

# Our Lady Queen of Peace

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

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

September 8, 2013



## 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

Thomas Broadbent, Sandee Burkemper, Bev Gregory,

René Heibeck, David Holmes, Taylor Layton,

Dave Mills, Donna Otzenberger, Jan Schultheiss,

Tim Webb, 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 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

For peace every Monday evening at 7:30 pm

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**

2013

**September**

- Sat 21 PSR Chili Supper
- Sun 22 OLQP Quilt Social
- S/S 28/29 Fall Festival

**October**

- Sat 12 Harvest Moon Auction
- Fri 25 Trunk or Treat

**November**

- Wed 13 Personal Finance Seminar
- Wed 20 Personal Finance Seminar
- Thur 28 Thanksgiving

**December**

- Mon 2 Blood Drive
- Sat 7 Advent Retreat
- Sun 8 K of C Ladies Auxiliary Bake Sale
- Mon 9 Immaculate Conception
- Sat 21 Parish All Day Confessions
- Wed 25 Christmas

2014

**April**

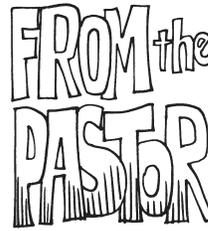
- Sat 12 Parish All Day Confessions
- Sun 20 Easter

**May**

- Sun 4 First Communion
- Wed 7 Confirmation

**June**

- Sat 14 OLQP Picnic



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**What Are The Odds?**

Did you know that the odds of winning \$142,000,000 in the Powerball drawing are 175,223,510 to 1? Did you know that the odds of winning \$100 in the Powerball Drawing are 12,244.83 to 1? Did you know that the odds of winning \$5,000 (or one of the \$500 prizes) in the *OLQP Big Ticket Raffle* are at the moment around 70 to 1? What's the better deal? Tickets are on sale in the back of Church after Masses on Sunday and in the Parish Office, Monday - Friday during business hours (8:00 am to 4:30 pm). The first drawing for a \$500 prize will be Saturday, September 28th. The cost of the ticket is \$250, yes that's a lot, but it is a donation to the parish to help raise funds. Even if you cannot afford a ticket on your own, think about going in on a ticket with several friends. The price of the ticket also includes a catered dinner for two next June.

**Prayer Before Mass**

A couple of weeks ago, I included in my pastor's column, a prayer that can be said before Mass in preparation for celebrating the Eucharist. Several parishioners found the prayer very helpful and asked if we could include it in our missalette. I gave permission to place the prayer in the front or back cover of our missalettes. Hopefully, in using this prayer, we can become more conscious that we come to worship God and pray with our brothers and sisters.

~ fr. mike



We will meet for lunch at Chili's (in Fenton) at 1:00 pm. Hope to see everyone there.

**Parish Activities  
September 9 - 15**

- Mon Sept 9 PSR begins, 6:15 - 7:30 pm
- Tues Sept 10 Perpetual Devotions after 8:00 am Mass  
Quilters, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, 6:00 - 8:30 pm  
Parish Council, 6:30 pm, Rectory
- Thur Sept 12 Choir Practice, 7:00 pm, Church
- Sun Sept 15 Senior Youth, 6:00 - 7:30 pm, Cafeteria  
meeting room  
High School Parent Gathering,  
6:00 - 7:30 pm, Cafeteria



### New Members

### We Welcome New Members

Ron and Mary Pott  
Byrnes Mill

### Recent Baptisms

Nolan Wesley Matthews  
son of Britton and Kimberly (House)

Lucas Edward Johnson  
son of Thomas and Sarah (Mizulski)

Grace Elizabeth Stonecypher  
daughter of Daniel and Christina (Politte)

### Lunch Room Volunteers Needed

Volunteers for the lunch room are needed from 10:45 - 1:00 pm. Please call the School Office, 636-671-0247, or Parish office, 636-671-3062, if you can volunteer or with any questions you may have.



### "The Bible and the Mass"

The Bible and the Mass is part of a Journey Through Scripture Series by the St. Paul Center's dynamic parish based Bible study program that is designed to help ordinary Catholics to grow in their knowledge of the Scriptures while deepening their understanding of the riches of our faith.

The Bible and the Mass explores what the Bible teaches us about the Mass. It looks at the ultimate meaning of the Eucharistic sacrifice and how what happens at Mass relates to God's covenant dealings with Israel. Through the Liturgy of the Eucharist we offer ourselves back to God.

It is being offered by Our Lady Queen of Peace Adult Faith Formation and will be held on Wednesday nights for six weeks beginning in a couple of weeks. You will find information in the Church lobby as well as a sign up so that workbooks can be ordered. The cost of the workbook is \$10 per person.

### Youth Council News

Junior High Youth Group  
St. Louis Super Saints

Saturday, September 21st, from 7:00 - 10:00 pm: All 7th and 8th grade youth are invited to our next Junior High Youth Group Event. The mission of our St. Louis Super Saints is to pair a generous service opportunity with a social event. In September we are going to help clean up after the PSR Chili Supper. After the cafeteria is put back in order we will have a bonfire, s'mores and fun. All youth wishing to participate in this event will meet in the cafeteria at 7:00 pm.

### High School Youth Group

Sunday, September 15th and 22nd, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm (all are invited to stay until 8:00 pm for snacks and fun): All high school youth are invited to join us twice a month on Sunday evening to share faith and build friendships. This fall we also have a "parent gathering" for the parents of high school youth. The Youth Group is facilitated by peer leadership with adult guidance. In a separate area, the "parent gathering" will be facilitated by Maureen and Joe Turney. Youth and parents will meet at 6:00 pm in the Cafeteria for some praise and worship music.

### Confirmation Candidate and Sponsor Meeting Sunday, September 22 9:00 - 11:30 am

Confirmation candidates and their sponsors will gather in the Cafeteria at 9:00 am for an opening session and will process into 9:30 Mass as a group. After Mass, we will meet in the Cafeteria to discuss their journey toward Confirmation on Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 with Bishop Rice and their sponsor's role in this journey. We ask our parish family to please pray for these young people as they prepare to become full members of the Catholic Church in the spring.

**Chart for Big Raffle Tickets**

Tickets Sold	Gross	Prizes	Dinners	Profit
15	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 450.00	\$ (3,700.00)
30	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 900.00	\$ (400.00)
45	\$ 11,250.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 2,900.00
60	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 6,200.00
75	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 9,500.00
90	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 12,800.00
105	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 16,100.00
120	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 19,400.00
135	\$ 33,750.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 4,050.00	\$ 22,700.00
150	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 26,000.00

**As of September 1, 2013**

70	\$17,500.00	\$7,000.00	\$2,100.00	\$ 8,400.00
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**OLQP Big Ticket Raffle**

Have you brought your Big Raffle Ticket yet? Your ticket makes you eligible to receive a chance to win in the quarterly prize (the first drawing is September 28th) and you will also be eligible for the Grand Prize. Tickets are available in the Parish Office Monday through Friday, 8:00 am until 4:30 pm and after all weekend Masses at the Scrip table. Your chance of winning the grand prize is 1 in 150!!



**First Sunday Breakfast  
September 8th**

Breakfast is served after the 7:30 and 9:30 am Masses in the Cafeteria. This is an "All-You-Can-Eat" Breakfast.

**Menu:**

Scrambled eggs, sausage, pancakes, biscuits and gravy, cereal, fruit cup orange juice, milk and coffee  
 Adults \$6.50; Children (6-12) \$3; children under 5 eat free.



**PSR Annual Chili Supper  
Saturday, September 21st  
after 5:00 pm Mass**

All proceeds go toward the purchase of bibles for the 6th grade students and for the needs of PSR. Come enjoy some great chili and fellowship.



**St. Vincent De Paul**

Our main source of revenue comes from donations. Help us to help our own needy. We thank you for your continued support!

**BINGO**  
**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  
Tyrer Estates Valley View Apartments,**

parishioners, Eric and Mary Mottert 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.

**What is Scrip???**

Scrip is the easiest fundraiser we can do!!!  
**How does it work?**

Scrip is just plain gift cards. You don't pay extra for them and most of them are for places and items that you already pay for! Everyone grocery shops, buys gas, goes to Wal-Mart/Target/Kmart at least a few times a month and we have gift cards that you can use making these purchases.

**How does it help the Parish?**

Our parish makes money on **every** card you purchase. A percentage is ours...just for buying something we already spend money on!! Plus, they come in all kinds of denominations which means it is great for grabbing a last minute gift for teachers, coworkers, birthday parties and family! Even if you decide to go out to dinner...we have the card!!

**How do you get the cards?**

Cards are available after all Masses (in the Church lobby) and in the Parish Office Monday through Friday (8 am - 4:30 pm). Plus, if we are out of the card you are looking for, we can order it (we place orders every Monday morning) and it will be ready for pick up by Thursday afternoon!! Since we can't carry every card (hundreds are offered) just let us know and we can order any card on the master list! Just ask...we will have it ready for you after Mass!

**Example of how this all works:**

Your family buys: Shop N Save - \$50 and Shell - \$50, you've spent: \$100. The parish makes Shop N Save - \$3; Shell - \$1.25 = \$4.25 for one week. \$4.25 x 4 weeks = \$17 goes to the parish just from you! Then 300 parishioners buy that amount = \$5,100 per month!!! Even better \$5,100 by 12 months would be \$61,200 to the parish in just one year. Just for buying items you already purchase! Add in an occasional restaurant card, birthday present, etc. and it is just more easy money for the parish!!

Let's work as a parish family and make a commitment to purchase Scrip and watch our free money grow!!

If you have questions please do not hesitate to call the Parish Office, 636-671-3062 or Kim, 314-210-8451.

Thanks for your support and let's get in the habit of buying gift cards whenever possible.

2013 OLQP Fall Festival  
BBQ and Beer Garden



Saturday, September 28th, 3:00 to 7:00 PM  
Sunday, September 29th, Noon to 7:00 PM

Dinners

Full and ½ slab St. Louis Cut Rib Dinners  
Pulled Pork and Pork Steak Dinners  
BBQ'd Chicken Dinners or by the Piece  
Hot Dogs and Children's Plates

Side Dishes

OLQP Coleslaw - Baked Beans - Corn on the Cob  
Mac and Cheese

Drinks

Free Lemonade and Iced Tea with Dinners  
Bud Light Draft and can Sodas Available

Games

Games of Chance for those Enjoying the Beer Garden

**27<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Moon Dinner & Auction**  
**Saturday, October 12, 2013**

Beginning Saturday, September 7, 2013 and Sunday, September 8, 2013, tickets will be available to purchase for the Annual Harvest Moon Dinner & Auction. Tickets are \$35 and will be available to purchase after all Masses.

Available only the weekend of **September 7th and 8th**, you will not only have the opportunity to purchase your tickets, but also, if you buy an entire table, you may choose where you and your guests will sit. This is a great opportunity to purchase your tickets early and also be able to sit right up front and see our auctioneers in action!

Tables may be purchased for 8 to 10 people. The entire amount is due at the time of purchase. Tickets purchased after the above mentioned weekend, tables will be assigned accordingly. So call your friends, put your money together, purchase an entire table and pick your table location!

If you have any questions or need additional ticket information, please contact Joyce Beck, 314-303-8134. For auction donation information, please contact Phyllis Kenney, 636-677-4364. Thank you for your continued support!

### Life In The Spirit Seminar

Life in the Spirit Seminar is a 7-week Catholic seminar which enriches the individual and the community. Through dynamic topics and speakers, the LISS draws people closer together and closer to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. This takes place at the Cardinal Rigali Center, 20 Archbishop May Dr., 63119 beginning Monday, September 9 – October 21, 2013 at 7:00 pm. Bishop Herman is the 1st week speaker.

Everyone is welcome! No fee! Please bring your Bible. Call the Catholic Renewal Center if you have more questions, 314-427-7786 or email [janeguenther@archstl.org](mailto:janeguenther@archstl.org). To register, please call 314-427-7786. It is okay to come even if you have to miss a week or two.

### Catholic Conservations on Immigration Sunday, September 15, 7 pm Immaculate Conception (Arnold)

You are invited to Immaculate Conception (Arnold) to listen to the Church's teaching on the Immigration issue, September 15, 7:00 pm, in the parish center basement.

### Grief Support "Seasons of Hope" Begins October 19, 9:30 - 11:30 am

OLQP Parish will host "Seasons of Hope", a unique support group for the bereaved. This program, rooted in Catholic tradition, conveys God's consolation through scripture, prayer reflection and sharing our faith. The next six week session begins Saturday, October 19, from 9:30 to 11:30 am. If you or someone you know would like more information, please contact Joan Ross, 636-677-3278, or Judy Holmes, [momholmes@hotmail.com](mailto:momholmes@hotmail.com).

This program is open to all parishioners and the general public. There is no fee to attend but donations to help defray the cost of materials would be appreciated.

### Marriage Encounter Weekend

Summer is coming to an end. You may have to do things around your home to tune it up but don't forget that at times your marriage may need a tune up to bring back those honeymoon memories. A Marriage Encounter weekend is a perfect tune up for good marriages. To find out more or to apply for an upcoming weekend, click on [www.stl-wwme.org](http://www.stl-wwme.org) or call 314-469-7317. Upcoming weekend dates are October 25-27 and December 6-8.

### Seven Days of Inspiration

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

#### Day 1

No one is more  
important than you are.

#### Day 2

Believe in the power  
of your wishes,  
prayers and dreams.

#### Day 3

Within you are  
gifts waiting to  
be unwrapped!

#### Day 4

Make room in your  
heart for more love.  
It's on its way!

#### Day 5

You sparkle when  
you're yourself!

#### Day 6

Every new day brings  
another chance to  
succeed!

#### Day 7

Your best is better  
than you think!

### 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**

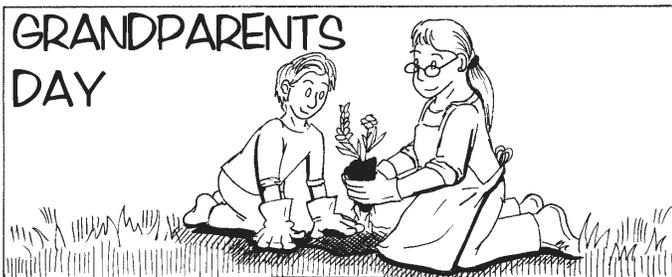
Our next Eucharistic Adoration is  
 Wednesday, September 25,  
 from 1:00 - 8:00 pm.

Come visit with Jesus. In the stillness of the sanctuary,  
 in the Presence of Christ, offer your heart.

**Our Gifts to God and Parish**

760 registered members  
 200 online, loose and envelopes used this week  
*"How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He  
 has done for me?"* Psalm 116:12  
 Thank you for your generosity!!!

**Sunday, September 8th**



**Catholic University of America**

Thank you for your contribution to last week's collection for the Catholic University of America! Your gift will make great things possible by providing direct financial aid to more than 4,000 students from dioceses across the country.

**Special Collections**

Catholic University \$ 694.00

**New Building Fund Total to Date \$ 762,268.30**

**Offertory**

Sunday envelopes \$ 9,689.72  
 Sunday loose 496.00  
 Above and Beyond 20.00  
 Parish Enrichment 462.00  
**Total Offertory \$ 10,667.72**  
**Offertory Goal 13,200.00**

**As of September 2, 2013**

**Contributions Year to Date \$ 114,501.94**  
**Projected Year to Date Budget \$ 118,800.00**

**Scrip Gift Cards**

Sales \$ 2,195.00  
 Profits/Tuition Reduction \$ 106.18

Script gift cards are available in the Parish Office from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday and every weekend after Mass.

**Stewardship  
 Start With Prayer**

*"Everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple."* Luke 14:33

When we first hear this statement, it seems that Jesus is making an unrealistic demand upon us. How can we renounce all of our possessions? We need them to live. However, what we must renounce is the belief that they belong to us. Everything that we have belongs to God alone. All of our resources are entrusted to us not only for our own use, but also so that we can help others. Once we renounce the idea that we possess or are entitled to anything, it is much easier to share the many gifts that God has given us. Then we truly are His Disciples.

**Home and School Selling  
 Entertainment Books**

The Home and School Association will be selling Entertainment Coupon Books for \$30.00 each. The book includes discounts for many area restaurants, great entertainment offers, shopping discounts, and \$20 in coupon savings from Schnucks. Don't miss out on the savings. Any questions or for more information please contact René, 314-691-1203.

**Please pray for those who are ill**

(parishioners are in bold)

<b>Audrey Hastings</b>	<b>Paul McDonnell</b>
<b>Ray Wieschhaus</b>	<b>Alice Aubuchon</b>
<b>Leonard Hirtz</b>	<b>Greg Hirtz</b>
<b>Glenda Clayton</b>	<b>Ellen O'Brien</b>
<b>Ralph Schultheiss</b>	<b>Fran Mills</b>
<b>Danielle Enghauser</b>	<b>Christine Dower</b>
<b>Jan DeClue</b>	<b>Wally Freihaut</b>
<b>Bernard Henning</b>	<b>Brian Bueter</b>
<b>Gerry Bufka</b>	<b>Lee Hoffman</b>

Ed Rabbitt Sr., father of Tammy Groppe  
 Allen Chott, nephew of Judy Mottert  
 Mary Jane Ortmann, mother of Richard Ortmann  
 Shirley Clinrrd, friend of Helen Wendt  
 Peggy Bauer, sister of Katie Tutass  
 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.

**Thank You!!**

Thank you for the many prayers, cards and well wishes we received during our recent illness. We are praying for you also.

Lee and Kay Hoffman



**Pray for the Deceased**

*Please pray for the repose of the soul*

*Adolph Gillman,  
 husband of BettyJo  
 Jerry Williams,  
 brother-in-law of Joan Oermann  
 Ralph Michael,  
 father of Gerry Little*

**Mass Intentions**

Mon	Sept 9	8:00 am	Poor Souls
Tues	Sept 10	8:00 am	Arleen Lammert
Wed	Sept 11	8:00 am	Rev. Robert L. Szydowski
Thurs	Sept 12	8:00 am	Frank Gaither
Fri	Sept 13	8:00 am	Ann Suda
Sat	Sept 14	5:00 pm	Deceased members of the Finney Family
Sun	Sept 15	7:30 am	Theodore/ Alberta Smentkowski
		9:30 am	People of the Parish
		11:30 am	John O'Donnell

**September 14 and 15**

**Special Ministers of the Eucharist**

5:00 pm	* needed, *needed, Peg Mikko, 4 needed
7:30 am	7 needed
9:30 am	*Maria Webb, *needed, Jan Schultheiss, 4 needed
11:30 am	7 needed

**\* You are responsible to clean the vessels after Mass**

**Proclaimers**

5:00 pm	Al Schuld, Shirley Tenny
7:30 am	Frieda Siebel-Spath, Linda Weber
9:30 am	Vicki De Long, Maria Webb
11:30 am	Tom Mattingly, Tom Ecker

**Servers**

5:00 pm	Christopher Dutton, Jack Groppe, Madison Gross
7:30 am	Colleen Kenney, Z. Morlock, T. Otzenberger
9:30 am	Sophia Kershaw, Cierra Payne, Samantha Tarter
11:30 am	Kaitlyn Esch, Jesse Mose, Gracie Scanga

**Ushers**

5:00 pm	Darlene Allmeroth, R. Munzlinger, Don Brooks, Ken Ganey, Ben Slodkowski, Bart Heinzer
7:30 am	Gerald Bachmann, Jeff Eschbach, Larry Lammert, John Nahlik, Robert De Long, Ted Hemen
9:30 am	Terry Filicsky, Ray Graf, Butch Mattingly, Sam Pierceall, Jeff Queen, Tom Broadbent
11:30 am	Kevin Huss, Paul McDonnell, Larry Bottchen, Mary Buckey, C. Duncan, Jennifer Younkins

**September 13**

Cathy Morlock,  
 Debbie Stephens,  
 Chyree de Roode,  
 Cheryl Brinker  
 and Carol Delue



**Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle C**



**THEME: “This brother of yours was lost and has been found.”**

Today’s liturgy asks us to consider our relationship with sinners and to examine that relationship in terms of acknowledgement of our own sinfulness. This meditation on sinfulness is not a gloomy and disparaging look at humanity, but rather a joyful affirmation of God’s love and mercy and an invitation to embrace our brothers and sisters as equally in need of God’s forgiveness, as equally loved and forgiven.

**THE READINGS:**

**FIRST READING: Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14**

The first reading, from Exodus, has its setting in the account of the great covenant at Mt. Sinai. At the very moment of entering into a special relationship with God, at the very moment that God’s promise that He would be Israel’s God and they would be His people is beginning to be fulfilled, the people sin. They are unfaithful, untrusting in their God. The story has some of the traits of a typical Crime-and-Punishment story. People sin and God acts to judge them. The judgment is deserved and

absolute. What is to be expected is that the people will be led to acknowledge their guilt and that God’s mercy will prevail, that He will lessen His judgment. Instead, we get Moses pleading with God, calling for His forbearance. In his call on God he cites the Patriarchal traditions, God’s election of a people and His promises to their fathers.

Israel’s election traditions always claim that the people were chosen for a purpose, to bring God’s blessings to others. Abraham, the Father of Faith, modeled the response to God’s election for a purpose by praying for sinners, interceding for the wicked in Sodom and Gomorrah. Moses does much the same here. What is significant in this story is that Moses intercedes not for other people of the earth, but for God’s chosen own. Our election is not merited, but an act of pure grace. Our call to pray for sinners isn’t issued because we are somehow better than or different from the rest of humanity, but because we share a common humanity, a common need for redemption, a common need for God’s mercy and compassion.

Abraham, the Father of Faith, had his doubts. Moses, the giver of the Law, fell short of trusting God and completely following His will. Their intercession of sinners was authentic because they knew sinfulness. That is our common lot.

**SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 1:12-17**

The second reading is from the First Letter to Timothy. In all likelihood, the two Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus were not written by St. Paul. They reflect a situation in the Church that did not take place until well after Paul’s death. Still, it was common to use a pseudonym in the ancient world to lend credence to the writing. The letter draws on the tradition that Paul was a persecutor of the early Church, that he had a conversion experience, and that he, having experienced the love and salvation offered by the Risen Lord, became a proclaimer of God’s will and word to the whole world. Paul speaks of this experience briefly in the Letter to the Galatians and Luke recounts the story of Paul’s conversion in Acts.

The reading from the First Letter to Timothy celebrates Paul’s election to be a minister of the Lord. That calling displays God’s mercy and in Paul and his experience as unfaithful, violent and sinful, others can find hope – hope for forgiveness, hope for salvation, hope for finding our true purpose in life in bringing God’s blessings and redemption to all people. Paul, by his own admission and in the stories that circulated about him, was not chosen because of his worthiness, but by the free gift of God’s grace, and he was chosen for a purpose. We, too, with our sinfulness, have a purpose, a part to play in God’s plan of announcing salvation to the whole world.

**GOSPEL READING: Luke 15:1-32**

In the Gospel reading, Luke tells three parables – the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son. There is a progression in Luke's presentation. People are offended that Jesus is associating with sinners and those deemed unacceptable in society. First Jesus asks them to consider what is of value – possessions. Of course they would search out lost livestock or money. Their livelihood depends on these things; they are of value. Then Jesus asks them to consider what is really of value – a brother or sister, a fellow human being.

The parable of the Prodigal Son has a dual focus. In the eyes of the father, a son is always a son. The lost son's plan to manipulate his father into taking him home never gets off the ground. There is no need. The father rejoices that his son has come home, that the one who was lost has been found. This is how God treats us. But then comes the catch. The older son resents his younger brother. In Luke's day, it is probable that members of the community had fallen away from the way during difficult times, times of persecution. When things settled down, they repented and wanted to return to the believing community. Some in the community did not want to receive them back. That is not God's way of viewing things. The parable lays before us this challenge: If, in God's eyes, a son is always a son, in our eyes can we view a brother, even a brother who has harmed or betrayed us, sinned against us, as a brother? Can we, too, be forgiving and loving?

God has chosen us to be His people, not because we are particularly deserving, but because He loves us. He loves us with all our weaknesses and faults. What He asks of us is the same tolerance and forbearance with other people so that we, His chosen, can be a means of His love and forgiveness for others, so that we can invite all people to come home to the presence of God with us in our Christian communities.

**FOR REFLECTION:**

- Am I tempted to compare myself to others and judge others as more sinful or can I see others who act in ways I don't approve of as merely sinners like me?
- When I confront my own sinfulness, am I discouraged and despondent or do I find reason to rejoice in God's love and mercy?
- Is my prayer for sinners authentic? Do I really seek for others the forgiveness that I have experienced? Can I seek to forgive as God forgives me?
- Am I able, like Paul, to share with others my own weaknesses as a means of offering them hope? Am I willing to show how God has forgiven me so that my struggles with sinfulness can offer encouragement to others?
- With whom do I identify in Luke's story of the Prodigal Son, the younger son or his older brother? Do I attempt to manipulate God to forgive me and care for me or do I simply let myself be loved? Am I resentful of God's love and care for others, others I find less deserving, or do I rejoice over God's mercy for others?

