

WELCOME TO ST. JOSEPH – ST. LAWRENCE PARISH

“Two Churches, One Parish”

Growing as Disciples of Jesus; Making Disciples for Jesus
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – June 28, 2020

St. Joseph of the Valley: 31151 207th Street, (Rural) Leavenworth, KS 66048
St. Lawrence: 211 West Riley, Easton, KS 66020
Parish Mailing Address: P.O. Box 129, Easton, KS 66020

Father Francis Bakyor, Pastor
Easton Rectory Phone: 913-773-5712
Father's cell: 913-235-6837
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Website: www.sjslparish.org
St. Joseph of the Valley Hall: 913-758-9225
St. Lawrence Hall & Fax: 913-773-8401
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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE:

TUES	June 30	07:00 pm	STL	Parishioners of SJ-SL
Adoration will follow Mass until 7:30 p.m. - CANCELLED				
THUR	July 2	07:00 pm	SJV	Edward & Rose Hand †
SAT	July 4	05:00 pm	SJV	Shirley Karczewski † Jamie Karczewski †
SUN	July 5	09:00 am	STL	Kenneth & Vernetta Herken †

Confessions: SAT-4:30 pm at SJV; SUN-8:30 at STL

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendance for Masses - limited to 25% of the building's seating capacity— 30-75 at St. Lawrence and 15-30 at St. Joseph of the Valley. We will be offering four Masses per week. Please do not feel obligated to attend weekend Masses — weekday Masses will work just fine if it fits into your family's schedule. You may sign-up for Masses online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A4AA9AB2AA1FA7-stjosephst>. Please see online info for restrictions and guidance.

Please pray for the sick, especially: Phil Bell, Deacon Guy Berry, Susie Beying, Joe Brose, Jennifer Brushwood, Glenn Coffey, Carl Davidson, George Dean, Carolyn DeMaranville, Vince Eimer, Tom Flack, Tina Gaspard, Ronnie Gast, Alan Halstead, Marly Heim, Richard Heim, Frank Heintzelman, Jim Heintzelman, Lydia Heintzelman, Melanie Herken, Jon Highfill, Trista Highfill, Mark Hund, Arlene Jennings, Wendi Johnston, Michael Jones, Elmer Karczewski, Phillip Leon, Kelly Long, Joyce Lowe, Mary Meinert, Jeni Mettelstedt, Don Navinsky, Kay Nocktonick, Dannie Phillips, Adam Pineau, Mike Pursel, Mary M. Ruhlman, Kim Sachse, Tanner Siebenmorgen, Julie Simonis, Jim (Poly) Sloan, Gary Stafford, Aaron Welch, Louise Wistuba and Nick Yuska.

Prayer List for Our Soldiers: ARMY: 1LT Daniel Broaddus, Pvt. David Crook, Lexi (Skaggs) Hargis, Major Bryan Herken, SPC Derrick Hunt, SGT Colby Seifert, William Stradley. AIRFORCE: E-4 Robert W. Herken, TSGT Scott Loecher, E-3 Connor Schuler, A1C Noah Tattershall. NAVY: ADDA Jason P. Herken, YNS1 (SS) Kevin Lansing.

Prayer for Vocations: Brother Seelos (Tyler Lunsford).

OUR PARISH NEWS

COLLECTION: Thank you for your gifts to our parish! Collections received this week were \$451 and \$1085 for a memorial to the church and \$1050 as a memorial to SJV cemetery. Last week's on-line collection was \$354.22. Thank you for your generosity.

DO YOU WANT TO DONATE and not sure how during this time? In Father's letter of March 24th, he wrote "I know many families are going through hard times this period. I would still like to encourage everyone to continue giving your weekly donations for the upkeep of the parish through online or mail services. God loves a cheerful giver." **Any donations during this difficult time will be greatly appreciated.** You can mail in your donations to: St. Joseph-St. Lawrence, P.O. Box 129, Easton, KS 66020 or deposit online by visiting our website at <https://www.sjslparish.org/home/donations> to click on the link to donate on-line! Thank you! We wish everyone good health. Blessings to all!

SECOND COLLECTION DATE CHANGE: The national collection date for the Peter's Pence Collection has been moved this year from June 28th to Oct. 4th, 2020.

BIRTHDAY CARD SHOWER: Father Francis Bakyor will be celebrating his 70th Birthday on July 1st. If you would like to honor him on this occasion, please send him a birthday card, letter, photos, and other good wishes, to P. O. Box 129, Easton, KS 66020. Happy Birthday Father!

FINANCE COUNTERS: Please resume the counting schedule. If you are uncomfortable with counting, please contact Karen Logan at 913-683-2406.

OTHER NEWS IN OUR ARCHDIOCESE

XAVIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL: New families interested in Xavier Catholic School? Looking for summer fun? Register for our *Outdoor Summer Activity Time* on July 15 and July 22 at Xavier Preschool or July 29 at Xavier Main Campus. Fun and free activities will be provided by our Extended Care staff for children ages 3 to 12 to include water activities, exercise, sidewalk chalk, bubbles and more! All sessions start at 9:00 a.m. Group size is limited and all participants will be screened. Register now by calling 913-682-1943 or on our Xavier website at <https://leavenworthcatholicschools.org/admissions/enrollment-events>.

POUSTINIA DESERT WEEKEND will be held July 17th at 5:30 pm through July 19th at 4:30 pm at Christ's Peace House of Prayer. Join us for this special "Poustinia" weekend. We will start the weekend off with a teaching about what a Poustinia is and how to enter into it through the words of Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Saturday will be a "Poustinia" day of prayer and fasting alone. The group will come together on Sunday for Mass and to share the fruit of their experience and what they will take back with them into the world. Cabins/Courtyard Rooms: \$170 or Guest Rooms: \$100. To attend, send an email to: info@christspce.com or call 913.773.8255.

CHRIST'S PEACE PRAYER GROUP: WEDNESDAY'S AT 6:30 PM
This is a special announcement for St. Joseph/St. Lawrence Parishioners: The Lord wants to speak to you. Do you know how to listen to his voice? Join us this summer on Wednesday nights at 6:30pm as we prayerfully read the gospel for the upcoming Sunday and learn to listen to the Lord. The meetings will take place at Christ's Peace House of Prayer, 22131 Meagher Rd, Easton, KS 66020. RSVP 913-773-8255.

CONSECRATION TO MARY SMALL GROUP RETREAT will be held

Sunday, **July 12th** from 1pm-4:30pm - Introduction and Orientation Meeting
Sunday's (**July 19 - August 16**) from 6:30pm - 8pm - Weekly Group Meetings at Christ's Peace House of Prayer. You are invited to sign-up for this special 33-day preparation for Marian Consecration on the Feast of the Assumption using Fr. Michael Gaitley's 33 Days to Morning Glory. For six weeks, we'll individually read about and reflect on four great Marian giants: St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa, and Pope John Paul II. They'll teach us the secrets to drawing closer to the Heart of Jesus through the Heart of Mary. In our weekly meetings, we'll share our insights within our small group and then watch a 30-minute video. If you're looking for a simple way to be spiritually renewed, develop a deeper relationship with Our Merciful Savior, and grow in holiness, join us for 33 Days to Morning Glory Small Group Retreat. To attend, send an email to: info@christspce.com or call 913.773.8255 (prior to June 26th to be included in the book order). Cost: \$20-\$30 for books.

BIRTHRIGHT OF LEAVENWORTH, INC. has re-opened and we are observing our regular hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 10am to 1:30pm and Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30pm to 8pm. We are helping families with baby clothes, diapers and wipes and formula. We can also do a pregnancy test for any woman who needs it. All our services are free and confidential. We are located at 221-A Delaware; we're on the alley side of the Leavenworth Landing between the back of the B&B Movie Theater and Tampico Restaurant. Look for the blue awning over our door.

VOTING WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

Since Roe v. Wade in 1973, it has possibly never been more important to support pro-life politicians as it is at the present time. The pro-life movement has recently gained considerable momentum. There has been numerous pro-life initiatives in Congress, such as the suspension of the dangerous RU-486 abortion drug, the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, putting an end to taxpayer support of Planned Parenthood, protecting babies who survive abortions and granting a woman's right to view her ultrasound prior to having an abortion.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Our loyalty to Jesus Christ should be stronger than our loyalty to any political party. Life is the most precious gift that God gives us and so a politician's position on abortion is the most important issue and outweighs all others.

Please vote with a clear conscience for LIFE and having done so, trust the Lord to bring about the victory for a Culture of Life!

VOTER REGISTRATION ANNOUNCEMENT One of key tenets of being a faithful Catholic is faithful citizenship. Every Kansas State Representative and State Senator office will be on the ballot in 2020. One of the most effective ways to ensure fair and just public policy (laws) is by electing people into office who share Catholic values and the ultimate goal of serving the common good. In order to participate in the upcoming August 4th Kansas State Primary Election, citizens must be registered to vote by July 14th. To register, please visit: www.kansascatholic.org. It is important to register especially if you recently turned 18, recently moved, have not voted in recent elections, or if you are unsure if you have registered in the past. Registering to vote ensures that you are able to vote and that you are voting at the correct polling location.

PLEASE NOTE – There are a large number of other Archdiocesan announcements that could not fit in the space available. They will be posted on our church website listed above as a 2nd page to this bulletin.

Bulletin Items: Contact Kim Sachse, 913-775-0690 Or Email Sisparish@gmail.com. Mass intentions may be scheduled with Kim as well. MUST SUBMIT BY 9 pm TUES FOR INCLUSION.

WELCOME TO ST. JOSEPH – ST. LAWRENCE PARISH
“Two Churches, One Parish”
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June 21, 2020

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(FOR POSTING ON THE CHURCH INTERNET SITE)

NEW FOSTER CARE WEBSITE: You can make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children in Kansas! Sadly, every day in Kansas, children are removed from their homes by no fault of their own for a variety of reasons. Each of these children is a precious, unique gift from God who deserves a loving and safe environment where he or she can THRIVE! Because care of the orphan and works of mercy are part of the mission for all baptized Catholics, the Church is the solution to an overwhelmed Kansas foster system which is facing increased needs due to COVID-19.

Please visit the new Archdiocesan Foster Care Ministry Website at www.archkcks.com/foster to learn how you can help vulnerable children in our community and support the families who have answered the call to love and protect these children. If you are currently fostering or have adopted your child/ren from foster care, we want to connect with you to support you on your journey! Please join the Archdiocesan Foster Family by registering here: www.archkck.org/fostercaredatabase

VIRTUAL 3-DAY WORKSHOP: Pornography & Unwanted Sexual Behavior. There is a Virtual 3-Day Catholic workshop coming up for men struggling with pornography and sexual behavior problems on **July 9-11** with Fr. Sean Kilcawley, Dr. Todd Bowman, Michael Ciaccio, MS, LPC, SATP, and Sam Meier, MA, LPC, CSAT candidate. There have been over 10 My House Workshops in Kansas City, and we are excited to offer this workshop virtually during these trying times with COVID-19. Many people are struggling with increased pornography use and unwanted sexual behaviors during COVID-19. Dr. Todd Bowman is a talented psychologist who is also part of the clinical team at Bethesda Workshops in Nashville, and they recently conducted a virtual workshop. Fr. Sean Kilcawley is a national presenter on “Theology of the Body” and protecting families from pornography, who has been through the PSAP training. A flyer for the workshop is included, and there is registration information and a professional video at <https://centerforhealingkc.com/myhouse/my-house-workshops> The My House workshop has Catholic spirituality and clinical content that is similar to the Bethesda Workshops in TN, and the Faithful and True Workshops in MN.

PRAYER FROM POPE FRANCIS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus’ pain, with steadfast faith. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father’s will and to do what Jesus tells us. He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

PROJECT CHRYSALIS is a ministry offering hope through Sacred Scripture and community to parents/grandparents who have lost a child or grandchild. While this ministry is not a bereavement group, our mission is to offer support and hope through scripture in a time of transformation. Our next meeting is on Tuesday **June 30** from 7:00-8:15 p.m. in the St. Mark Room at Church of the Ascension, 9500 W. 127th St. in Overland Park. Fr. Scott Wallisch is our guest speaker. For more information, contact Ken Billinger at 913-634-4210 or email kbillinger@archkck.org. The group is open to parents who have lost a child or grandparents who have lost a grandchild. *Please note that this meeting is subject to postponement pending any changes to the Johnson County reopening plan.*

CONSECRATION TO MARY CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION RETREAT will be held Friday, **August 14th** at 5:30pm - Sunday, **August 16th** at 4:30pm at Christ’s Peace House of Prayer. Come spend a weekend dedicated to Mary and make/renew your Marian Consecration on the Feast of the Assumption! Don’t forget to start your 33 day renewal preparation on July 13th or join our small group. There will be Marian conferences, a special Consecration to Mary Ceremony and Celebration, Eucharistic Adoration, Mass, Confession and time for private prayer, reflection and walking. Cabins/Courtyard Rooms: \$170 Single/\$250 Couple or Single Guest Rooms: \$100 (Meals Included). Day Guests are also welcome for the Ceremony and Celebration. To attend, send an email to info@christspeace.com or call 913.773.8255.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING: Fertility Care Center is planning to hold their next Creighton Model Education Class in August (EPI) & March (EPII). They will provide the class over two extended weekends to help accommodate everyone’s busy schedules.

The dates are:

Education Phase One: **August 21-24 & August 28-31, 2020**

Education Phase Two: **March 6-8 & March 13-15, 2021**

The link to their website with all the information needed to apply is

<http://www.fertilitycarekc.com/fertilitycare-practitioner-training.html>

Questions can be referred to admin@fertilitycarekc.com or pwhite@fertilitycarekc.com.

COUPLES CELEBRATING THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN 2020: The Archdiocesan 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration has been rescheduled to Sunday, **August 23rd**, at 2:00 pm, at the Church of the

Nativity/Leawood. To receive your invitation from Archbishop Naumann, please call the parish office and give us your name, address, phone number and date of your wedding. Please do this as soon as possible.

CAMP KATERI TEKAKWITHA combines demanding outdoor activities with powerful, spiritual instruction bringing about a unique encounter with God. Although our adventure activities are memorable, often the love that campers experience through prayer is what kids remember most. Take advantage of this amazing opportunity for your kids. For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.archkck.org/camp>

CAMP TEKAWITHA IS OPEN

Faith, Fun and Friends. Camp Tekakwitha is Open; Sign Up at ARCHKCK.ORG. Kids need fresh air, friendly smiles, fun activities and to talk about the big ideas in their heart, mind and soul. That is Camp Tekakwitha!! We are operating in correspondence with social distance guidelines, CDC and ACA guidelines.

“THE HISTORY & LEGACY OF IMMACULATA HIGH SCHOOL” is now available for purchase from the publisher, Lulu.com. Access the link to order from Facebook pages “Forever Raiders”, “Immaculata High School Alumni” or “The History & Legacy of Immaculata High School”. Direct link is:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/mary-ann-sachse-brown-and-marti-sachse-judson/the-history-legacy-of-immaculata-catholic-high-school-in-the-first-city-of-kansas/hardcover/product-24157407.html> This is a keepsake hardcover 120 page book with nearly 300 images. Available in color (best quality) or black and white.

AMAZING PARISH: Registration is filling fast for the upcoming Amazing Parish Conference hosted by our Archdiocese on **Oct. 19-21st** at the Overland Park Convention Center. Parish teams from around the country have already signed up to take part in this valuable training! Register Here: <https://amazingparish.org/>

What does an Amazing Parish look like? If you’re ready to build an effective leadership team and improve the organizational health of your parish, we hope you’ll join us. Amazing Parish gives busy pastors and their teams the tools they need to transform their parishes - moving from maintenance mode to mission communities that are truly alive! For more information: Parish Journey – A Pastor’s First Steps, <https://amazingparish.org/get-started/#firststeps> or call the Office of Evangelization at 913-721-1570

NEW END-OF-LIFE RESOURCE GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE

The Ethics Council that serves Archbishop Naumann has produced a comprehensive resource for end-of-life planning titled “Catholic Guide For End-Of Life and Establishing of Advance Directives”. The purpose of the guide is to assist the faithful in making wise decisions about complex treatments in grave illness or as life’s end approaches in accordance with the teachings of our Catholic faith. It also includes two Appendices for a Durable Power of Attorney and an Advance Directive form. For a free digital copy of the Guide, visit www.archkck.org/prolife-end-of-life-care.



MAN AND WOMAN

Key Truths about Redefining Human Sexuality



For more resources, please visit www.marriageuniqueforareason.org

The Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that a federal law that bans discrimination on the basis of "sex" also applies to "sexual orientation" and "transgender" status. Unjust discrimination against anyone is wrong. This decision may be an attempt to address that but instead they harm the common good. In effect, it legally redefines human sexual identities to no longer mean man and woman – who are made for each other and form the foundation of the family – and requires people to honor one another's asserted gender identities and sexual conduct.

Definitions Matter

It is not just to disregard the truth, goodness, and reality of who we are as created male or female. Nor does accepting this reality require adhering to rigid stereotypes or social roles. It is also unjust to elevate "sexual orientation" as if a sexual attraction is an inherent aspect of one's "sex."

Sexual Difference is a Gift

God created humanity male and female, made to live in relation to each other, and found His creation very good. This is therefore a good thing and we are all called to accept and embrace our God-given sexual identity. Sexual difference, male and female, is essential for marriage and children. Our bodies matter—we don't just *have* a body but *are* an ensouled body.

Marriage and Children

A man and a woman, in marriage, are irreplaceable and not interchangeable. Marriage is a natural institution that predates government. Every human society has acknowledged that the sexual union of man and woman matters because it creates the next generation. Children have a right to be raised by a mother and a father whenever possible. This enables society to flourish.

Love and Community

Love, in the Christian sense, is not a feeling nor unconditional niceness, but rather willing the good of another person. The marital relationship involves a unique type of love. When we disconnect sexual

activity from the permanence of marriage or from openness to children, or when we deny our God-given sexual identity, we make our relationships more about us and our feelings than about giving ourselves or serving others. On a large scale, this can have an effect on the whole community as well.

Dignity of the Human Person

All persons have inviolable dignity and deserve love and respect. Effectively redefining human sexuality in law furthers no one's rights, least of all those who struggle with their sexual identity.

Equality and Rights

Affirming the true definition of "sex" denies no one their basic rights as a human being. Rather, it affirms the equal dignity of women and men in society and under law.

Discrimination

Unjust discrimination is wrong. Treating different things differently is not unjust discrimination. For example, only man and woman can form a conjugal union that brings forth children. Protecting the foundation of the family is a matter of justice.

Same-Sex Attraction or Gender Incongruence

Experiences of same-sex attraction or gender incongruence are realities that call for compassion, sensitivity, and pastoral care. Support groups, such as Courage and Encourage, are an important part of the Church's pastoral ministries.

Religious Freedom and Advocacy

Redefining human sexuality under the Civil Rights Act will likely change numerous other laws. It sets the Church's teaching, witness, ministries, and service organizations – who serve everyone but must do so in accord with the truth – in opposition to the law. It will cause innumerable conflicts between the state and religious institutions and individuals. There are, in fact, already numerous examples of this in schools, hospitals, shelters, and small businesses. The faithful are encouraged to stay engaged with their policymakers on these matters to help advance just outcomes wherever possible.



Office of Stewardship and
Development
Archdiocese of
Kansas City in Kansas
stewdev@archkck.org
CatholicPlannedGiving.org



Have Your Plans Changed

For almost everyone, the answer to that question is, "Yes."

"When the scourge of COVID came to Kansas, life changed. Cloistered in our upper rooms we sought refuge and answers. There is a certainty whose name, face, hand and word have power over everything; our lives and even death. He is Jesus and He sent His Spirit to lead us. As One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, please join me in taking the hand and, Rosary of Our Lady as she leads us to a hope that will not disappoint."

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

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During times like these, even the best-laid plans may need to be revisited.

Whether you are rethinking how you previously planned to provide and protect your family through a Will or Trust, or for the first time be considering a planned gift to your parish upon your death, please know that the Office of Stewardship and Development has a variety of resources available online.

Visit CatholicPlannedGiving.org for information.

Our Catholic Church has spanned the centuries and the globe and has been a source of charity through its parishes, schools, and ministries. The Church in Northeast Kansas will be here for you and your families tomorrow, too. Reach out to your Pastor or stewdev@archkck.org for an advisor or resources.

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13th Sunday in Ordinary time, Year A (6/28/2020)

Texts: First Reading. 2Kg.4:8-11,14-16.

Second Reading. Rom. 6:3-4,8-11

Third Reading. Mt.10:37-42

Theme: What is the Cross for me as follower of Jesus?

Congregation: St. Joseph- St. Lawrence Parish, Easton-Kansas.

Dear Brothers and Sisters warm greeting again to you all and your loved ones. My hope is that you are all staying safe and keeping well. The theme for us to reflect on today in the Gospel reading is about the cross.

What is the Cross? The Cross is the principal symbol of the Christian religion, recalling the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the redeeming benefits of his passion and death. The Cross is thus a sign both of Christ himself and the faith of Christians. The cross refers to the trials, hardships and persecution we encounter in following Christ. No Good Friday no Easter Sunday. No Cross, no Resurrection.

"Anyone who does not take up his (or her) cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me". Those are powerful words -powerful words indeed. Does Jesus really mean that we are to prefer him over our own loved one or we're not worthy of him? I think this is what he is telling us. True Christianity comes at a great cost. To be a true Christian, leaves no 'wiggle room' for self-centeredness. True Christianity costs.

We've all heard of the phrase, "you get what you pay for". Well then, beware of cheap religion. Beware of any religion that comes across as soft and easy- the religions that basically say, "go ahead and do your own thing as long as you are being true to yourself". Beware of religions where the cost of following Christ is never mentioned and where your conscience is never challenged or disturbed. Cheap religion will only wrap you in tales of God's love but will never tell you that, that same fire of Love must burn all of our self-centeredness out of us.

There are many religions today that only give one side of the story-God's love- and not the other side-our responsibility to follow him in the way that he wants us to. Go to the funeral of the biggest crook on the face of the earth and you are likely to hear some comforting eulogy on how he/she was true to his /her conscience or some other piffle/nonsense.

There is a true story told of two/2 African-American brothers who lived in the South during the 50sand 60s.One brother, Robert, became a noted lawyer and politician. The other, Clarence, got involved in inter-racial work- not exactly a popular occupation in those days. It was the time when the great tension between blacks and white was very high. People were staging sit-ins and marched down city streets. Police used dogs and fire hoses to disperse the protesters.

Eventually Clarence's work got him into trouble and he turned to his brother for legal help. And, Robert wouldn't help him. What shocked Clarence most of all was that both of them had committed their lives to Christ together.

After confronting Robert about why he couldn't help him, Robert defended himself saying, "Clarence, I do follow Jesus, but only to a point. I follow him up to the cross, but not on the cross. I'm not getting myself crucified". Clarence looked at his brother and said, "Robert you are not a follower of Christ. You are only an admirer of his".

We can all relate to Robert's feelings, can't we? After all there are times in our lives when our commitment to Christ is tested to the breaking point too. Some hardship or tragedy hits us and we are tempted not to pick up our cross and follow Jesus.

For example, it's hard for an elderly person to pick up their cross and follow Jesus after they have just been forcefully put into a nursing home.

It's hard for a wife and mother of 4 children to pick up her cross and follow Jesus after hearing her husband tell her that he's leaving her for a younger woman – a woman who really understands him and makes him feel young again.

It's hard for a Catholic school teacher of 20+years to follow Jesus after his school has been closed and he won't be hired at another Archdiocesan school because they only want entry-level teachers who don't make as much money as he does. It's hard indeed.

All of us, at one time or another or in one way or another have had to bear our crosses. Why do some of us come out on the other end of our trials more miserable than before and some of us come out more Christ-like- more beautiful? To me, the answer has to do with how we see Jesus. Are we followers of Him or admirers? If we are admirers, we'll become bitter and hopeless people when things don't go our way. St. Teresa of Avila had a great quote for these types of people "Lord, spare me from sour-face saints.

Now, if, on the other hand, we are followers of Jesus, we will realize that all of our trials and tribulations, no matter how awful they may be, can and will bring us closer to God, if we'll only put away our self-centeredness. If we do this, realize that as one door closes, another one will open, we'll gain a deeper appreciation of our authentic needs and wants and put away all of our useless and transitory desires.

Remember that people learn about God, not because they figure the Trinity or what the Vatican is doing or because they can read the New testament in the original Greek. No, people learn about God from Godlike people- people who pick up their crosses every day and do their best to follow Jesus. All of us can be God to someone-someone who will remember what God is like because they remember what we are like- that we are followers of Jesus-not admirers.

Fr. Bakyor Francis,