MASS SCHEDULE
Monday thru Wednesday.........................6:30am
Thursday and Friday.................................8:00am
Holy Days Consult bulletin
Saturday: ................................8:00am and 5:00pm (Vigil)
Sunday: 7:30am, 9:00am, and 11:00am

CONFessions
Saturday 4:00 to 4:45pm or by appointment

EUCHARISTIC CHAPEl HOURS
Weekdays: 12am to 6am and 9am to 12 midnight.
Saturdays: 12am to 7am
Chapel will close at 7am Saturday until 9am Monday.
Holy Days: Please consult the bulletin.

EUCHARISTIC EXPOSITION
Wednesdays after 8 a.m. Mass until Noon (closing with Benediction). Confessions 1st Wednesday.

BAPTISMS
Baptism Class for parents/godparents is normally held on the first Monday of the month at 7 PM in the Church. To register for the meeting and/or to arrange for a baptism, call Karen Rychlewski.

MARRIAGE
Couples planning marriage contact the pastor at least six months in advance.

COMMUNION CALLS
Please call the Parish Office to request Communion if someone is unable to attend Church.

HOSPITAL VISITS
Please notify the Parish Office concerning hospitalization.

REGISTRATION
New parishioners may register at Parish Office or see one of the priests after Mass. New information e.g. address, phone numbers or moving from the parish, please call Parish Office.

BULLETIN INFORMATION
Please submit information for the bulletin by Noon TWO Fridays before publication. Include name, daytime phone number of person submitting information, Commission and group name. Items can be e-mailed to mwelsh@holyspiritstl.org.

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS
Stewardship for August 31-September 1, 2019
Sunday Envelopes, 233 utilized $ 14,374.00
Loose Collection $ 640.47
Online Donations, 53 families $ 3,523.00
Holy Days $ 36.00
Total $ 18,573.47
Weekly Budget $ 20,000.77
Weekly Surplus (shortfall) ($ 1,427.30)

HandS $1,135.00
Parish Improvements $ 720.00

WHAT’S HAPPENING THIS WEEK
Sunday, September 15
8:00 am—Blood Drive, Annex
—Donuts & Coffee, Parish Hall
    hosted by Stephen Ministry
9:00 am—Liturgy of the Word for Children, Rm. 106
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Community Rm.

Monday, September 16
6:00 pm—Quilting, Annex

Tuesday, September 17
9:00 am—Quilting, Annex
7:30 pm—Fire in the Spirit, Community Rm.

Wednesday, September 18
9:00 am—Senior Exercise, Rigali Rm.
7:00 pm—Ensemble/Teen Choir Practice, Church
    —RCIA Inquiry, Parish Hall

Thursday, September 19
9:00 am—Senior Exercise, Rigali Rm.
1:00 pm—Prayer Shawl, Rigali Rm.
6:00 pm—Men’s ACTS Sendoff, Rigali Rm.
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Rm. 2
    —Choir Rehearsal, Church

Saturday, September 21
2:00 pm—CFC Assembly, Rigali Rm.

Sunday, September 22
7:00 am—Salad Sunday, Parish Hall
9:00 am—Liturgy of the Word for Children, Rm. 106
11:00 pm—Men’s ACTS Return Mass
7:00 pm—Al Anon, Community Rm.

WE NEED YOU!
If you’ve ever considered singing in a church choir, NOW is the time to jump in!
The Holy Spirit Adult Choir sings at the 9:00 am Mass every week, with practices on Thursday evenings. We rehearse on Thursdays, beginning at 7:00 pm. If you think you might be interested, let me know. Please note that this choir is not auditioned, and that I firmly believe everyone has a voice. Contact me and we’ll talk about it. I’d love to meet you!

Marilyn O’Neill
Director of Music – Holy Spirit Parish
314-739-0230, ext. 107
moneill@holyspiritstl.org
PRAYERS FOR THE SICK
In your prayers, please remember all the sick and home-bound parishioners and those who care for them.

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Sick Relatives and Friends:

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MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, September 15
7:30am For Our Parishioners
9:00am Fred DeWitt
11:00am Lou Difani

Monday, September 16
6:30 am Linda DeClue

Tuesday, September 17
6:30am Roger Vogt, Special Intention

Wednesday, September 18
6:30am Faithful Departed

Thursday, September 19
8:00am Ed Taszarek

Friday, September 20
8:00am Robert Allman Jr.

Saturday, September 21
8:00am Sarah Scott
5:00pm Carol Klump

Sunday, September 22
7:30am Frank Knoppe
9:00am Fred DeWitt
11:00am For Our Parishioners
Iowa testing is this week! Eat a good breakfast and get a good night’s rest.
If you are interested in volunteering for OASIS please contact Mrs. Hewitt.

Thursday, Sept. 19: K-4 Mass Prepared by grade 2
Friday, Sept. 20: 5-8 Mass Prepared by grade 7

Wish List
- 4 Nasco School Balances
- Bean Bag Chairs for Pre School
- Paper Towel Tubes
- Toilet Paper Tubes
- Plastic Bags
- Clean Milk Gallons & ½ Gallons
- Plastic Water Bottles (empty)
- Knick Knacks
- Empty 2 Liter Bottles with Caps

With God all things are possible!
Mrs. Hewitt

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A PRAYER PARTNER WITH A STUDENT?

No special skills needed just say a prayer for your assigned student daily
Holy Spirit PSR & Full Time School invite you to become a prayer partner with one of our students. Submit your name by completing this form and we will match you up with a student from either the PSR or Full Time School program. You will receive the student’s name and he/she will receive your name. Then please include “your student” in your prayers and “your student” will pray for you in return.
Questions? Please contact Sharon Kaufman 739-0230 x110 or skaufman@holyspiritstl.org
I, _____________________________ (please print) would like to be a Prayer Partner with a student from Holy Spirit PSR or Full Time School. I will pledge to pray for the student who is chosen for me.

SAVE THE DATE!
The full-time school will be having a restaurant fundraiser at the Papa Johns on Dorsett on Tuesday, September 24. A portion of proceeds for each order will be given back to the school that evening so enjoy a night off in the kitchen and support our full-time school students. Thank you in advance for your support!

Sacrament of Reconciliation Parent Mtg.
Monday October 7th - 7 P.M. in Church
This parent session is essential for at least one parent/guardian of all children in 2nd grade and older students preparing to receive the Sacrament for the first time this December. This is an integral component of the child’s preparation for the sacrament. If you have any questions, contact Karen Rychlewski 739-0230, krychlewski@holyspiritstl.org

Knights of Columbus Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest
Open to all students Grades 8-12
2019-2020 Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest
Theme: The Virtue of Charity
Discuss the meaning of Virtue and how you live and embody the virtue of Charity.

In an essay of 500-750 words, consider the meaning of virtue and think about ways in which you exemplify the virtue of Charity to glorify and reflect the nature of God. This could be at home with your families or in your communities, as you enrich the welfare of others.

For contest form & more details, contact Sharon Kaufman, skaufman@holyspiritstl.org, 314-739-0230 x 110

Deadline for submission: Monday, October 14th by 3pm.

PSR News
If you have not registered your child(ren) for Parish School of Religion for the 2019-2020 school, please contact Sharon Kaufman, Coordinator of Religious Education or Julie Spinner both at the Parish Office 314-739-0230 as soon as possible. PSR registration is completely online ONLY. If you do not have computer access and need assistance, please contact Sharon to set up an appointment to complete the registration process.
The Parish School of Religion has religion classes on Tuesday evenings, from 6:45-8 p.m. for students in grades 1-8 who attend public schools. PSR sessions focus on the message of Jesus, experienced within a community of faith with opportunities to pray, worship and do service for others. The students are also prepared to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Confirmation is a parish wide program coordinated by our Youth Minister, Donna Eisenbath.
All families will register and make payments for PSR through our online program, www.holyspirit.psrenroll.com or PSR registration is one of the quick links on the parish website, www.holyspiritstl.org. Detailed information was also sent by email to each returning family.
For more information, please contact: Sharon Kaufman, 739-0230 or skaufman@holyspiritstl.org or Julie Spinner, 739-0230 or jspinner@holyspiritstl.org
**GLUTEN FREE HOSTS AVAILABLE**

If you have a gluten allergy & would like a gluten-free host for communion, please contact Sharon Kaufman, 739-0230 x110.

**YOUTH MINISTRY**

**HOLY SPIRIT YOUTH MINISTRY on FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM**

[www.facebook.com/hsyouth & HS_YOUTH_STL on Instagram](https://www.facebook.com/hsyouth)

**CONFIRMATION**

8th Grade: TODAY, Sept. 22 is Session 9: The Church. We will begin at 9:00 a.m. Mass then meet in The Annex from 10:10–12:30. Sponsors and parents are welcome to attend this great session and discussion about the Catholic Church.

Oct. 23 is an Adult Only meeting for parents. We will help you prepare for the retreat that your child will attend and go over information about the day of Confirmation. No young people, please.

Sunday, Oct. 27 the young people will receive a blessing at the 9:00 a.m. Mass. Our retreat will follow immediately. Retreat is for sponsors & young people. Each young person must have an adult with them for the entire day.

7th Grade: An information meeting will be held Oct. 21 in the Rigali room, 7 PM for all those who wish to join the Confirmation community to be Confirmed in Nov. 2020. Session will begin in January.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS**

All 6th-8th grade students are invited to attend a night just for you! We’ll pray and play from 7-9 in the Annex. Bring a friend and join the fun. The next date is Friday, Sept. 20

**HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS & SENIORS – ALL ARE WELCOME:**

Eat, Pray, Discuss for high school teens meets every Thurs. in the Resource Center (enter through the basement door), 7-9. All 2019-2020 freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors are welcome anytime. Drop in when you can. Bring a friend if you like.

**ADULTS WE NEED YOU!**

Looking for PGC adults for our fall, winter and spring events. We need your help to make all these things possible. Young adults, parents & empty nesters are all welcome. Our young people benefit from your life, your faith & YOU! They truly appreciate your help.

**FALL/WINTER/SPRING** will be here before we know it. We can always use overnight chaperones, drivers, & chaperones for our weekly & monthly meetings, March for Life, & C2B spring retreat. A new Confirmation cohort will begin in January. If you are interested in being a catechist, or helping with meetings, contact Donna E.

**Interested? Want to help our teens encounter Jesus through participation in our parish community?**

Contact Donna Eisenbath.

**WOLF, WEBELO & ARROW OF LIGHT CUB SCOUTS**

The next Catholic award session for Light of Christ (Wolf) and Parvuli Dei (Webelos & Arrow Of Light) is: Oct. 6th, from 1-3pm in the Annex. Makeup sessions, including the first session, are available.

Please bring a parent to each session. Scouts not members of Holy Spirit Pack 954 are welcome to attend and will have a $5 fee for materials. Pack 954 scouts have no additional fee. Religious awards will be presented at Scout Mass in February. Questions: contact Dave Klaus or Mary Ann Malloy at Cubmaster954@gmail.com

**SOCIAL JUSTICE—JUST LIVING**

Father R. Rolheiser says in *One Great Act of Fidelity*: “To say that Eucharist calls us to justice and to social justice, is not a statement that takes its origin in political correctness. It takes its origin in Jesus, who, drawing upon the great prophets of old, assures us that the validity of all worship will ultimately be judged by how it affects ‘widows, orphans, and strangers.”

**THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**

Our prayer shawl ministry makes shawls available to anyone who would like one with no expectation of return. In addition to shawls, we have lapghans (lap-sized afghans), scarves & various items appropriate for all.

**Our next meeting is Sept. 19, 1 PM, Rigali Room of the Annex. AND, our next EVENING meeting is Sept. 25, 7 PM, Parish Hall.** If you already knit or crochet you are already ready to make prayer shawls. If you’re not sure where to start we have patterns, yarn needles & hooks that you can have to make a prayer shawl. There are no time limits or requirements of any sort.

If you don’t knit or crochet & would like to learn, we will teach you. We have needles & hooks as well as yarn to get you started.

Call Mary, 497-5048 to get a shawl or with any questions you might have.

**MEN’S ACTS RETREAT WEEKEND: SEPTEMBER 19 -22, 2019**

Have you thought about going on a retreat? Are you looking to further develop your ties with God, grow your faith, or further dive into the community that is Holy Spirit Church? Would you like some time to get away from the hustle and bustle of life? If you said yes to any of those, the Men’s ACTS retreat is for you.

Jesus said, “Follow Me”, this retreat, put on by laymen, does this through the themes of ACTS—Adoration, Community, Theology and Service.

The next men’s ACTS retreat will be Thurs. evening, Sept. 19, through 11 AM Mass on Sun., Sept. 22, at the Pallottine Renewal Center.

Registration forms are in the Gathering Space. Please call Paul Farrar for more information, 314-606-3341.

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, September 15, 2019 | 5
ADULT SCRIPTURE STUDY OPPORTUNITY

Romans—The Gospel of Salvation is an 8-session program. Paul’s letter to the Romans has been at the center of reflection, conversion, & controversy from the very beginning. This study provides an authentically Catholic, comprehensive, & simple way to understand the overarching theme of Romans—salvation. The cost of materials: $29.

Join us for one of two sessions:
Monday evenings, beginning September 30th, 7-8:30 pm in the Annex, or
Wednesday mornings, beginning October 2nd, 10-11:30 am in the Parish Hall.

To register, complete the form below and either mail or drop it off at the parish office by September 23. If you have any questions, contact Karen Rychlewski, 739-0230, Ext. 108 or krychlewski@holyspiritstl.org.

SLUH VISIT OPPORTUNITIES!
Eighth graders can now shadow for a morning of classes with a freshman host beginning October 1st. ALL middle school boys are invited to SLUH Night on Thursday, October 17th from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Spots are filling up – create an account and register to find out more about SLUH at sluh.org/admissions.

IWA VISIT OPPORTUNITIES!
Eighth graders can visit Sept. 24 and 26; Oct. 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22 and 29; Nov. 7 and 12. If a seventh grader would like to visit, the dates are: Mar. 12 and 26; Apr. 2 and 16. Registration is open: https://www.iwacademy.org/page/VisitIWA.
The carnival committee would like to thank EVERYONE (our sponsors, booth chairs, volunteers and attendees) for supporting this year’s Carnival!

AND, the winners are:

**MAIN RAFFLE:**

1st Prize       Mary Ann Weiss  
2nd Prize       Kathleen Patrylo  
3rd Prize       Anita Magparangalan  
4th Prize       Gary & Marianne Boulcault

**BARREL OF BOOZE:**       Anna Metzger
**STEPHEN MINISTRY**

Stephen Ministry has specially selected & trained men & women to listen with care to all they serve, & to keep all that is shared with them in strict confidentiality. Whether your struggle with emotions is what you consider small, or even if it is larger, Stephen Ministry awaits your call for help. 739-0230, ext.130, leave a confidential message. Compassionate & caring listening for you!

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**PRO-LIFE**

All are welcome to the monthly **Holy Hour for Life**. Join us every 3rd Monday of the month: **Monday, September 16th** from 8pm-9pm in the Eucharistic Chapel. Come spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament in prayer dedicated to pro-life intentions. Come for 5 minutes or the whole hour!

**Boys Into Men**: Sundays, Sept. 29 (ages 11-12) and Nov. 10 (ages 13-17) These father-son programs discuss physical and relational changes into adulthood, communication, and appreciating God’s gift of sexuality. Register through Mercy Hospital.

**Mother-Daughter Afternoon**: Sun, Oct. 13 (ages 10-12). This candid, loving, age-appropriate conversation about puberty, modesty, and the sacredness of human life features registered nurses and a teen Q&A panel. Register through Mercy Hospital.

**2019 Missouri Catholic Conference Annual Assembly**: Saturday, October 5 in Jefferson City. Mocatholic.org

**43rd Annual Respect Life Convention**: Sunday, October 13 at the St. Charles Convention Center.

Watch the bulletin for information on our next parish pro-life meeting!

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**BLANKET & COAT DRIVE**

Winter—it’s right around the corner. That means it’s time for HandS Blanket and Coat Drive. HandS accepts new and gently used coats, hats, scarves, gloves, and blankets. Please begin to get your warm items ready to give to those who are less fortunate and in need of warm clothing.

We will be collecting on these two weekends:

- Questions, Lois, 314-739-6239
- October 19 & 20 AND October 26 & 27

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**SALAD SUNDAY—NEXT WEEKEND!**

Holy Spirit Parish is responsible for the dinner salads served to the homeless once a month (the fourth Sunday) at St. Patrick’s Center. Just leave your donation in the big green bin in the Parish Hall as you come in for mass: before 5:00 Mass Saturday, **Sept. 21**, or until the beginning of 11 am Mass Sunday, **Sept. 22**.

We appreciate your help!

For more information please contact Ellen Staples, 422-2381.

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**BLOOD DRIVE**

Each donation will generate a contribution benefiting Holy Spirit’s Full-time School and PSR programs (for educational tools used by these students).

**Holy Spirit Parish**

**In the Rigali Room of the Annex**

Sunday, September 15
8:00 am – 12:30 pm

**TODAY!**

**Be a Steward of Christ!**
Appointment Preferred.
Walk-in’s welcome.
To schedule an appointment, log on to www.bloodcenterimpact.org
Use group sponsor code 10414

**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER**

**For information or reservations contact**
Michael Koch
10318 ST Dolores
St Ann Mo 63174
314-429-8565 or mj.koch@ad.com

Hole sponsorships available
AROUND TOWN

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend is for husbands & wives who love each other, have a good marriage, & want an even better marriage. So why not plan to have one of the greatest weekends you will ever experience! The next weekends are Sep. 27-29, 2019 or Dec 6-8, Courtyard Marriott, St. Peters. To apply or more info, https://stl-wwme.org/schedule.php or 314.649.7317.

CYC LACROSSE PROGRAM

St. Monica is starting a CYC Girls and Boys Youth Lacrosse program for grades 6th thru 8th for the East area of West Country CYC. Lacrosse is a spring sport. St. Monica is hosting an information meeting for both parents and kids at St. Monica on September 19 at 7:30 pm in the cafeteria. If you are interested in playing, coaching or officiating, please also attend this upcoming meeting. For more information please contact Felix Ferrise 314-792-9296 or stmonicalax@gmail.com

HOLY TRINITY FAMILY FESTIVAL

10901 St. Henry Ln., St. Ann, 63074
Fri., Sept. 20—6-11 p.m.; Sat., Sept. 21—3-11 p.m.
Chicken Dinner - Saturday - 4:30-7:30 p.m.
Tacos/Tamales/Nachos/Funnel Cakes/Sno Cones
Cotton Candy/BBQ, Beer Booth, Basket Raffles/Silent Auction/pull tabs/Raffles: Quilt, Smart TV, 50/50

MARRIAGE ON TAP- SAINT LOUIS

Married couples are invited to a fun date night! Be with other couples who care about a good marriage growing better, and want to enrich themselves. Tues., Sept. 17, the Pasta House Company (Party Room), 8213 Delmar Blvd, U City, 63130 (just East of I-170). 6 PM buffet dinner, $25/person (includes tax & tip). 7 PM dynamic talk: Living Our Faith as a Family by Vince & Marianne Burkemper. Vince & Marianne have been married for 33 years & have three grown children. They are parishioners at St. Joseph—Manchester. Their son, Fr. Andrew Burkemper was ordained to the Priesthood in 2014, their daughter, Madeline teaches 3rd grade in Raytown, MO & their youngest, Claire recently returned from Pohnpei, Micronesia after serving 2 years with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Vince & Marianne’s love for each other, their family & their faith shine through in all that they do. RSVP before Sept. 13: marriageontapstl@gmail.com

ST. LOUIS ROSARY RUN: DEVOTION IN MOTION

5k Run/Walk and St. Stephen’s Divine Mercy Mile Fun Run—8am Sat., Oct. 12, Start/Finish: St. Mary of Victories Catholic Church, 744 S. 3rd St., St. Louis 63102
Includes: Custom Marian Medal, T-shirt, Blessed Rosary Rings, Icon Awards, Holy Water Station, Mystery Markers, Music, Marian Procession, Relic Veneration and more...
Register at RosaryRun.com. Check us out on Facebook. More info: 314-293-8344 Email: stlrosaryrun@gmail.com

FIAT WOMEN’S GROUP

All women are invited to Kenrick-Glennon Seminary (5200 Glennon Dr, 63119) on the third Thursday of each month for prayer and a talk. The next meeting will be Sept. 19. The speaker will be Bishop Robert Hermann, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus and Spiritual Director at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. The Rosary will be prayed at 8 a.m. and Bishop Hermann will speak from 8:15-9 a.m. Coffee will be offered afterwards in the Fireside Lounge until 9:30 a.m. For more information or to watch videos from past Fiat talks, see: www.kenrick.edu/ fiat.

STS. PETER AND PAUL FALL FESTIVAL

In Historic Soulard
Sunday, Sept. 29, 11 a.m.—4 p.m.
Church tours, Church Photography Sale, Grand Raffle (1st Prize is a St. Louis Cardinal Quilt & many other prizes), Pull Tabs, Wine Pull, Crafters, Mum Sale, Silent Auction, Soda, Beer and Brats, Washer and Corn Hole tournaments, and much more.

AUDITIONS: THE YOUNG CATHOLIC MUSICIANS

The choir and orchestra of The Young Catholic Musicians will hold auditions for singers during September in preparation for its 46th Year of service to the Church. These young people (aged 10-17) represent over 40 parishes and schools in the St. Louis area. They learn quality liturgical music and lead the music for Mass once each month at different parishes. Contact Fr. Bruce Forman (314-231-7464 or revycm@charter.net) or Mrs. Mary Smith (314-962-9260 or smithycm@sbcglobal.net) for additional information and to schedule an audition. Visit our web page, www.archstl.org/musicians.

IC QUILT BINGO SOCIAL!

Sunday, Oct. 6, 1 p.m., Immaculate Conception (Arnold) Gym, 2300 Church Rd., 63010. Doors open 11:30 a.m.. Beautiful quilts & money games. Refreshments available. No one under 16, please. Checks will NOT be accepted.

DYNAMIC CATHOLIC, ALIVE!

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

Are we truly joyful Christians? Do we rejoice at the great gift of faith, forgiveness, and love that we have discovered in our encounter with Jesus? It doesn’t take much to rob us of real joy—indifference, ingratitude, lukewarmness, and spiritual laziness. But it also doesn’t take much to rediscover the treasure we sometimes lose through our own negligence. Take time to safeguard your joy, and celebrate when you find it again! (CCC 2094, 2546) www.archstl.org/live-the-faith.


24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Exodus 32:7-11,13-14
Ps 51:3-4,12-13,17,19
1 Timothy 1:12-17
Luke 15:1-32

Monday September 16
Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian
1 Timothy 2:1-8
Ps 28:2,7-9
Luke 7:1-10

Tuesday September 17
1 Timothy 3:1-13
Ps 101:1b-3b,5,6
Luke 7:11-17

Wednesday September 18
1 Timothy 3:14-16
Ps 111:1-6
Luke 7:31-35

Thursday September 19
1 Timothy 4:12-16
Ps 111:7-10
Luke 7:36-50

Friday September 20
Sts. Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Ha-sang & co
1 Timothy 6:20-12
Ps 49:6-10,17-20
Luke 8:1-3

Saturday September 21
St. Matthew
Ephesians 4:1-7,11-13
Ps 19:2-5
Matthew 9:9-13

Today's Gospel is an assurance of God's desire to regain what has been lost. He is a God of reconciliation, pursuing those who have strayed from the truth. Why? Because he cares – he cares more than we do about the people we know who are "lost sheep" or "lost treasures" like the coin in this parable.

Think of the people who have been lost to you because they have abandoned you. God cares and is pursuing them to bring healing to the relationship, and he will continue his efforts even until they take their last earthly breath (sometimes the healing comes after death).

Think, too, of people who are neglecting their faith. Jesus is a Good Shepherd who will never give up pursuing them. Why? Because their value to your family and to the Church is important! Their absence is debilitating the strength of the community. And God, who is the source of the life of the community, is doing everything possible – even the impossible – to lead them to repentance, healing and a safe return.

However, we cannot leave it all up to God. He works through us. Only when we've tried and our influence is nil does God say, "Let go. Trust that I am continually working on the problem." We can believe that Jesus is still chasing after them, even though they hide from him.

He is not far from them, even though they push him away.

If there is something else we can do to invite them back into the sheepfold, but we don't, someday we will have to explain to Jesus why we didn't. Why did we fail to love as much as he loves them? Why did we let them stray away without researching how we could help them? Have we done anything to push them away?

No matter how difficult it gets as we partner with Christ to bring others back to the sheepfold, the most important thing we can do is keep loving them unconditionally. Hopefully, they will see in us the love that Jesus is offering to them.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Who are the lost sheep and missing treasures of your family and your parish community? What will you do to reveal Jesus and his merciful love for them?

2. Is there a parish ministry or an evangelization program that you could join to learn how to better help others turn to Jesus?

3. When the lost are not ready yet to turn to Jesus or return to us or to the Church, how do our attempts to give them Jesus prepare them for an eventual conversion?

4. Why is it worth trying, even if we don't see any fruits for our efforts? Even if it includes sacrifice and extra humility on our part?
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