

Our Lady Queen of Peace

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

www.olqpparish.org



PASTOR

REVEREND MICHAEL MURPHY

ASSOCIATES

REVEREND JAMES BEIGHLIE, C.M.

REVEREND DONALD MOLITOR, RETIRED

DEACONS

REVEREND DR. THOMAS GERLING

REVEREND MR. PAUL TUREK

MUSIC DIRECTOR

MR. BOB ELLISON

GRADE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

MS. RENEE CHAUVIN

PSR COORDINATOR

MRS. DEBRA O'DONNELL

PRESCHOOL COORDINATOR

MRS. NANCY LORENZ

YOUTH MINISTER

MRS. TERRY OSTLUND

PARISH COUNCIL

DOUG BJORNSTAD

CLIFF BRANDT

JOANNE DAVID

VICKI DE LONG

CLAY GREGORC

TOM LAKIN

ARNIE LOHBECK

PAUL MCDONNELL

DENISE ORTMANN

RICH ORTMANN

PHONES

Parish Office

671-3062

School

671-0247

Cafeteria

375-5335

SCHEDULE OF HOLY MASSES

Saturday Evening

5:00pm

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

Sunday

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

Holy Days

as announced

Weekdays

8:00am

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.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

314-223-8751

YOUTH MINISTRY

314-566-8363

SUNDAY OFFERING

Our Gifts to God and Parish Last Week

Special Collections

St. Vincent de Paul	\$	10.00
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New Building Fund

Lavender Envelopes	\$	1,111.00
Total Received to date	\$	657,311.86

Offertory

Sunday Envelopes	\$	8,424.50
Sunday Loose	\$	552.50
Total Offertory	\$	8,977.00
Offertory Goal	\$	13,699.00

Thank you for your generosity.

As of July 19, 2010

Contributions Year To Date	\$	32,475.54
Projected Year to Date Budget	\$	41,097.00

Together We're Better Certificates

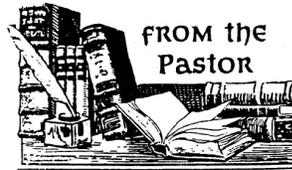
Sales	\$	1,685.00
Profits/tuition reduction	\$	41.22

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



"Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." LUKE 11:9

Jesus assures us that if we ask Him, God will take care of what we need. The problem is that in our culture we often confuse what we really **need** with what we simply **want**. We need very little. However, we usually want so much more. A good steward only asks God for what he needs.



Pre-School

The new school year will be starting in about a month and we need to know how many children will be attending pre-school so that we can hire the correct number of teacher aids.

If you are planning to send your children to pre-school and have not registered please call Nancy Lorenz and let her know your intentions as soon as possible.

During the summer, it is difficult to communicate with a large portion of the parish.

It would be very helpful if you could talk to your friends and neighbors about the pre-school program. Please spread the word.

B-I-N-G-O

Have you ever found yourself sitting at home on a Friday evening, bored stiff with nothing to do? When you experience moments like this, I'll tell you what to do. Go to the Knights of Columbus Hall and PLAY BINGO!! You can have loads of fun, drink beer, ward off Alzheimer's disease; get yelled at for talking too much during play time.... and all of this with a chance to win **A GAZILLION DOLLARS!** Who needs the casinos! So, call your friends, get a group together and plan a Friday night at the KC Hall.

The Knights of Columbus have been very generous and supportive of our parish over the years. They have provided much needed funds and manpower for various projects in the parish. Please take the time to support their fundraisers, especially BINGO. I am hoping to put the Knight's calendar of upcoming events in the bulletin so that we can support them. I don't care what their wives say; they are a GREAT bunch of guys!

-fr mike

Bingo

Every Friday

Knights of Columbus Hall

Doors Open 4:30 pm

Bingo starts at 6:45 p.m.

Hope to see you there!

Grade School News

I have officially moved into my office and am working on things to make next school year a great success. I want to say thanks to those who have welcomed me so warmly! I feel like we are going to have a terrific school year!

Just a few things to look forward to for this upcoming year:

- Technology: Fr. Beighlie has been working extremely hard this whole summer! The computer lab is set up in one of the modulars, the wiring is in place, and things should be up and running for students to be able to use the computer lab on a regular basis. Teachers will bring their classes to the lab to learn computer skills or to work on projects for their other subjects.

- Bullying: I am in touch with Lynne Lang, director of BJC HealthCare School Outreach and Youth Development. BJC offers bullying prevention programs to schools. There are a variety of different programs offered to whole schools, certain grade levels, and to parents. After I meet with her, I will let you know what direction we are heading with this important program.

- Discipline: Some of the faculty is meeting with me over the summer to discuss a possible change in discipline. In keeping with our school's mission of providing a nurturing environment which enables all students to attain their full potential as faith filled members of society, we feel it is important to have a consistent discipline policy throughout the whole school. Again, more information will be given to you as this develops.

- Calendar: We are in the process of updating our school website. We have the school calendar under the school information tab. As events are added during the school year, please check here! Please be patient as we work to add more features to the drop down menus for your convenience.

- School Theme: We will be having a school theme for the 2010-2011 school year. It is: "Be a piece of God's peace." Throughout the year, we will be reminded that we are to share God's peace with everyone we meet whether it be classmates, peers, parents, faculty, staff members, parishioners, family members, or even visitors to our school...God wants us to bring His peace into every situation we encounter, and that will be our focus for this school year in our journey to bring Christ to others.

So, these are just some of the things being worked on for next school year and I wanted you all to know. As the summer and the year progresses, I will keep you updated as to what else is going on.

God Bless,
Renée Chauvin



YOUTH MINISTRY

The Thunderstorms of Life

Parenting our teen children has times of bright sunny days and times of thunderstorms.

Thunderstorms scare many people just as parenting teens through tough times can scare some parents. Just know that in the springtime of your teen's life there is supposed to be thunderstorms so growth and new life can take place. If you ask God to shine through these challenging times in your son or daughter's life you will receive comfort and courage to weather the storm with your teen child. You just might be surprised and see a rainbow after the storm. Enjoy parenting your teen and invite God to shine through the thunderstorms of life.

Youth Night this Wednesday from 6-9pm in the Bear's Den.

Terry Ostlund, Youth Minister
636-671-0302 or 314-566-8363

PSR Registration

The final PSR Registration for the 2010-2011 school year will be after all masses the weekend of July 31st-Aug. 1st in the cafeteria and on Monday Aug 2nd from 6-7:30pm in the school office building.



St. Vincent De Paul

Before Dinner

I remember when the family gathered together and prayed before mealtime and Mom would ask that we think of those less fortunate. We ask that you remember those friends less fortunate and perhaps share your coins with SVDP.



**PRAY
FOR THOSE WHO
HAVE DIED**

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

Viola Wilfong,
mother of Rich Wilfong,
Donald Hoffman,
brother of Jan Hussman,
Jerry Smith,
husband of Phyllis

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



Parish Corner

Every week a different organization is featured in the bulletin. The following week they have representatives speaking and/or in the vestibule to talk about their organization and sign up potential members.

Adult Faith Formation

The Adult Faith Formation committee is a group of parishioners who plan and host events designed to foster the continuing faith growth of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish. The committee has been instrumental in planning the Lenten Retreats and is currently working on a special Mass of Parish Unity to be celebrated on Saturday, August 21, a celebration of the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul on September 27, celebrated by our Vincentian associate pastor, that will recognize the efforts of our St. Vincent de Paul Society and the role of our whole parish in serving the poor, an Advent Retreat, a Parish Mission in February, 2011 and an evening of recollection for parents of our school and PSR children. If you would like to be involved with this committee or if you have suggestions for faith formation activities for the committee to consider, please contact Bev Gregory, Bev.Gregory@lcef.org or 314-952-2167. We will have a meeting on Monday, July 6th in the Rectory Meeting Room. All are welcome!

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Our next Eucharistic Adoration is
Wednesday, July 28
From 1:00pm - 8:00pm.
Please sign up for a Holy Hour.
A sign up sheet is located
in the Church vestibule.

**1st Sunday Breakfast Menu:
Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs
Sausage, Hash Browns
Cereal
Coffee, Milk, Orange Juice**

We will be serving after the 7:30 and 9:30 Masses..
Due to lack of customers we will no longer serve after
the 11:30 Mass (time for lunch!!)

Calendar Scheduling

If you have not submitted the times and dates you plan to use our facilities please send a list (in writing) or email (parishoffice@olqpparish.org) to the Parish Office. Sometimes we have experienced conflicts with organizations wanting to use the same facilities. By scheduling early we can avoid most of these disappointments. Just a reminder, even if you always had the same time and place for your meeting we will not know that you intend to continue to meet. Typically we redo the calendar at the beginning of our fiscal year, July 1st.

Thank you so much for your help in keeping our parish calendar up to date and running smoothly.

PARISH PRIDE WORK DAY

We will have a Parish Work Day on Saturday, July 31st, from 9:00am until Noon.

There are bushes and hedges to be trimmed and other miscellaneous yard work that needs to be completed. We will be spreading mulch in several gardens around the campus.

We would like to clean up the parking lot, sweep up gravel, and pull weeds.

If you are able to share an hour or two of your time, it would be greatly appreciated. Lunch will be provided.

Bring your trimmers, rakes, and blowers and join in on the fun.

**Daughters of Isabella Tailgate Sale
Saturday, August 21, 8am to 2pm**

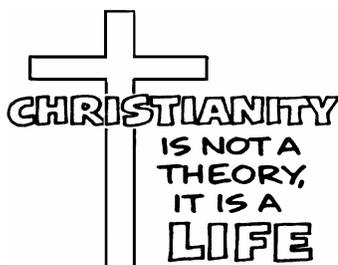
If you are cleaning out your closets, attic or garage this summer and want to make a few bucks and get rid of the clutter at the same time, you can help the Daughters with their semi-annual Tailgate Sale!!

It will be held in the lower parking lot of OLQP. A space is the size of two parking spaces and cost \$10.

To reserve a space, please call Carol at 285-4450 or Fran at 375-3774.

*Young
at
Heart*

Due to the death of our member, Jerry Smith, we will be postponing our Annual BBQ until further notice. Please watch the bulletin for more details.



**Our Lady Queen of Peace
PARISH DANCE**

Featuring



Music From the 50's, 60's & 70's

www.sh-boom.com

Saturday, August 21, 2010

Knights Of Columbus Hall

7 pm - 11:00 pm

Doors open at 6:00 pm

\$10/person in advance

\$15/person at the door

Price includes Beer & Soda

(Burgers, Hot Dogs, Fries & Nachos can be purchased)

For Tickets call: 636-671-3062

M-F 8 am - 4 pm

or email: dance@olqpparish.org

or purchase in the parish office

Purchase your tickets soon as they will go on sale to neighboring parishes beginning in August!!

**Fr. William Scheid Priest Play
August 20–22, 2010**

The Catholic Youth Apostolate and the Fr. William Scheid Players will celebrate 30 years of performances in 2010 with Cole Porter’s “Anything Goes” featuring our former pastor, Msgr. Norb Ernst. Performances will be on Friday, Aug. 20th, Saturday, Aug. 21st, and Sunday, Aug. 22nd. All performances will be at the Florissant Civic Center. Tickers are \$14 each, or \$12 for seniors and groups of 25 or more. Contact Sarah at 314-792-7611.

**St. John’s Chicken
and Roast Beef Dinner
4525 Old Highway 21**

Sunday, August 1, 11:30am-5pm

Serving Fried/Baked Chicken or Roast Beef Dinners with Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Beans, Slaw, Home-made Desserts and a Beverage. Cost is \$8 large; \$5 small. Proceeds go towards the New Church Building Fund. We will also have a big resale booth and 50-50 drawings.

Any questions please call 636-296-8061 for more information.

**St. Patrick’s Old Rock Church
Annual Picnic
Sunday, August 15th**

Please join us for Mass starting at 11:15am. The picnic will run from Noon till 6:00 pm. Family style Chicken and Beef dinners will be served. Prices are \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 12.

There will be a Country Store and Raffle—1st prize, \$500; 2nd price, Handmade Quilt; 3rd prize, \$100. Entertainment will be provided by Missouri Valley Boys.

Directions: 5 miles South of Pacific, Mo. Hwy. 44, Exit 257. Go East on Osage (south side of I-44), south on MO Hwy F. Stay left on MO Hwy O at split to left on MO Hwy. NN. Left at split to stay on MO Hwy. NN to right on Rock Church Road.

Seven Days of Inspiration

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

All the riches in
the world do not come
close to the treasure
that you are.



Just to be
is a blessing.



Smile always when you can.
It’s cheap medicine.



Seven days without
laughter makes
one weak.



Friendship is
a sheltering tree.



A smile is worth
a thousand words.
A friend is worth
a thousand hugs.



Friendships are glued
together with
a little kindness.

**Discovering God in Our Lives
2-Day Women's Retreat**

National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows
Retreat Presenter: Heather King
Fri., Sept. 10th and Sat., Sept. 11th
For more information, please contact:
Diane Gren at 1-800-233-6264 or e-mail:
dgreen@oblatesusa.org.

**Magnificat Women's Prayer Breakfast
Saturday, Sept. 11, 9-noon,**

Kathleen Beckman, Speaker
Cardinal Rigali Center, Fleur de Lis Rm.
Kathleen Beckman serves on the Magnificat Central
Service Team and has written several books, including
"Rekindle Eucharistic Amazement", "Behold the Lamb",
and most recently, "Only for Love: The Sacred Heart,
Priesthood and Purity."

Registration ends Friday, Sept. 3, so please call soon to
reserve your place at 314-427-7786 or email
janeuenther@archstl.org. \$15 includes breakfast.

**Caregiving—Cradle of God's Grace
How to Truly Honor your Child, Spouse,
or Aging Parent Without losing Yourself
in the Process**

Thursday, Aug. 19, 10am-3pm
Cardinal Rigali Center

This seminar is directed to anyone involved in Care-
giving of any sort, whether this Caregiving involves
direct physical care, indirect care, emotional care, sup-
port care. . . Whether their loved one is living here or
far. This program presents the ten fundamental and
universal principles of Christian Caregiving.

Many of us are called into the Caregiving roll with
very little, if any preparation. We want to help yet we
may often feel conflicted. Caregiving demands much of
us: some of us are called to give direct care, others dis-
tance care, still others a care management. We're called
to care for our children, our spouses, our aging parents,
and others. Whatever type of Caregiving we're called
to perform, we cannot forget to care for ourselves. Jesus
did command us to honor others but never asked that
we dishonor ourselves in the process. Caregivers re-
ceive a special grace, a stream of grace that uplifts and
sustains us, protects and propels us closer to God. Care-
giving is essentially a faith journey, a pilgrimage to our
very soul. Come learn some straight answers that help
you serve other's need without ignoring your own.

For more information, please call 314-792-7183 or visit
the website: *www.stlcatholics.org*.

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 _____

Please circle one:

New Registration Address or phone number change Moving out of parish

Parish Activities

Mon	July 26	Rosary for Peace, 7:30pm, Church Adult Faith Formation, 7pm, Rectory
Tues	July 27	Devotions after 8am Mass Quilters, 9am - 3pm, 6 - 8:30pm, Activity Center
Wed	July 28	Eucharistic Adoration, 1-8pm, church
Sat	July 31	PSR Registration after 5pm Mass
Sun	Aug 1	1st Sunday Breakfast after 7:30 & 9:30 Mass PSR registration after all Masses

Mass Intentions

Mon	July 26	8:00am	Barbara Butz
Tues	July 27	8:00am	Redel Family
Wed	July 28	8:00am	Walter Politte
Thurs	July 29	8:00am	Gary David
Fri	July 30	8:00am	Robert Crean
Sat	July 31	5:00pm	Thomas Dower
Sun	Aug 1	7:30am	Harold Duckworth
		9:30am	People of the Parish
		11:30am	John Alexander

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

Jackie Nappier	Robert Pratt	Eddie Skaggs
Val Leiber	Charles Bacher	Vince Ferrara
Bud Waeltermann	Jan Sankey	Bill Bierman
Debbie O'Brien	Mary Coughlin	Mary Wigge

- Msgr. Thomas Worachek, former pastor of OLQP
- Joe Graham, friend of Carl and Patsy Boyer
- Allen Chott, nephew of Judy Mottert
- Carol Brennan, sister of Katie Tutass
- Cindy Swafford, niece of Alan and Mary Myers
- Sam Mayberry, friend of Patrick Rawlins
- Jimmy Rawlings, son of Lynette Rawlins
- Jeffery Rawlins, grandson of Lynette Rawlins
- Rachel Preston, granddaughter of Lynette Rawlins
- Christine DeClue, daughter of Bill and Linda Weber
- Anna Ade, mother of Angie Ecker
- Kay Oestman, sister of Maureen Turney
- Shirley Hussey, sister-in-law of Cathy Eimer
- Louise Gunter, mother of Lynette Rawlins
- Susan Keilholz, mother of Ann Riley
- Mary McFarland, mother of Jan Hussman

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.

July 31st and August 1st

Special Ministers of the Eucharist

5:00 pm	Clay Gregorc, Peggy Mikko, S. Munzlinger, Richard & Denise Ortmann, Shirley Tenny
7:30 am	Mary Bjornstad, Ken Bohnert, Jo Jahnsen, Michael & Joyce Ruopp, Marie Strayhorn
9:30 am	Dan & Kim Horn, Jan Hussman, Jo Ann Vess, Jan Schultheiss, Connie Stubits, Nancy Wilfong
11:30 am	Thomas Broadbent, Sandee Burkemper, Barb Ooppelz, S. Schmidt, Maria Webb, D. Witt

Proclaimers

5:00 pm	Andrea Lawson, Maryann Turek
7:30 am	Pat Hanes, Scott Reimer
9:30 am	Margaret Gerling, Helen Salamone
11:30 am	Carol & Gary Freihaut

Servers

5:00 pm	Rachel Cundy, Brian Gagen, Ashley Marks
7:30 am	Jackson & Teddy Bjornstad, Kaitlyn Robertson
9:30 am	Andrea Brown, Hanna Osborne, Kim Queen
11:30 am	Joey & Tommy Carbone, Johnny Gibson

Ushers

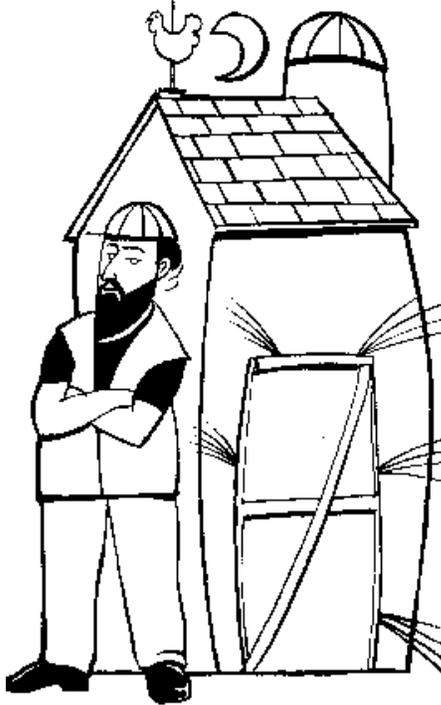
5:00 pm	Larry Bottchen, Bill & Donna Clifton, Ralph Munzlinger, Helen Stewart, Katie Tutass
7:30 am	Gerald Bachmann, Carl Boyer, Jeff Eschbach, Larry Lammert, Vince Rocchio, Jerry Smith
9:30 am	Ray Graf, Mike Luebbert, Butch Mattingly, Sam Pierceall, Ralph Schultheiss, Ron Williams
11:30 am	Don Brooks, Jim Robertson, Paula Schroeder, Al Schuld, Benny Slodkowski, David Witt

Parish Office email
parishoffice@olqpparish.org
OLQP Web Site
www.olqpparish.org
submit articles for bulletin
olqpbulletin@yahoo.com
Deadline Tuesday at 4:30 pm
Inserts - Monday at noon



Diane Yocom,
Susan Whitworth,
Joanne David
and Dot Hirtz

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle C



THEME: “Seek the things that are above.”

There is an unavoidable reality in life. We are mortal. We live in this world, with its riches and its struggles, with its pleasures and its pains. But we live in this world with hope, hope for eternal life with God. How we live in this world has meaning. Here is the arena of salvation. Here is where we live for eternity. Here is where we can say “Yes” or “No” to what God has in store for us. We can immerse ourselves in this world, work for success and pleasure. But that is a life without hope. We can reject the good things of God’s creation and immerse ourselves in prayer, penance, in all that is spiritual. But that is a life of fear, a life that denies our humanity. Or we can live in this world, enjoying God’s creation, and realizing that this world matters, that it is here that we make our choices for or against God, and try to live in our world in such a way that we seek the things that are above. How will we choose to live?

THE READINGS:

FIRST READING: Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes) 1:2, 21-23
 Today’s first reading is from the Book of Qoheleth. Wisdom in Israel was, generally, positive, believing that

God had spoken His word and created a good and ordered world. By observing the world around us, we can learn God’s wisdom and understand what leads to a good life. In time, however, the Wisdom writings began to take on the status of dogma. Still, Wisdom in Israel always stood apart from main-stream thought patterns and questioned what was held as dogma. Such is the case with Qoheleth. Some have held that Qoheleth’s outlook is pessimistic. That is hardly the case. More accurately, Qoheleth can be seen to be realistic, especially in the face of Wisdom teachings that were taking on the status of immutable truth. The general observation that good actions lead to good results and bad actions lead to hardship and sorrow, while generally true, is not an absolute. Qoheleth observed that industry and hard work, sobriety and temperance didn’t always lead to happiness and that the results of a person’s industry did not change the fact of death. In death, others could and did benefit from the good life of an individual without having to exert any effort on their own. This was vanity – emptiness.

Had Qoheleth been a pessimist, had he found no meaning in our life in this world, he would have concluded that hedonism was the only recourse, immersing ourselves in the world around us and seeking whatever pleasure we could find. That was not his conclusion. Instead, he concluded that how we live matters, that we should enjoy the good things of the world when we can, but in moderation, that there are consequences for actions, and that ultimate meaning isn’t in our hands, isn’t something we can control and determine no matter how wise and understanding we are. There are circumstances beyond our control. And there is a God whose Wisdom is inscrutable, beyond us. To think that by hard work, by our own efforts we can determine the outcome of our lives, that we can win the favor of God is vanity and emptiness. Yet, with our God, we can try to live as best as we can, knowing that many aspects of life are beyond our control. We can enjoy the good things of life when the opportunity arises; we can endure life’s hardships when necessary; we can seek balance and peace. For Qoheleth, this is righteousness; this is living a right relationship with God; this is realistic human life that admits our limitations and lets God be God.

SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-5

“Seek the things that are above.” The advice from Colossians can seem, at first glance, to fly in the face of Israel's Wisdom. It can look like we are being asked to ignore this world, the life we lead day to day, in order to focus on the spiritual life, our life with God. It can look like we are being asked to negate the importance of this world, this present state of our lives, as if it didn't really matter. But this world and this life does matter and the Letter to the Colossians does affirm this.

The Letter to the Colossians states unequivocally that we have taken on a new life in Christ. We live this new life in the here and now. In living the new life, we are called to put aside old ways of living, ways that hurt other people – fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire. Instead, in Christ, we are to understand that there are no divisions among people, we are on a common quest – to live our lives in a world where we are related to one another and, in this way, to live towards God's purpose, to set our minds on what is above. Our sense of purpose, our sense of meaning comes from living our connectedness with others and this connectedness is precisely what comes “from above.” We have a new life in Christ, all of us, and living that relationship well is what gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

GOSPEL READING: Luke 12:13-21

The story from Luke's Gospel makes the same point. There is a dispute between brothers over possessions. Jesus tells the story of the rich man who builds store houses for himself so that he can enjoy for himself all his good things. But death claims him. His possessions do not give his life meaning. To grow rich for the Kingdom of God is to live our connectedness, is to be related, be brothers and sisters with one another, not to amass wealth for its own sake. Israel's wisdom, when its teachings began to become rigid, could be misread by assuming that the wealthy and influential were those in God's good graces. Good actions lead to good results. But that is an assumption that can be false. Finding purpose in this life is not about gathering and enjoying good things, but about being brothers and sisters. To live otherwise is true vanity, true emptiness.

God has created a good world and gifted us with life.

He has placed this good world in our hands. This world and this life matter. God is completely other and has reconciled us to Himself. He invites us to share eternal life with him. That is good. It is somehow in the interplay of the reality of the here and now and the hoped for life of eternity that our lives are played out. It is in that interplay that we seek meaning. How will we choose to live?

FOR REFLECTION:

- Do I ever think about my mortality? Am I afraid of death? How is my death a part of God's plan? Do I see a relationship between my life now and the life God promises me in eternity, or do I see this life and this world as something to be escaped to achieve a greater life? What meaning do I find in the present world?
- Qoheleth, the teacher, experienced disappointment and disillusionment. What has been my experience of disappointment and disillusionment? In the face of these, where did my quest for meaning lead me? In a less than perfect world, can I find happiness? Am I pessimistic, idealistic or realistic?
- What does it mean to me "to seek the things that are above?" Do I negate the value of this world? In seeking what is above, what is there in this world that really matters?
- Finding purpose in this life is not about gathering and enjoying good things, but about being brothers and sisters. To live otherwise is true vanity, true emptiness. Do I agree with this statement? Is living unaware of my connectedness with others - the poor, the homeless, the divorced, the gays, the criminals, terrorists - emptiness?
- It is somehow in the interplay of the reality of the here and now and the hoped for life of eternity that our lives are played out. It is in that interplay that we seek meaning. What meaning do I find? How will I choose to live?

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