under 18)

*Vacation Bible School  
Monday, July 9th thru  
Thursday, 12th*

*From 6 to 7:30 pm*

*For ages 5 - 11*

*Cost: \$25 per child*

*Registration forms are available  
in the parish office or after Masses.*

*Questions please call:  
Christine, 636-640-3561*



*Parish Corner*

Every week a different organization is featured in the bulletin.

*No organization this week.*

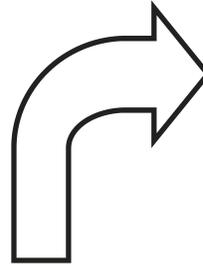
**Words to live by....**

Live in such a way that those who know you but don't know God, will come to God because they know you.

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

No one can go back and make a brand new start. Anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.



**BINGO**

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

**St. Vincent De Paul**



St. Vincent de Paul is meeting the Gospel challenge to see the face of Christ in the poor regardless of their race, religion or country of national origin.

*Invite someone to Mass next Sunday.  
This one hour puts power and meaning  
into the other 167 hours in our week.*

*Cemetery Mass at Chapel Hill  
Wednesday, July 4th, 9:00 am  
Donuts and fellowship to follow.*

~~~~~  
*If you are able to assist  
with set up for the Mass, please  
contact the parish office, 671-3062.*

***St. Lawrence Parish (Bloomsdale)  
Annual Picnic, July 15th***

Delicious dinners featuring Home Fried Chicken, Kettle Beef along with Liver Dumplings and all the trimmings will be served starting at 11 am. We feature homemade quilts at our Bingo, a country store and games for young and old. Take I-55 south or north to the Bloomsdale exit #157. Go west on Highway Y for seven miles and you are at the picnic!

***Our Lady, Help of Christians  
(St. Genevieve, MO)  
Parish Picnic***

***Sunday, July 29th, 11 am to 8 pm  
Chicken and Kettle Beef Dinners  
Served Family Style  
Adults - \$9 Children - \$4.50***

From St. Louis, take I-55 south to exit 150; turn right on MO 32 and go southwest 6.5 miles.

***St. Anthony of Padua (High Ridge)  
Cancels First Friday Fish Fry***

Originally advertised First Friday of the Month Fish Fry has been canceled until further notice. We would like to thank everyone for their kind patronage and past support and look forward to seeing you again.

Thank you!

***Please Patronize Our Sponsors***

We wish to thank **Peaceman's Coins**, for being a sponsor for our bulletin. Because of their generosity we do not pay to have our bulletins printed. Please remember to patronize our sponsors when in need of their type of service.

**Seven Days of Inspiration**

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

You're easy to love!

~~~~~

A new dream can do  
more for you than  
any makeover.

~~~~~

Hope always prevails.

~~~~~

Let yourself be you!

~~~~~

See yourself as a winner  
and you're halfway there!

~~~~~

Kindness will pay  
you a visit today.

~~~~~

Say "yes" to someone  
you may have overlooked:  
yourself!

***Retrouvaille of St. Louis  
A Lifeline for Troubled Marriages***

Find help for your troubled marriage through the next Retrouvaille Program, September 21- 23, with a weekend (Friday through Sunday), that has six follow-up sessions held over 3 months. You need not be Catholic to attend and we will work with people having financial difficulties. For confidential information, please call:

1-800-470-2230 toll free - or visit

**[www.HelpOurMarriage.com](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.com)**

***EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION***

Our next Eucharistic Adoration is  
Wednesday, July 25th,  
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. See what He does with it.

***Peter's Pence Collection***

Thank you for your generous support of the essential works of the Holy Father and his charitable acts through the Peter's Pence Collection. Our contributions will be combined with those of our brothers and sisters around the world to help Pope Benedict reach out to those in need. Your generosity will help to cast Christ's peace upon the world.

***Annie Mattingly Receives  
Unconditional Commitment Award  
Sunday, August 12, 2 pm***

Ann (Annie) Mattingly has been chosen by our parish as a woman of "Unconditional Commitment". She will be honored by the Archdiocese. The award ceremony is **Sunday, August 12, 2012 at 2:00 PM at Holy Spirit Parish (3130 Parkwood Lane, Maryland Heights, 63043).**

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

**Paul Marler**, neighbor of Peter and Sandy Allen  
**Marge Hoene**, former parishioner  
*May God welcome them home, fill them with peace,  
and bless those who will miss them.*

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

|               |    |        |
|---------------|----|--------|
| Mission Co-op | \$ | 25.00  |
| Peter's Pence | \$ | 397.00 |

***New Building Fund***

|                        |    |            |
|------------------------|----|------------|
| Lavender Envelopes     | \$ | 124.50     |
| Total Received to date | \$ | 729,139.72 |

***Offertory***

|                        |           |                  |
|------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Sunday Envelopes       | \$        | 13,222.00        |
| Sunday Loose           | \$        | 627.00           |
| Above and Beyond       | \$        | 217.00           |
| <b>Total Offertory</b> | <b>\$</b> | <b>14,066.00</b> |
| <b>Offertory Goal</b>  | <b>\$</b> | <b>14,000.00</b> |

*Thank you for your generosity.*

**1,177 registered members**

**214 online, loose and envelopes used this week**

***As of June 25, 2012***

|                               |    |            |
|-------------------------------|----|------------|
| Contributions Year To Date    | \$ | 629,718.31 |
| Projected Year to Date Budget | \$ | 728,000.00 |

***Scrip Gift Cards***

|                            |    |          |
|----------------------------|----|----------|
| Sales                      | \$ | 1,915.00 |
| Profits/ tuition reduction | \$ | 95.13    |

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****Start With Prayer**

*"...your abundance at the present time should supply their needs..."* 2 Corinthians 8:14

Economic crisis can teach us many valuable stewardship lessons. We are quickly realizing that as individuals and as a society we really did not need everything that we wanted. We are also learning to count our blessings and to see that we have been abundantly blessed by God. And, hopefully, we are becoming more willing to share our gifts with those who truly are in need.

### Parish Activities

|      |        |                                                      |
|------|--------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Mon  | July 2 | Women's Bible Study, 6:30 pm, Cafeteria meeting room |
|      |        | Rosary for Peace, 7:30 pm, Church                    |
| Tues | July 3 | Devotions after 8 am Mass                            |
|      |        | Quilters, 9 am - 3 pm, 6 - 8:30 pm                   |
|      |        | Women's Bible Study, 1 pm, Cafeteria meeting room    |
| Wed  | July 4 | <b>Happy 4th of July</b>                             |
|      |        | <b>Chapel Hill Cemetery Mass, 9 am</b>               |
| Thur | July 5 | Daughters of Isabella, 7:30 pm, Cafeteria            |

### Mass Intentions

|       |        |          |                           |
|-------|--------|----------|---------------------------|
| Mon   | July 2 | 8:00 am  | Lorraine Hopper           |
| Tues  | July 3 | 8:00 am  | Ron Day                   |
| Wed   | July 4 | 9:00 am  | Barb Rocchio              |
| Thurs | July 5 | 8:00 am  | Jim Vess, Sr.             |
| Fri   | July 6 | 8:00 am  | Mary & Joseph Smentkowski |
| Sat   | July 7 | 8:00 am  | Deacon Tom Murphy         |
|       |        | 5:00 pm  | Alvin Lechner             |
| Sun   | July 8 | 7:30 am  | Jerry Smith               |
|       |        | 9:30 am  | People of the Parish      |
|       |        | 11:30 am | Gertrude Benefield        |

### July 7th and 8th

#### Special Ministers of the Eucharist

|          |                                                                                                              |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5:00 pm  | Larry & Margaret Bottchen, Pat Hoskins, Jan Hussman, Joe Nenninger, *Michael & *Joyce Ruopp                  |
| 7:30 am  | *Mary Bjornstad, Mary Copeland, Ruth Haen, Michele Huff, Jo Jahnsen, Marie Strayhorn, *Linda Weber           |
| 9:30 am  | Dan & Kim Horn, Don Moeller, *Helen Salamone, Jan Schultheiss, *Paul Stonecypher, Jo Ann Vess, Nancy Wilfong |
| 11:30 am | Sandee Burkemper, Barb Oppelz, Deb Pigue, Sharon Schmidt, Connie Stubits, *Maria Webb, *Denise Witt          |

\* You are responsible to clean the vessels after Mass

#### Proclaimers

|          |                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------|
| 5:00 pm  | Peggy Mikko, Terry Soer               |
| 7:30 am  | Roseann Robinson, Frieda Siebel-Spath |
| 9:30 am  | Bruce Gallion, Margaret Gerling       |
| 11:30 am | Carol & Gary Freihaut                 |

#### Servers

|          |                                               |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 5:00 pm  | Sara Eimer, Matthew Grimes, Zachary Mikko     |
| 7:30 am  | Alyssa Block, Cameron Haug, Kaitlyn Robertson |
| 9:30 am  | Hanna & Sara Osborne, Kimberly Queen          |
| 11:30 am | Allie & Nicholas Gal, Jakob Stoff             |

#### Ushers

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

### *Please pray for those who are ill* (parishioners are in bold)

|                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Frieda Siebel-Spath</b> | <b>Maria Stonecypher</b> |
| <b>Maryann Barnett</b>     | <b>Audrey Hastings</b>   |
| <b>Lenore Burns</b>        | <b>Jackie Nappier</b>    |
| <b>Rose Ficken</b>         | <b>Debra Emery</b>       |
| <b>Ray Wieschhaus</b>      |                          |

Fr. Wesloh  
 Donald Urban, brother of Joan Shannon  
 Alice Schwing, friend of Tom & Sue Alt  
 Bob Cranston, friend of Tom & Sue Alt  
 Jean Breckle, friend of Margaret Myer  
 Jack Beine, son-in-law of Maryann Barnett  
 Pam Szolga, sister of Frank Saggio  
 Lucy Alma DeClue, mother of Ken DeClue  
 Mildred Lester, mother of Kathy Constantz  
 Nancy Malpocker, niece of Lee & Kay Hoffman  
 George Bagot, cousin of John Bokern

~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](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*



Carol Delue,  
 Mary Ann Whitecotton,  
 Katie Tutass  
 and Mary Bowler

**14th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle B**



**THEME: Put aside expectations and see God as He is.**

As members of the believing community, none of us doubts the presence of God in our midst. Throughout the year, we are led to ponder this awesome presence, to consider the role of the Church in making the presence and power of God a reality in the world, to see and celebrate this presence in the smallest units of the Church, the family, and to celebrate our role as disciples of Jesus to continue His ministry, to continue to do what He did. And yet we easily also fall into the trap of looking for and expecting to see this presence and power of God in ways that are comfortable, in ways we expect. The readings for the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time challenge us to acknowledge the freedom of our revealing God, to look for the ways He chooses to manifest Himself, to consider the people through whom He chooses to manifest Himself in new and different ways. We are asked to put aside our expectations and try to respond to our revealing God on His terms.

**THE READINGS:**

**FIRST READING: Ezekiel 2:2-5**

The first reading today is taken from the beginning part of the Book of Ezekiel. The prophecy of Ezekiel is to be dated largely to the time of the Babylonian Exile, shows affinity to the Priestly source of the Pentateuch, and offers a message of hope to the people who had experienced loss that God's promises were not abrogated, that all was not lost, that individual actions made a difference and that the experience of renewal, the experience of living again into God's promises was a possibility.

Most prophetic books are poetic writings. It can be noted that when communication flows from God to the prophet, prose writing is employed, but poetry is reserved for those occasions when the communication comes from God through the chosen prophet to the people. The book of Ezekiel begins with a prose account of the prophet's call and the actions God required of him. The prophet's experience of God's forbearance is then mirrored in the experience of the exilic community as Ezekiel takes up his role as a messenger of God to his people. In the opening chapters of the book, Ezekiel is prepared for his work so that people will be able to recognize that a prophet has been among them. Ezekiel, a fellow exile, is given the task of announcing God's will and revelation to a people whose experience of God, whose experience of God's involvement with them has come into question, who believe only that God relates to them to enact justice, that God's mercy and forbearance have been lost. In this, Ezekiel will be treated like Jeremiah, as an outsider, as someone who speaks against the people's common experience, as someone who speaks words the people cannot bear. In Ezekiel, God chooses to come to and relate to His people in ways they do not expect, with a message of hope that sounds like folly, through the strange actions and ramblings of man who seems mad, or at the very least completely out of touch with the fractured relationship between God and His people. Yet prophets are the voice of God for the people. And God chooses to speak to His people, offer hope to His people, renew His people through just such an unexpected means, at an unlikely time, in a completely novel and unexpected way.

Do we fail to recognize or reject the voice of God in our midst because the message is novel and unexpected, or the messenger is out of the ordinary?

**SECOND READING: II Corinthians 12:7-10**

The notion of being dependent on God is carried forward in the reading from the Second Letter to the Corinthians. We all have a role to fulfill in furthering the message and ministry of Jesus Christ. Paul is explicit in stating that there are many gifts within the believing community, that all these gifts come from the Holy Spirit, and that they are all given for the sake of building up the Church. Some are teachers, some of priests, some are parents, some are doctors or lawyers or scientists. We all have a role to play in serving the needs of others and building up the Church.

Paul, honored as the father of worldwide Christianity, was proud of his role, was proud of his efforts to serve his Lord and be a means of drawing others to the Christian community. We can share that pride. But if it is possible to miss the presence God that comes through unexpected people and events, it is also possible to assume the presence of God in human efforts and works. Paul laments the thorn in his side with which he had habitually to deal. Scripture scholars have reached no consensus on what Paul's problem was, whether it was some physical malady, some sinful impulse, or some other persistent problem. Whatever it was, Paul could not conquer it and it was precisely in this failure that Paul found grace. Whatever he had to deal with let him know that he was human, that he was not God, and that he needed God.

Can we, called to body Christ forth to the world, see the presence and power of God not so much in our successes but in our failures, in those times and circumstances when we are powerless, when we must admit that we are dependent on the love and mercy of our God?

**GOSPEL READING: Mark 6:1-6**

The Gospel reading is Mark's account of a visit by Jesus to the synagogue in his home town. The story is an illustration of the old adage, "Familiarity breeds contempt." Jesus taught in the synagogue and His listeners took offense at Him. They knew Him; they knew where He was from and who His family was. Who was He to stand up and teach them? He was one of them, a local boy. He was not the expected means of hearing God's word and revelation.

In day to day life, it is easy to dismiss or ignore the child who tells us that we aren't being nice, to resent the friend or colleague who expresses disapproval of our actions or words or suggests that we could be involved in some good work. It is easy to ridicule the "goody-two-shoes" in our midst and not see them as a means of God's love and revelation and an example for us to follow.

Consistently, the readings for today point to the reality that God's revelation of His will for us comes in unexpected and surprising ways, ways that can challenge and offend us on merely human terms, but in ways that can break down our resistance to the ways that God calls us beyond ourselves and our present situations and

attitudes, our sense of complacency. This awareness of God can even come through our own personal failings when we come face to face with our limitations and are forced to admit that we are not self-sufficient, that we need God, that we are dependent on His mercy. Today we are asked to look for our revealing God in the most humble places, in the common places and experiences we share with the ordinary people who are part of our daily lives.

**FOR REFLECTION:**

- How do I expect to find God in the world around me? Do I expect a vengeful God who will punish all wickedness? Do I expect a loving God who will change everything for the better. When I look for God to change things, am I looking for things to be the way I want or the way God wants?
- When have I found God in an expected way, in an unlikely person's words or deeds? Was I willing to let go of my expectations or was I resentful? What opportunities to find God in unexpected ways may I have missed?
- How have I been an unexpected means of God's presence to others? Have I ever been surprised when people have told me that I said something that made God real for them? How has God used me to be a means of his presence?
- What is the "thorn in my side?" What experiences have I had in life that have humbled me? Have I learned from these experiences that this life is not all about me, that I need God?
- Are there people in my life that I tend to write off or dismiss? What leads me to do this? Can these people still, somehow, be a means of God's will and loving presence for me? How?

BULLETIN NUMBER:

724950

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SOFTWARE:

MSPublisher 2010  
Adobe Acrobat X standard  
Windows 2010

PRINTER:

HP Officejet J4680

TRANSMISSION TIME:

Tuesday, June 26, 4:50 pm

BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY:

July 1, 2012

NUMBER OF PAGES SENT:

1 through 12

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: