WELCOME TO ST. JOSEPH - ST. LAWRENCE PARISH

'Two Churches. One Parish''

Growing as Disciples of Jesus; Making Disciples for Jesus Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - October 25, 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 Father's Email: francis.bakyor@yahoo.com Website: www.sjslparish.org

St. Joseph of the Valley Hall: 913-758-9225 St. Lawrence Hall & Fax: 913-773-8401 "LIKE" us on Facebook for new announcements

THIS W	EEK'S SCH	EDULE:		
TUES	Oct 27	06:00 pm	STL	All Souls
Adoration	will follow Mass	until 7:30 p.m	CANCEL	LED
THUR	Oct 29	06:00 pm	SJV	Parishioners of SJ-SL
SAT	Oct 31	05:00 pm	SJV	Charlie Bress ₽
SUN	Nov 1	09:00 am	STL	Jack Rogers ₽
Confession	ons: SAT-4:30	pm at SJV; SU	IN-8:30 a	nt STL

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendance for Masses - limited to 25% of the building's seating capacity— 30-75 at St. Lawrence and 30-45 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/9040A4AA9AB2AA1FA7stjosephst. Please see online info for restrictions and guidance.

Please pray for the sick, especially: Phil Bell, Susie Beying, Jennifer Brushwood, Carl Davidson, George Dean, Carolyn DeMaranville, Vince Eimer, Tom Flack, Tina Gaspard, Ronnie Gast, Alan Halstead, Marly 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 NAVY: ADDA Jason P. Herken, YNS1 (SS) Kevin Tattershall. Lansing.

Prayer for Vocations: Brother Seelos (Tyler Lunsford).

OUR PARISH NEWS

COLLECTION: Thank you for your gifts to our parish! Collections received was unavailable, will be provided next week. Last week's on-line collection was \$409.23. Thank you for your generosity.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: We are soliciting volunteers who would like to serve as our Parish Director of Religious Education (DRE), leading the effort to teach our children about their Catholic faith. The DRE performs a number of crucial functions: coordinating CCD enrollment and the necessary paperwork, developing the CCD calendar, recruiting and assisting teachers and other volunteers, working with the Archdiocese and teachers in curriculum development and resource procurement, communicating with parents and the parish council, and ensuring all teachers are Virtus trained. Please prayerfully consider this incredibly fulfilling role within our parish. We are also open to co-DREs if that is an approach that works for you. The parish council does not anticipate starting CCD classes before October, allowing the new DRE time to prepare. If you are interested please contact: Jason Nichols, phone: 913-683-2661 or email: jnichols@dfamilk.com_OR Sharon Wagner, phone: 913-683-4495 or email: w5cattle@aol.com.

<u>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:</u> We are searching for a volunteer to clean the rectory twice a month. POC is Sharon Wagner, phone: 913-683-4495 or email: w5cattle@aol.com.

TOOTSIE ROLL DRIVE: The Knights of Columbus will hold their Annual Tootsie Roll Drive following Mass on November 1st. All money collected will go to help individuals with intellectual disabilities.

NOTE: PARISH MASS TIME CHANGE! Tuesday and Thursday evening mass schedules will change to 6:00 p.m. beginning on Tuesday, October 27th.

OUR CCD PROGRAM: Now that we've navigated the start of the school year amid the pandemic, St. Joseph-St. Lawrence parish is ready to resume religious education for our children. The parish council met this week and voted to move forward with CCD. Father Francis and the parish council feel it is crucial that we provide children in our parish the most engaging opportunity to learn more about their faith and grow in that faith. We will begin with eighth grade students preparing for Confirmation. Class for eighth-graders will begin on Sunday, **November 1st**. Class will be held at St. Lawrence Hall following 9 a.m. Mass (10:00 -11:30 a.m.).

The next step is a plan for the remainder of the classes (1st -7th). Those classes are projected to start November 8th. There are many items that need to be worked between now and the first day of class. First and foremost, we need to know how many students by grade plan to attend. Once we have those numbers we will know how many teachers are still needed and establish a schedule that allows for a safe environment. All classes will be held at St. Lawrence Hall following 9 a.m. Mass. However, how frequent classes meet is dependent on the number of students. Please be assured that the council will do our best to put in place precautions to provide social distancing and a clean/safe environment.

Please contact Sharon Wagner or Jason Nichols with name and grade of student(s) who plan to participate in CCD this year. In addition, please fill out the attached form (PROVIDED AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN) and return to Sharon or Jason.

Please let us know as soon as possible, but no later than October 28th if your child/children will attend CCD this year.

Contact: Jason **Nichols** 913.683.2661. FMAII Sharon Wagner - 913.683.4495, EMAIL: inichols@dfamilk.com. W5cattle@aol.com.

OTHER NEWS IN OUR ARCHDIOCESE



LEST WE FORGET: There was an interesting B.C. cartoon in the newspaper on May 5th. Two little men were talking - one said 'Show me an animal that eats its young and the other man says 'and I'll show you an endangered species.' Think about it! We have allowed over 62 million babies to be murdered. We have lost approximately one third of our younger generation because of abortion. Why do you think there is a shortage of nurses, teachers, etc.?

Also, a May 5th article about a Holocaust survivor had some wonderful quotes by Mr. Steve Goebel from St. Ambrose University. He stated "...that human life is sacred. We remember the horrible suffering inflected upon Holocaust victims...their families...to work for justice and to respect one another as children of God." Then why do we ignore the plight of the unborn? They suffer when they are aborted. Their mothers suffer anguish mentally, emotionally and physically. Our justice system does not show respect for these little ones. And yes, they, too, are children of God.

Abortion is a horrible holocaust - an on-going holocaust - one we need to put to an end. People say we should never forget the Holocaust. I say that we already have since it is happening every day. It's a Holocaust of the Little Innocents. We have forgotten our little ones.

JOIN ARCHBISHOP NAUMANN FOR A HOLY HOUR for our nation and the election! With the upcoming election and all that is happening in our country, we need to join together in prayer now more than ever. Archbishop Naumann will be holding a Eucharistic Exposition & Benediction for our nation and all are welcome to join either in-person or via livestream. Together, let's pray for protection and guidance especially during these next few weeks. **October 26th**, 7:00 pm Holy Trinity Catholic Church 13615 W. 92nd Street, Lenexa KS Visit www.htlenexa.org/livestream to access the

2020 ELECTION NOVENA – The USCCB is offering an Election Novena to help Catholics prepare for the upcoming election. For nine consecutive days, Monday, October 26 through Tuesday, November 3, participants will be encouraged to pray one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be for the day's intention. A closing prayer for elected leaders will be offered on day 10, Wednesday, November 4. To sign up to receive the Novena daily be email, please visit https://www.usccb.org/2020-election-novena and scroll to the bottom of the page.

<u>STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS:</u> "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37) Do you put other "gods" before God? Is your love of money, power, status, comfort or some personal possession greater than your love for God? Do you really recognize that everything you have and that everything you are is a gift from God? The good news – it's not too late to put God first in all things in your life.

PLEASE – 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 <u>Sislparish@Gmail.Com</u>. Mass intentions may be scheduled with Kim as well. MUST SUBMIT BY 9 pm TUES FOR INCLUSION.

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PAGE 2 – bulletin (FOR POSTING ON THE CHURCH INTERNET SITE)

<u>XAVIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL</u> is looking for substitute teachers for the Fall semester. If you are interested in working with talented children and staff at our Xavier K - 8 campus or at our extended care program please contact the school office at 913-682-3135.

XAVIER CATHOLIC PRESCHOOL is seeking two volunteers who are interested in becoming trained as Catechists for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program. Xavier plans to implement the Catechesis Program for the 2021-2022 school year. This is a beautiful ministry! Learn more at https://www.cgsusa.org/ Xavier will cover the cost of the training with a grant. Please call Shannon Holcomb if you are interested or if you have questions at 913-682-1943.

THE UPCOMING KANSAS ELECTION MATTERS!

This past Legislative Session, the Kansas Constitutional VALUE THEM BOTH amendment passed the Senate, but came four agonizing votes short in the House. Planned Parenthood and the abortion industry cheered. The Catholic Bishops of the United States have declared abortion to be the preeminent moral issue of our day. The Catholic Bishops of Kansas call VALUE THEM BOTH their #1 legislative priority. What is VALUE THEM BOTH? VTB is the proposed state constitutional amendment that will "undo" the recent Kansas Supreme Court ruling that recently created a nearly unlimited "right" to abortion. Because of this ruling, all of our current abortion laws including the parental notification law and bans on taxpayer-funded and late-term abortions are now presumed unconstitutional. We need VTB to protect women and their unborn babies from the abortion industry.

Before casting your vote this election, become informed about this and other issues. Then exercise your responsibility of faithful citizenship and VOTE. More information can be found at www.archkck.org/prolife-ks-constitutional-amendment

MASS OF INNOCENTS: Due to COVID-19, we will not be having our annual Mass of Innocents this year. There never was and never will be again a child like the one(s) you lost. That's why, even if we were gifted with other living children, it is right and fitting to acknowledge and grieve their absence. We would be honored to pray for your baby by name. You can send your child(ren)'s name(s) by email to Mary Anne at flifesec@archkck.org. If you have not named your child, you can simply provide your family name. We will add them to the "Book of Remembrance" that Archbishop Naumann will keep in his chapel and pray over during the month of November. For more information on miscarriage support: https://www.archkck.org/.../mclmiscarriage-and-infant-loss

JOYFUL HOMES NOVEMBER 2020: Forgiveness In a fallen world, a family can't stay healthy without a steady diet of forgiveness! Join us this month as we find one small way to invite more joy into our homes by being more forgiving! www.archkcks.org/forgiveness

PROJECT CHRYSALIS is a ministry offering hope through Sacred Scripture and community to parents or 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 will be held on Tuesday October 27th from 7:00-8:15p.m. - both in person and online via Zoom. Our guest will be Jerry Anselmo who lost his son Brian and began the BMA Foundation. We will meet in the St. Mark room in the lower level of Church of the Ascension, 9510 W. 127th St. in Overland Park. For more information and the Zoom invitation link, contact Deacon 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.

REKINDLING THE LIGHT: Spiritual Refreshment for Caregivers in the Holiday Season Hosted by the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and The National Catholic Partnership on Disability with Catholic Author and Speaker Maureen Pratt. Throughout this unprecedented year, caregivers have tirelessly and selflessly shown their love in grand ways and small. As 2020 nears an end, one more potentially tall hurdle remains: The holidays! Full of profound faith and spiritual meaning and additional events and activities, the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Years can be especially challenging, stressful, and draining for caregivers. It can also be a time of isolation and loneliness. Rekindle the Light will provide a virtual half-day of spiritual refreshment for caregivers of all kinds. Rekindle the Light... will be held live online on Saturday November 14, 2020, from 12:30 to 4:30 PM CST. For registration and agenda, go to www.archkck.org/special-needs. For more information, contact Tom Racunas at tracunas@archkck.org or call 913.647.3054.

<u>BEGINNING EXPERIENCE</u> ~ Grief Support Weekend Beginning Experience is offering a healing weekend **November 6-8, 2020**, at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, Kansas. This invitation is open to men and women of all ages who have suffered the loss of a spouse through death, divorce, or separation. It is a time to heal and a time to begin anew. Reservations are required. For more information visit: www.beginningexperience kc.org email: register.bekc@gmail.com or contact Laura 308-530-1873

<u>UPCOMING RETREATS AT CHRIST'S PEACE HOUSE OF PRAYER:</u> Save the date(s)!

Save the date(s)!

Nov. 6th to 8th: LOUIS AND ZELIE MARTIN FAMILY SANCTITY
RETREAT: reflects on the importance of Family Sanctity. Retreat info:
https://www.archkck.org/cpp/christs-peace-house-of-prayer-calendar?cid=38&ceid=3376&ceid=0&cdt=11%2f6%2f2020

calendar?cid=38&ceid=3376&cerid=0&cdt=11%2f6%2f2020

Dec. 4th – 6th, Advent Silent Retreat. Retreat info: https://www.archkck.org/cpp/christs-peace-house-of-prayer-calendar?cid=38&ceid=3378&cerid=0&cdt=12%2f4%2f2020

Jan. 8th – 10th, 2021: Spiritual Reflection & Planning Retreat. Retreat info: https://www.archkck.org/cpp/christs-peace-house-of-prayer-calendar?cid=38&ceid=3377&cerid=0&cdt=1%2f8%2f2021

For more information, contact info@christspeace.com or 913-773-8255.



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.

"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.

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

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.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM - ADULT TRAINING (VIRTUS) Effective Immediately In light of the current health conditions, one prudent and preventative measure we are taking is to make the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children for Adults training available Online as an option. Effective immediately, due to COVID-19, the Archdiocesan requirement for attending a VIRTUS Protecting God's Children for Adults workshop live session will be suspended and the option of the online version of the module can be offered in lieu of live training. This is a temporary safety precaution, and parishes may still offer the live training session available as an option if they prefer as long as the local county and state ordinances in effect at the time of the event are followed. Please note, the training must still be completed prior to participants working around youth, but the requirement may now temporarily be met by completing the online Protecting God's Children module. Individuals needing to attend a session will be offered the option of the online module at the time of registration. They will still need to follow the background screening and policy completion process at the time of registration. Individuals who are already currently registered for an upcoming live session, may log back into their account and change to the online module. These procedures will be reviewed and updated periodically as needed and are in place to protect you, those you work with, and your family. Please stay safe and healthy and continue to pray for all our brothers and sisters in Christ! We are praying for all of you and your families. If you have questions, please contact Sandy Vielhauer at svielhauer@archkck.org or Jenifer Valenti at jvalenti@archkck.org. May God bless you and keep you safe.

PLANNED GIVING BRIEF: Our Catholic Church has spanned the centuries and the globe and through all previous pandemics and disasters has been a source of charity to all through its parish priests and religious. We invite you to make a grateful response to God for these gifts by planning a deferred gift to your parish. Visit CatholicPlannedGiving.org to learn how to accept this invitation.



Election Novena Prayer Intentions

Monday, October 26 through Wednesday, November 4

Each day's intention is followed by one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be.

Day Ones Monday, October 26
As we prepare for the national & local elections, in the midst of a global pandemic, may our political engagement be guided by our Catholic faith.

Day Two: Tuesday, October 27

In this month of the Holy Rosary, may Our Blessed Mother guide us in confronting racial inequalities and restoring peace in our communities.

Day Threes Wednesday, October 28

May all Americans recall the necessity of dialogue, civility, and humility in this election season.

Day Four: Thursday, October 29

May all people understand the moral and ethical dimensions of political decisions and decide accordingly.

Day Five: Friday, October 30

May voters & elected leaders uphold the dignity of every human life in their political engagement.

Day Six: Saturday, October 31

May Catholics recall all aspects of Catholic social teaching as they consider their votes.

May there be a transformation of politics to focus on the dignity of the human person and the common good.

Day Eight: Monday, November 2

May we keep in mind the gift of religious freedom and our duty to defend and exercise it as faithful citizens.

Day Nine: Tuesday, November 3.
Today, as we approach the polls, may we understand & embrace the principles of our faith that guide our political engagement.

Closings Wednesday, November 4

May the leaders elected this week be guided by the Holy Spirit as they fulfill their positions.



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JOYFUL HOMES AREN'T PERFECT



november: Post election, pre-Inanksgiving, 8 months into pandemic life. Raise your hand if you can use some forgiveness in your life right now! In a fallen world, families can only hope to stay healthy on a steady diet of forgiveness.

As a family, discuss:

- What is our normal pattern as a family when someone gets hurt? Do I like this pattern or not? Why?
- Have you ever met someone who is angry and bitter most of the time? What do you think contributed to this attitude?
- What difference would it make in the world if everyone just forgave one hurt in their lives?
- Who do I need to forgive?

Pick one practice this month!

One small, attainable goal sets us up for success.

- Parents, set an example this month by being proactive about asking and granting forgiveness to other members of the family.
- · Adopt the phrase, "I forgive you."
- Have each member of the family think of someone they need to forgive, and pray each day for the grace to forgive them and wish them well.
- Add one small practice to help your family take the next step in faith:

Attend Confession together Do a simple examination of conscience each night Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet

IT'S NOT OKAY

"Sarry."

"It's okay."

Have you ever had this little conversation? While it's a good start, it doesn't usually do the trick when a hurt is significant. Why? Because sin is not "okay." including sins committed against us.

instead, try:

"Please forgive me."

"I forgive you."

In this way, the offending person is acknowledging that their sin needs to be forgiven, not excused. This simple change can make a big difference!

Scripture of the month: Lamentations 3:23
His mercies are new each morning.

How can we give ourselves and each other a clean slate each day?

Want more ideas and encouragement? www.archkcks.org/forgiveness

30th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A (10/25/2020)

Texts:

First Reading. Exodus 22:20-27

Second Reading. 1Thessalonians 1:5-10

Third Reading, Matthew 22:34-40

Theme: Love of God and Love of Neighbor.

Congregation: St. Joseph of the Valley-St. Lawrence Parish, Easton/Kansas.

Dear friends, and Brothers and sisters in Christ, good evening/morning to you all. The Lord invites us again to his banquet table to listen to his word and be fed with the Eucharistic meal. Let us open our ear attentively and hear what he tells us.

Today is the 30th Sunday in ordinary time and just as we enter into the final phase of the Ordinary Time, the scripture Readings of today remind us of what is most important. It is the commandment to Love. The First Reading from the Book of Exodus assures us of the lord's compassionate stance for the needy and vulnerable. He cares for foreigners, the widows and orphans, and the poor. He defends them because of his merciful nature as God. Just as the Lord is kind and merciful to the poor and needy among us, so must we be. The First Reading from the Book of Exodus tells us of the loving relationship that the Israelite people ought to have towards those under-privileged and vulnerable. The three issues touched here concerns groups of people would have been particular vulnerable in the socioeconomic system of the tribes following their settlement in Canaan. Resident aliens, widows, and orphans, as well as the poor who had to borrow to survive, were 'at risk' population within a social milieu in which one welfare and security depended upon being a property owner or at least being or having a breadwinner to provide for the household. Of particular note is the way the text connects its social policy imperatives both to Israel's own history and the very nature of God.

The Israelite people had been treated compassionately by a God of love in their times of vulnerability. No less would be demanded of them now, if they were to remain faithful to their covenant relationship with that same God of mercy. Concern for the poor and weak is a distinguishing characteristic of God, and He in turn requires His people to refrain from exploiting the vulnerable. Jesus in the Gospel reading of today will pick up and develop this teaching by demanding love for one's neighbor, and he will then link such love to the supreme command of the law, the love of God above all else.

The Second Reading from St. Paul's 1 Letter to the Thessalonians illustrates the dynamics of Love at work in the early Christian community in Thessalonica. Having experienced the saving love of Christ preached and witnessed to them by St. Paul and his companions, they opened their hearts to the Gospel and imitated their Christian example.

St. Paul tells them that the joy in their faith during persecution is the fruit of the Holy Spirit and true imitation of Christ. Further, he praises them wholeheartedly for abandoning their idols to serve the true living God and thus becoming living model of faith for all believers in Macedonia and Achaia. These

were communities where St. Paul was residing when the good news about Thessalonians reach him. Moreover, the life that they lived by the power of the Holy Spirt enabled them to spread their loving faith in God to surrounding places. Finally, St. Paul asks them to eagerly await for Christ's return who rescues all from wrath.

In today's Gospel Reading from St. Matthew, we have the last and final of the three questions put to Jesus to trap him by his opponents- the 1st regarding the payment of taxes to Caesar, about which we heard last Sunday, the 2nd concerning the nature of the resurrection of the dead, asked earlier, and the 3nd question "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" which we heard in today's Gospel Reading. The question seems simple, but it is really not. God, through Moses had given to the Jews the ten commandments. And by the time Jesus came into the world, their religious leaders had multiplied them to 613 or so. Now, the devout Jew, all the commandments were to be observed with equal care. Surely to single out one commandment might suggest that the other commandments are not of equal weight, or of lesser importance. This is perhaps the trap that the Jews hope Jesus might fall into.

In the Gospel Reading from St. Matthew, Jesus is asked for the greatest of the commandments. He does not say that it is 'love God' alone, but adds 'love of neighbor' to it. Jesus gives them both. He is asked for one commandment and answered with two. Perhaps, an indication that he saw them as one and the same thing. To love God is to love one's neighbor. One cannot claim to love God and not care for others. By radically connecting the love of God with the love of neighbor, Jesus brings in a new teaching. Clearly above Jesus is showing that these two commandments are not only inseparable but are in fact one commandment. However, there is in fact a third commandment implied in Jesus' answer, namely, "Love of oneself". The third commandment is the one we often fail to notice and yet in some ways the key to the others. For Jesus true love must express itself in the three dimensions. These three dimensions are (a) Love of God, (b) love of neighbor, (c) love of oneself. The first two are positively commanded; the last one is not commanded but presumed to be the basis of all loving.

The commandment to love your neighbor as yourself presumes that you love yourself. What I am to myself becomes what I am to others and vice versa. And together we go to God as he comes to us in love.

Even though Jesus' answer touched on all the three dimensions of love, what is the emphasis, the point Jesus is trying to make? When you ask a question that demands a straightforward answer and the person answers his question and goes on to add another thing that he did not actually ask for, it is most likely that the person is trying to get his attention on the second element of the answer. So, the emphasis in today's question about the greatest of the commandment is not on the obvious love of God but on the love of neighbor which the Pharisees were trampling upon. They, actually had great zeal and love of God and were so conscious about its primacy and importance; but the point Jesus is making to them is that why then they are so insensitive when it comes to love of neighbor?

The error of the Pharisees is still here with us. There are still many Christians who try to separate love of fellow human beings from love of God. Their commitment to faith does not include commitment to love of their neighbor. We shall do well to heed the message of Jesus in today's gospel: that true love of God and true love of neighbor are two sides of the same coin. Any attempt to separate them is a falsification of the message of Christ.

Today's Gospel Reading is probably the best known and most memorized scripture passage in the New Testament. Love is the center of Christian life. To love God with your whole being means to make God the center of our life. Once God is the center of our life, the second commandment is easier to follow, to love our neighbor. It sounds as simple as that, but it is very challenging. It isn't that easy as one may realize. We do not always love as we ought to and our failure to love is an indication that we ought to pray even more to discover and not to fall in love with God.

Finally, it is God who first loves us and that makes us able to love ourselves and therefore to be grateful for the gift our ourselves. This awareness of life as gift is what we mean by loving God. We cannot love ourselves without being grateful to God, and it is gratitude to God that sets us free to really love other people. Too often the value that we place upon others is tied up with what they can do for us-"What is their value to me?". Truly loving one's neighbor entails valuing them as gifts of God. Not only are we gifts of God, and our neighbor's gifts of God, but the love with which we love ourselves and others is the expression of our love for God. And this is the Good News of today.

Fr. Francis Bakyor.

CCD Enrollment Form 2020-21

Fathers Name: (Include middle name)		Mothers Name: (Include middle name and maiden nam		
Address:		Address: (If different)		
Home Phone:		Home Phone:		
Cell Phone:		Cell Phone:		
Work Phone:		Work Phone:	8	
(Emergencies Only)		(Emergencies Only)		
Email:		Email:		
Religion:		Religion:		
Primary Church for the School ye	ear? St. Joseph	of the Valley OR	St. Lawrence	
Emergency Contact (Primary) (So	omeone other than M	Nother or Father)		
Name:		Home Phone:	t:	
Cell Phone:		Email:	Email:	
		1		
Emergency Contact (Secondary)	(Someone other than	Mother or Father)		
Name:		Home Phone:		
Cell Phone:		Email:		
1º Child				
Last Name:	First Name:		Middle Name:	
Gender:	Grade:		Birthday:	
Place of Birth	City:		State:	
Sacraments	City.	Date	Parish and Location	
The Property of the Property o		Date	Parish and Location	
Baptism Pennance	_			
1st Communion				
2 0011111011				
Allergies/Medical Conditions:				
2 rd Child	59.			
Last Name:	First Name:		Middle Name:	
Gender:	Grade:		Birthday:	
	City:		State:	
	Service A.		Parish and Location	
Place of Birth		Date		
Place of Birth Sacraments		Date	Parish and Location	
Place of Birth Sacraments Baptism		Date	raisii aliu Location	
Place of Birth		Date	Parish and Location	

CCD Enrollment Form 2019-2020

3rd Child	Ter . W	Tarren ar
Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Name:
Gender:	Grade:	Birthday:
Place of Birth	City:	State:
Sacraments	Date	Parish and Location
Baptism	l.	
Pennance		
1st Communion		

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Name:
Gender:	Grade:	Birthday:
Place of Birth	City:	State:
Sacraments	Date	Parish and Location
Baptism	1	
Pennance		
1st Communion		

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Name:
Gender:	Grade:	Birthday:
Place of Birth	City:	State:
Sacraments	Date	Parish and Location
Baptism		
Pennance		
1 st Communion		