



THE CARPENTER

NEWSLETTER OF ST. JOSEPH PARISH

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JANUARY 2023

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THE GRACE THAT COMES FROM LISTENING

Fr. Gene Schroeder

PASTOR

Pope Francis is inviting all of us to listen to one another. He's called this world wide "listening session" synodality. That is a word we don't often hear. It simply means being able to listen to each other.

What are we to listen to? First, we're invited to listen to the messages of life happening in our experience, calling for attention and response. Then, as we live in community, we are invited to listen to each other. What do our brothers and sisters report that they have heard? Together we all ask the bigger questions: How is God asking us to be in the world today? -What is God asking each of us as individuals? How is our Church supposed to be in the world today.

A listening church



I think Pope Francis is encouraging us to engage with these questions because he knows that God is a part of everyone's life. When we listen to each other it gives us a chance to listen to the piece of wisdom each of us has and then, together, to know what God is asking of us.

Listening to each other takes lots of deliberate effort and it takes courage. Trying to listen to one another can be very scary for some people. Fear can get in the way and it can cause us not to want to listen to others, especially those who may be saying things that are different from our experiences of life. Fear can cause us to believe that the values that we hold dear in life and that have formed our way of viewing the world might be destroyed. Then, simply as a way to survive, that kind of fear can lead us to shutting ourselves off from what other people have to say.

But we are called to be part of a community. We grow in faith together. So we are called to engage with one another. At some level, I think we all know this. But that doesn't always make it easy to do. We hear that sentiment expressed in the Prayer of St. Francis. Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.....grant that I may not so much seek to be understood as to understand.

In the book, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch, a lawyer who is defending a young black man accused of raping a white woman, tries to help his children Scott and Jem understand the

fear and hatred that has been aroused in the community by the trial. He tells that them, "you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them."

This is not a new sentiment. Many of you will no doubt agree with and try to

practice it in your life. And you all know how difficult it can be to accomplish it. Saying it is one thing: doing it is often an entirely different thing.

Recently I was listening to a podcast entitled "Think Like a Jesuit." In this podcast the speakers were talking about how the wisdom of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, had much to say to our world.

Ignatius lived from 1491 until 1556. It was a turbulent time in the church. We call this period the Reformation. It was a time of great unrest and upheaval. Many people were questioning the way the Catholic Church was being "church" at that time. People like Martin Luther and John Calvin would look at some of the practices of the church and conclude that the church was on the wrong path. In time they would form churches of their own.

It was in this world that Ignatius lived. He spent his time trying to listen to and engage with people. They were often angry and upset about the things they saw happening especially in the church. Among the things he tried to teach were two things that I think speak to us today.

The first of these is that Ignatius talked about the "good" spirit and the "bad" spirit. The starting point for Ignatius in talking with others, is that it was good to engage with others. In fact, engaging with others was the way for us to come to know more about who we were and who God is. So we did not need to fear listening to others. It was the "good" spirit, that was pushing us toward engaging with others. And the "good" spirit was from God who is giving us grace to listen to others.

The "bad" spirit, on the other hand, would lead people to fearfulness. This spirit would lead people to see others as those who would take something away from them. It would see others as people who were out to destroy us and what we believed in.

Think about the consequences for us. Listening to others, trying to stand in their shoes, seeking not so much to be understood ourselves as much as to understand where other people are coming from are good things. In fact, they help us be better persons and they help us to come to understand even better who God is.

One of the big risks in the world today, is that we simply refuse to engage with others who may think differently than we do. Surrounding ourselves with people who think and believe

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CPC '22



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Up Close and Personal

Introducing our High School Seniors



Jacob Scheller

We got the chance to talk with Jacob in the midst of deer season. Hunting is a big part of his life. More on that later. Jacob is the son of Steve and Debbie Scheller and the younger brother of Joe Scheller. He is a senior at Mater Dei High School.

Jacob got his love for hunting from his Dad. He's joined him and his brother Joe on many hunting trips through the years. "I think I was about 5 or 6 the first time I

went hunting with my Dad. They've mostly gone deer hunting and turkey hunting. He got his first deer when he was 14. Along with hunting, he's learned all the skills needed to dress the deer in the field and then cut it up and process the meat. "Most of the time we make ground meat from the deer along with deer jerky and smoked deer links." He's learned those skills from his Dad as well. He hasn't got a deer for this year but he has got a wild turkey.

Jacob has used his shooting skills also as a member of the Clay Trap Shooting Team at Mater Dei. He's been a member of that team since his eighth grade year. Last year the team won the state championship. For the record, in the state tournament, you shoot two rounds of 25 shots and the best average wins. Jacob's average was 24.2. Not too shabby! It earned him fifth place individually at state. He and his teammates will be defending their title when shooting competition begins this spring.

Hunting is just one of the things that has occupied Jacob's time. During his four years of high school he has also been a member of the cross country team. He's become quite familiar with the grounds of Angel Mounds State Park where the local meets are held.

Jacob has been a member of the National Honor Society at Mater Dei these past two years. One of the service projects they engage in, aside from providing tutoring services, is to host study sessions for students as they prepare for final exams.

This past year, Jacob was selected as one of the honorees at the Workforce Luncheon sponsored by Mater Dei and Memorial High Schools.

Jacob has worked hard with his academic classes as well. He's taken a number of AP (Advanced Placement) Classes that earned him college credit in addition to high school credits. Over the years, Jacob remembers having some great teachers. "I remember Mrs. Whicker who taught English and German. The fact that she believed in me was really important." Jacob's hard work in academics is reflected in his achieving a 4.0 GPA going into this senior year.

Next year Jacob hopes to pursue a degree in engineering. That is another Scheller family tradition, since his mom and dad both received their engineering degrees from U of E and his brother Joe is also pursuing an engineering degree. Jacob is looking at going to USI, U of E, or perhaps Murray State University. Jacob is hoping to get his degree in Civil Engineering.

When Jacob isn't hunting or doing academic work, you may find him working at the Rooted Barrel Garden Center. He's part of the landscaping crew. "It can be hard work on hot days but it keeps you in shape." He's got his good friend and classmate, Ethan Kissel to work there as well. You may also find him helping his dad and brother and grandpa farm the forty

plus acres. They are usually planting corn and soybeans.

Among the biggest influences in his life, Jacob points to his family. Along with a love for hunting and the outdoors that he learned from his father, he also learned about the value of hard work. He credits his mom as the person who has taught him how to care for others. Holiday times will find Jacob gathering with the Scheller family (his grandparents live just across the field from them) as well as his mother's family who live outside of Rockport.

Jacob graduated from grade school here at St. Joe. Those years were filled with a lot of memories. "I remember having some really good teachers that believed in me. I remember especially Mrs. Elpers and Mrs. Daugherty. There were tough teachers but they prepared us well for high school. And the best thing about grade school was the great lunches we had."

WORDS OF WISDOM: "One of the things I have appreciated about life, outside of my family, is the group of friends I have. Some of them go back to grade school and some of them are people I have gotten to know in high school. Some of the guys are hunting buddies but a lot of them are just guys who like to hang out together. Being a somewhat reserved person, having good friends helped me to get involved in things I might not otherwise have done. Good friends can challenge you and can be there to support you in tough times. They can make all the difference in the world."

Lauren Voelker

It's been a fast four years for Lauren Voelker, a senior at Mater Dei. She is the daughter of Tim and Julianna Voelker and the older sister of Grant, who is a freshman at Mater Dei.

These past four years have been crammed full of activities. For all four years she has been part of the volleyball team. Her freshman year, she played as one of the team and for the last three years she has served as team manager, keeping track of games stats and equipment. "I've really enjoyed being part of the team. We had to move up a class this past year. We went from being one of the larger schools in the previous class structure to being the school with the smallest enrollment in our present class." The team did pretty well this past year before falling to their rivals at Memorial in the sectional championship.

Lauren has also been a member of the track team for the past three years and plans to be part of the team this coming spring. Her specialty is the discus and the shot put events.

Lauren has also been a member of the German Club and the Pep Club. They have been pretty busy as they have supported the football and soccer teams on their way to state competition. She's also been trained as a member of the Peer Mediation Team who's purpose is to help members of the Mater Dei community resolve disputes.

For the past two years, Lauren has been a member of the National Honor Society. One of the special service projects they do is to sponsor "Coco and Cram" sessions, providing hot chocolate to students at special study sessions in preparation for se-



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mester exams.

Lauren has invested a lot of her time and energy in her academic classes. Over the years she has taken a number of AP (Advanced Placement) and Dual Credit classes that have earned her college credits as well as high school credit. She credits her teachers at Mater Dei with challenging her to do well. Among them are her AP calculus teacher, Mrs. McDurrmon, her chemistry teacher, Mr. Schleter and her biology teacher Mr. Vogel. Her hard work as paid off so far with her achieving a 4.0 GPA going into her senior year.

Lauren graduated from St. Joseph Grade School and remembers her years here with great fondness. "We had a great class and got along well one another. I remember especially the class trip we took in 8th grade to Camp Ondessonk. I played on a lot of the sports teams—volleyball, basketball, softball and track. We had some great teachers and I think they did a great job preparing us for high school, especially Mrs. Elpers and Mrs. Daugherty. But the best thing about grade school were the lunches. Great meals and the cooks were just great!"

Through the years Lauren has participated in a lot of different parish activities. "St Joe Parish feels like a big family where people seem to care about one another." She's helped out at the Fish Frys and the Summer Social. For the past few years she's been helping and learning from her dad, Tim, and Uncle Matt as they have perfected the recipe for green beans at the summer social. "The first year they made green beans, they weren't satisfied with the way the green beans tasted so they checked out a bunch of different recipes before coming up with one they really liked."

For the last few years, Lauren has had the chance to learn about the art of butchering as well. Her dad and a number of other families in the parish have gotten together to butcher some hogs and process all the meat. That's something her grandparents would have known lots about.

Family life has been an important part of Lauren's life. Her grandparents (Dan and Sharon Volker and Joe and Julie Greubel) are all members of our parish. Holiday gatherings for Christmas and Thanksgiving are always something she looks forward to. Another thing they enjoy doing is going boating at Patoka Lake. Lauren has had the chance to go water skiing as well as tubing. "I can get on my water skis but I think I enjoy hanging on to an inflatable tube pulled by a the boat."

When Lauren isn't busy with sports, school activities or her classes, you may find her working at Panera Bread on the west side of Evansville. She works as a team leader. In that job she has had to learn how to do all the different jobs, from line cook to serving. Hard work and being reliable are some of the traits she learned from both her parents. "I think I get my determination and strong will from my dad. My mom is lot more laid back about things. But both of them have shown me how important it is to follow through with commitments and do what you say you

are going to do."

Next year, Lauren plans on pursuing a nursing degree. "I've always wanted to get involved in the medical field. I think that is where I can best use my talents." She's been accepted at U of E but also has her application in at Purdue and if she gets accepted there, that is probably where she will end up. Down the road, there is also the possibility of becoming a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant.

WORDS OF WISDOM: "I think it is important to appreciate the time you have with friends. I've enjoyed the special times of high school, dances, going to sporting events, especially going to the state football championship game this past year. For the first two years of high school we didn't get the chance to do these things because of the covid pandemic. That made the experiences we had the last two years all the more special.

I think there are always going to be challenges in life and you need to just keep pushing forward everyday. Having some good friends can be a big help. They can be there to support you in the difficult times and you can do the same thing for them. I think we all need people in our lives who can push us to do things we might not otherwise do. When they believe in you it can make all the difference in the world."

Conner Wiley

Conner is a senior at Mater Dei High School, the son of Jenny Wiley and Nick Wiley, the grandson of Joe and Kathy Weber and the younger brother of Drew Wiley.

When we sat down to talk with Conner, he was still basking in the glory of the being part of the Mater Dei Football State Championship team. "I'd have to say that football has really been the biggest part of my life. I've been playing since I started in EJFL in the second grade." The deep bond he has felt from being part of the Mater Dei football team began in those years in the junior football league and continued through the Mater Dei cub football and then being a member of the freshman, reserve and varsity football squads. "We've built up a great chemistry through the years and that helped us have the success we had. I don't think we were the most talented or the strongest team physically, but we had a great desire to win and were willing to do what it took to succeed. We believed in ourselves and knew we had a chance to do something great."

Winning the state football championship this year was really the culmination of their efforts. As it happened, this year's state title match was a rematch of last year's state championship game where they lost to Andrean High School. When asked what the difference was this year as compared to last year, Conner replied: "We were better prepared this year and less intimidated by the team we played and the whole atmosphere of being in a state championship game. We knew what we had to do and we did it. We faced a very strong running back and we knew we had to stop him if we had a chance to win."

As a starting cornerback, Conner was a big part of the defensive effort that sealed their victory. "I think we had a lot of confidence in each other on the team. That's a big part of the chemistry we built up. It's about believing that each of us could do our part and trusting that everyone would do their job. I don't think we could have played a better game than we



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(Continued from page 3)

did for the state championship.”

Being part of the team has given Conner a great sense of family. “There’s nothing like the atmosphere of being part of the team—from all the weight training, to the long hot practices that began at 6 am, to watching game films, to the team dinners we had before all the games, to the traveling to games and then being able to play the game itself. It’s been the best part of my high school years.”

Now that football is over, Conner is focusing his athletic talents on being part of the swim team at Mater Dei. “It takes a little to switch gears for swimming because swimming uses a whole different set of muscles than you use in football. We should be a little better than we were last year.” In the past, Conner has focused on the 200 meter butterfly, but this year he will likely participate in a number of individual races as well as some relays.

Conner also plans on being a member of the track and field team this spring. He has participated in the discus and shot put events. “I’m not the biggest guy around in these events, so if I’m going to do well, I have to focus on developing a good technique.”

In addition to sports, Conner has worked hard in his classes. “I’ve had some great teachers at Mater Dei—Mr. Keith, Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Jewel come readily to mind. With their support and encouragement Conner is on track to earn his honors diploma this year.”

As far as plans for next year, Conner was originally thinking about going to USI to get a business degree and then pursue a career in real estate. But now he’s leaning more toward going to Ivy Tech and doing his apprenticeship in Heating and Air Conditioning. “I like the idea of doing some ‘hands on’ kind of work. I could see myself working in the HVAC field or perhaps using these talents to buy and renovate houses. I’ve been around my Grandpa Weber over the years when he has worked on different rental properties so I got a little taste of what house renovations are all about.”

Conner attended grade school here at St. Joe. “Grade School years were great. I remember all my teachers—from Pre-School through eighth grade. You knew they cared about you and that made those years so special. I’ve been around a lot of folks through the years and not everyone looks back on their grade school years with fondness. But for me grade school was fun. I had some great classmates, good teachers and the school lunches were the best. I looked forward to them everyday. The lunch ladies were the best!”

It’s no surprise that when talking about influences in his life, Connor speaks of his coaches. “They can get on your case at times but I always felt that they wanted the best for me.” Conner also sees his maternal grandparents and his uncles and aunts as big supporters. “My Grandma Kathy is very organized and has always been there for me.” I think I share a love of travel with my two uncles, Sam and Tim. They both took the opportunity to do some extended traveling in Africa and South America. I

always had a desire to visit places like Tokyo and the Far East.”

WORDS OF WISDOM: “When you can learn from life you will be ahead of the game. Things in life may not go the way you want them to or hoped they would. But I have found that there are good things that can come out of any situation. Being able to trust yourself is important. Having people who believe in you is important too. I think simple things like following through with what you say you are going to do are important as well. There have been things in my life that have been difficult to deal with. But going through them has made me a lot stronger and I think a better person. It’s not like I want to go through them again, but if I hadn’t had them, I don’t think I would be the person I am.”

TUITION ASSISTANCE AT MATER DEI

Applications for tuition assistance are now available for parents wishing to apply for Mater Dei High School tuition assistance for the 2023-24 school year. Hard copies of applications are available at Mater Dei and at our school and parish office. To download and complete the application online go to www.materdeiwildcats.com. Select “Enrollment”, then



“Tuition and Financial Assistance”. The priority deadline for applying this year is March 1, 2023. Questions? Please contact Jill Seiler at Mater Dei (812-426-2258, ext. 322) or email jseiler@evdio.org.

---SALUTING OUR YOUTH---

• Ima Ntewo and Ashley Jung were selected as the Serra Club Vocation Winners from St. Joseph School. They were honored at a special luncheon on November 7 sponsored by the Evansville Serra Club.



• Jay Smith helped lead the Rose Hulman Football team to a very successful season.

• Tess Freeman received the Kiwanis Award Winner for soccer at Mater Dei.

• Kaelyn Wessel was awarded a two year Orr Fellowship this year. She is using it to pursue a career with a company in Indianapolis selected by the Orr Fellowship. She will also be working with those applying for Orr Fellowships.

• Mitch Adler, Conner Wiley and Lane Wargel helped to lead the Mater Dei Football team to a



state championship this year. In addition, Mitch was selected as a member of the All City Football Team by the Downtown Quarterback Club.

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FRIDAYS MARCH 3 & 17

It’s time to make plans for “the best fish fry in the Evansville area,”—March 3rd and 17th We will be serving our fish dinners **DRIVE**

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THANK YOU MARK....

If you drove by the parish on any Monday night during the lawn mowing season, you would more than likely have found Mark Schmitt hard at work. For over twenty years, Mark has taken on the role of maintaining all our mowing equipment. That meant keeping all our weed eaters filled with string as well as making sure they had gas and oil. That way, all our mowing crew volunteers had to do was to pick up a weed eater and start using it. Mark looked after the self propelled lawnmowers and our riding lawn mowers as well. This involved not only making sure there was gas and oil in all the equipment but also changing oil filters and servicing the engines.

At the end of the mowing season, Mark would give all the mowing equipment a good checking over. And he kept an eye on all the equipment and knew just when it was time to replace equipment. Mark treated everything with such care and dedication. That made it really easy for our mowing crews to do their work and it enabled us to get the maximum usage out of each piece of equipment.

After all these years, Mark has decided it is time to bring his lawn mowing maintenance efforts to a conclusion. And now it is our time to thank Mark for his many years of service. You have blessed us in your own quiet and efficient way for so many years.

....FOR A JOB WELL DONE!



THE WISDOM THAT COMES FROM GROWING GRACEFULLY

Most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely about getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of our physical life, but I simply don't believe that's all there is to it. What looks like falling can largely be experienced as falling upward and onward, into a broader and deeper world, where the soul finds its fullness, is finally connected to the whole, and lives inside the Big Picture.

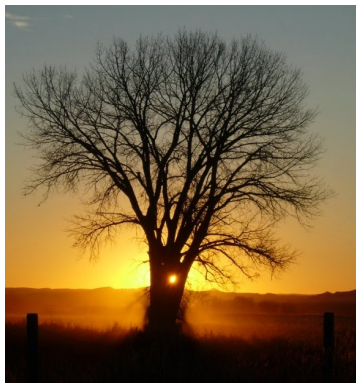
It is not a loss but somehow a gain, not losing but actually winning. We probably have to have met at least one true elder to imagine this could be true. I've met enough radiant people to know that it is possible. They have come to their human fullness, often against all odds, usually by suffering personally or vicariously and empathetically. As Jesus describes such a person, "from their breasts flow fountains of living water" (John 7:38). They are models and goals for our humanity, much more than the celebrities and politicians whose actions we seem to care so much about today.

Remember, no one can keep us from the second half of our own lives except ourselves. Nothing can inhibit our second journey except our own lack of courage, patience, and imagination. Our second journey is all ours to walk or to avoid. My conviction is that some falling apart of the first journey is necessary for this to happen, so don't waste too many moments lamenting poor parenting, lost jobs, failed relationships, physical challenges, economic poverty, or other tragedies. Pain is part of the deal. If we don't walk into the second half of our own life, it is surely because we do not want it. Let's desire, desire deeply, desire ourselves, desire God, desire everything good, true, and beautiful. All of the emptying out is for the sake of a Great Outpouring.

Fr. Richard Rohr, OSF

Jesuit theologian and scientist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) prayed to allow his life to unfold in full confidence of God's presence until the very end:

When the signs of age begin to mark my body (and still more when they touch my mind); when the ill that is to diminish me or carry me off strikes from without or is born within me; when the painful moment comes in which I suddenly awaken to the fact that I am ill or growing old; and above all at that last moment when I feel I am losing hold of myself and am absolutely passive within the hands of the great unknown forces that have formed me; in all those dark moments, O God, grant that I may understand that it is You (provided only my faith is strong enough) who are painfully parting the fibres of my being in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substance and bear me away within Yourself.



If we learn anything at all as time goes by and the changing seasons become fewer and fewer, it is that there are some things in life that cannot be fixed. It is more than possible that we will go to our graves with a great deal of personal concerns, of life agendas, left unresolved. . . . So has life been wasted? Has it all been for nothing?

Only if we mistake the meaning of the last period of life. This time of life is not meant to solidify us in our inadequacies. It is meant to free us to mature even more. . . .

This is the period of life when we must begin to look inside our own hearts and souls rather than outside ourselves for the answers to our problems, for the fixing of the problems. This is the time for facing ourselves, for bringing ourselves into the light.

Now is the time to ask ourselves what kind of person we have been becoming all these years. And do we like that person? Did we become more honest, more decent, more caring, more merciful as we went along because of all these things? And if not, what must we be doing about it now? . . .

Can we begin to see ourselves as only part of the universe, just a fragment of it, not its center? Can we give our-

BECOMING MAKERS OF PEACE

We pray constantly for an end to senseless violence in our world and we all hope that it will happen. But we can do more than hope, we can begin by being bearers of peace in our own lives. We can do that by....

- **Respecting our self and others** and avoiding uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical attacks and self-destructive behavior.
- **Communicating better** by sharing feelings honestly, and looking for safe ways to express anger, and working at solving problems peacefully.
- **Listening carefully** to one another, especially to those who disagree with me, and considering other's feelings and needs rather than insisting on having our own way.
- **Learning to forgive and to apologize and make amends** when we have hurt others, learning to forgive others and keep from holding grudges.
- **Respecting nature** and treating the environment and all living things, including our pets, with care and respect.
- **Playing creatively** by selecting entertainment and toys that support our family's values and avoiding entertainment that makes violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.
- **Being courageous** by challenging violence in all of its forms when we encounter it, whether at home, at school, at work, or in the community, and standing with others who are treated unfairly.



selves to accepting the heat and the rain, the pain and the limitations, the inconveniences and discomforts of life, without setting out to passively punish the rest of the human race for the daily exigencies that come with being human?

Can we smile at what we have not smiled at for years? Can we give ourselves away to those who need us? Can we speak our truth without needing to be right and accept the vagaries of life now—without needing the entire rest of the world to swaddle us beyond any human justification for expecting it? Can we talk to people decently and allow them to talk to us? .

Now, this period, this aging process, is the last time we're given to be more than all the small things we have allowed ourselves to be over the years. But first, we must face what the smallness is, and rejoice in the time we have left to turn sweet instead of more sour than ever.

A burden of these years is the danger of giving in to our most selfish selves. A blessing of these years is the opportunity to face what it is in us that has been enslaving us, and to let our spirit fly free of whatever has been tying it to the Earth all these years.

Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB

Opening deeply to the truth of our own aging is wise. Opening deeply to the truth of our own impermanence is wise. Although such opening may not come easily at first—we all know how the ego tends to resist vulnerability—it is important to do so if we wish to mindfully use the time remaining to us. To live a life of an elder is to ripen into being that is more than simply elderly, more than just old. It involves ripening into clear-eyed acceptance of the way things actually exist. That ripening involves, for each of us, many difficult reckonings in

the multifaceted, multidimensional understanding that everything that can be lost will be lost. . . .

Grey hair and sagging notwithstanding, many of us still cling childishly to so much that is unreal and inessential. Many of us still cling to reputation, to imagined security, to unexamined habits of attitude and behavior, and to self

-image. We have deep aversion to having all of our cherished illusions stripped away by life-in-form's seeming indifference.

We all have reservoirs of fear, some large and some small and subtle, around entering this new terrain of unknown and mystery: our last years. What will aging do to me? To my body? To my mind? . . . Will I matter to anyone? Will I be a burden? How will I die?

We do not know. We have no clue what these years will hold for us. We have no clue what will happen tomorrow. The "moment that changed everything" usually arrives unannounced.

The only person who can answer the questions posed by the often painful challenges of aging is the person we will be in the moment we confront those circumstances. The shaping of that person into someone with greater wisdom and equanimity can begin in this moment.

If we are to claim the last years of life as years that hold the possibility of awakening into equanimity and lightness, into the very embodiment of grace, we need to bear witness to the ripening of that possibility. Not only would it be a blessing for each of us, it would be a blessing for a world starving for such witnessing.

Mindful of impermanence, the breath-by-breath arising and

abiding and falling of each moment, we can remain in remembrance of our longing to exist in wisdom and love and compassion. We can remain in our intention to ripen into the spiritual maturity that is our birthright to cultivate. There is no more noble way to spend these years than to become an elder, to bear witness to the world as placeholders for peace, love, wisdom, and fearlessness.

Kathleen Dowling Singh

We ripen in holiness and spiritual fulfillment as we learn to sit in the sun of God's mysterious, sustaining presence that energizes and guides our efforts, bringing us to realms of grace that are beyond, way beyond, anything we can achieve by our own efforts alone.

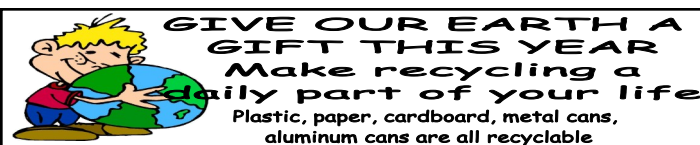
The lifelong process of ripening brings about a corresponding ripening of our ability to understand the fundamentals in a wiser, peace-giving manner. As a person ripens in unsayable intimacies in God, they ripen in a paradoxical wisdom. They come to understand God as a presence that protects us from nothing, even as God unexplainably sustains us in all things. This is the Mystery of the Cross that reveals whatever it means that God watches over us; it does not mean that God prevents the tragic thing, the cruel thing, the unfair thing, from happening. Rather, it means that God is intimately hidden as a kind of profound, tender sweetness that flows and carries us along in the intimate depths of the tragic thing itself—and will continue to do so in every moment of our lives up to and through death, and beyond.

As fruit ripens, it fulfills itself in reaching its full potential to nurture us and give us pleasure. We might say that, as fruit ripens, it fulfills itself in giving itself to us. In a similar way, we do not undergo the transformative process of ripening for ourselves alone, but rather that our transformed presence might be a source of nurture to others.

Then too, there is the fruit that, in remaining unharvested, falls onto the ground and dies. The lesson here is in Jesus' words, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it brings forth fruit a hundred fold, a thousand fold" (John 12:24).

And so it is with us. As we grow old we realize that, in all we have been through, Love has been using us for its own purposes. And for this we feel immensely grateful. We know, too, that our inevitable passing away, in which we fall into the ground and die, is not the end of our ripened and transformed life. It is rather our passage into an infinite and deathless fulfillment. Saint John of the Cross [1542-1591] talks about a windfall of delight. [1] When fruit becomes very ripe, the slightest wind can cause it to fall to the ground. This is also true of us, and not just in the sense in which we learn to be undone and fulfilled in all the unexpected little blessings that come to us throughout the day. The windfall of delight pertains as well to our last breath, which we know and trust will send us falling forever into the deathless depths of God.

James Finley



The final stage of the wisdom journey in mythology is symbolized by the ruling image of the king or queen or what I like to call the grand father or grand mother. When we can let go of our own need for everything to be as we want it, and our own need to succeed, we can then encourage the independent journey and the success of others.

The grand parent is able to relinquish center stage and to stand on the sidelines, and thus be in solidarity with those who need their support. Children can feel secure in the presence of their grandparents because, while their parents are still rushing to find their way through life's journey, grandpa and grandma have hopefully become spacious. They can contain problems,



inconsistencies, inconveniences, and contradictions—after a lifetime of practicing and learning.

Grand parents can trust life because they have seen more of it than younger people have, and they can trust death because they are closer to it. Something has told them along the way that who they are now is never the final stage, and this one isn't either. We need to be close enough to our own death to see it coming and to recognize that death and life are united in an eternal embrace, and one is not the end of the other. Death is what it is. I am a grand father when I am ready to let go. To the grand mother, death is no longer an enemy, but as Saint Francis called it, a "welcome sister."

The soul of the grand parent is large enough to embrace the death of the ego and to affirm the life of God in itself and others, despite all imperfections. Its spaciousness accepts all the opposites in life—masculine and feminine, unity and difference, victory and defeat, us and them and so on—because it has accepted the opposition of death itself. Grand parents know that their beliefs have less to do with unarguable conclusions than scary encounters with life and the living God. They have come to realize that spiritual growth is not so much learning as it is unlearning, a radical openness to the truth no matter what the consequences or where it leads. They understand that they do not so much grasp the truth as let go of their egos, which are usually nothing more than obstacles to the truth.

I cannot imagine a true grand father or grand mother who is not a contemplative in some form. And contemplatives are individuals who live in and return to the center within themselves, and yet they know that they are not the Center. They are only a part, but a gracious and grateful part at that.

Richard Rohr

LITURGICAL MINISTERS January 21, 2023--February 19, 2023

DATE	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS	READERS
Saturday January 21, 2023 5 PM	Butch & Linda Feulner	Sis Jarboe
Sunday January 22, 2023 8 AM	Joan Inkenbrandt Lisa Cook	Terry Drone
Sunday January 22, 2023 10:30 AM	Angie Will Diane Bassemier	Mandy Elpers
Saturday, January 28, 2023 5 pm	Donald Werner Donna Niemeier	Mike Reffett
Sunday January 29, 2023 8 AM	Tom & Dolores Folz	Marcia Frey
Sunday January 29, 2023 10:30 AM	Darlene Appler Danielle Weledge	Jane Scheller
Saturday February 4, 2023 5 PM	Maey Loehrlein Diane Woods	Jessica Reckelhoff
Sunday February 5, 2023 8 AM	Imogene Baehl Mike Elpers	Jalene Weber
Sunday February 5, 2023 10:30 AM	Tricia Gerteisen Doris Taylor	Shane Wessel
Saturday February 11, 2023 5 PM	Carolyn Hutchison Lee Werner	Toni Askins
Sunday February 12, 2023 8 AM	Rodney & Paula Baehl	Donna Blankenberger
Sunday February 12, 2023 10:30 AM	Sally Kempf Cecelia Koch	Mandy Elpers
Saturday February 18, 2023 5 PM	Ron & Margaret Angermeier	Sis Jarboe
Sunday February 19, 2023 8 AM	Randy & Kathy Fehrenbacher	Chick Duncan
Sunday February 19, 2023 10:30 AM	Amy Cody Paul Hillenbrand	Jane Scheller

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MISSION OUTREACH



Be an island of mercy in
a sea of indifference.

Pope Francis

Not all of us can do great things, but
we can do small things with great love.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

SPECIAL COLLECTION THIS MONTH FOR THE CHURCH IN LATIN AMERICA

Your gift helps fellow Catholics in Latin America and the Caribbean who are rich in spirit but lacking in material resources to participate more fully in the life of the Church.

Several recent grants to the Collection were used to train seminarians; provide pastoral care with those infected with HIV/AIDS; provide formation training to pastoral ministers in rural parishes; provide formation to high school students to serve as pastoral agents; and develop and execute diocesan pastoral plans.

Over the past five years, the Collection for the Church in Latin America has faithfully distributed 87 percent of its annual income as pastoral grants. Please contribute generously. For more information, visit their website at www.usccb.org/latinamerica.



DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING FOR RESPECT FOR LIFE JANUARY 22, 2023

On Sunday, January 22, you are invited to join Catholics throughout the United States in a national day of prayer and fasting for a growing appreciation and respect for life.

We pray especially

—For those deprived of their human needs and their human rights, that they may be given the dignity that God confers on all his people.

—For those who have grown very old and especially those tempted to die, that God might grant them patient endurance to embrace the journey of their life.

—For young mothers everywhere, and especially those who are tempted to despair, that through the child they carry deep within, they might know hope and joy.

—For those who are forgotten especially for the poor, the sick and the aged, that God might move us to love them as the image of Christ and so change their hearts.

—That the Lord, who rescues the life of the poor from the power of the wicked, might send an angel to guard and protect all unborn children, all those who suffer from violence and all those who live on the margins of society.

—For all parents who struggle to raise their children, that God will give them the strength of the children of God and the support of the people of God.

—For all the people of our church, that our daily lives might give witness to our commitment to the innocent child, the forgotten and all those whose life is not valued.

—For those condemned to die, and especially for men and women on death row, that their plight might move the hearts of the people of this nation to move from an attitude of punitive justice to one of restorative justice.



Thank you so much for the many ways you support the St. Vincent dePaul Food Pantry ministry. Back in November we received your amazing donation of 200 lbs of free ground pork. We're always glad to get fresh meat that is donated. As you know, it is very expensive to purchase. In addition, thanks so much for the weekly donations of food

which you bring in so faithfully. In addition to all this, we are grateful for the faithful volunteers from your parish: Terry Drone, Martha Baehl, Ruth Burk and Dolores Folz. Without a doubt, you are helping us give a 4-day supply of groceries (including fresh milk, eggs, meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, potatoes) along with cereal, canned and dry goods, personal hygiene and cleaning items to those facing hard times. Thank you for acting on the inspiration to help those in need.

Sr. Donna Marie OSB, Manager, SVDP Food Pantry

**We are now accepting donations for the
St. Vincent dePaul Food Pantry each weekend.**



**HERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO
PUT YOUR PRO LIFE BELIEFS
INTO PRACTICE**

Birthright of Evansville is looking for volunteers to help operate their drop in center on Reed Street. Their goal is to support to women who are pregnant or think they may be pregnant. Birthright is interdenominational and is not involved in any political activities, or lobbying. Birthright's focus is on loving the mother, reminding her that there is hope and ensuring she is not alone. Men and Women are invited to offer their time. The drop in center is open three days a week for two hours. Contact them at 812-2555 to offer your help.



**NEXT PARISH
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in the gym**



**SPECIAL COLLECTION JAN. 28-29
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GOD PARISH IN VLADIVOSTOK, RUSSIA**



JANUARY 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8 & 10:30 Mass Food Drive Collection 	2 7 am-6:30pm Eucharistic Adoration SCHOOL RESUMES 6:30 PM MASS	3 7:30 AM Mass	4 7:30 AM MASS Parish Staff Meeting 12-2 Bible Study 6:45 pm	5 NO MASS	6 7:30 am Mass Youth "Beat The Winter Blues" Game Night	7 Confessions 4-4:40 pm 5 pm Mass Food Drive Collection Haiti Collection
8 8 & 10:30 am Masses Family Religious Education 9:00 Confirmation Session 6 11:30—1:30 Food Drive Collection	9 7 am-7 pm Eucharistic Adoration 6:30 PM Mass 7 pm Knights of St. John Meeting 	10 7:30 am Mass	11 7:30 am Mass Parish Staff Meeting 12-2 Bible Study 6:45 pm	12 NO MASS Altar Society Meeting 6:30 pm	13 7:30 am Mass	14 Altar Society Kuchen Sale Confessions 4-4:40 pm Food Drive Collection 5 pm Mass
15 8 & 10:30 am Masses Family Religious Education 9:00 Food Drive Collection	16 7 am-7 pm Eucharistic Adoration 6:30 pm Mass 7 pm Men's Club Meeting	17 7:30 am Mass	18 7:30 am Mass Parish Staff Meeting 12-2 Bible Study 6:45 pm	19 NO MASS 7 pm Haiti Ministry Meeting	20 7:30 Mass 	21 Confessions 4-4:40 pm Food Drive Collection 5 pm Mass
22 8 & 10:30 Masses Food Drive Collection	23 7 am-7 pm Eucharistic Adoration 6:30 pm Mass	24 7:30 am Mass Prayer Day for Vocations 6 am Tuesday--6 am Wednesday	25 7:30 am Mass Parish Staff Meeting 12-2 Bible Study 6:45 pm	26 NO MASS 	27 7:30 am Mass	28 Confessions 4-4:40 pm 5 PM Mass Food Drive Collection
29 8 & 10:30 am Masses Family Religious Education 9 am <i>Message Renewal Sunday</i>	30 7 am-7 pm Eucharistic Adoration 6:30 pm Mass	31 7:30 am Mass	1 7:30 am Mass Parish Staff Meeting 12-2 Bible Study 6:45 pm	2 NO MASS <i>COME AND SEE WHAT ST. JOE SCHOOL HAS TO OFFER TO YOU THURSDAY FEB 2 5-7 -m</i>	3 8:15 am Mass with Prayer Partners	4 Confessions 4-4:40 pm Confirmation Mass 5 pm Food Drive Collection

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(Continued from page 1)

THE GRACE OF LISTENING....(cont.)

as we do can give us some comfort in the short term. But the truth is that growth comes from engaging with those who do not necessarily agree with us.



The second thing about Ignatius' teaching that struck me is what I call "the presumption of good will." Ignatius did not use this word, but he did talk about how important it was to see what someone else was saying in the very best possible light. What he would say is that when you

listen to someone else, try to see the "good" in what other people are saying.

Now, I'm the first to admit, this can be really hard at times. Not only do we have to make it easy for people to like us, but we have to make it easy for people to hear the "good" in what we have to say. The words we use in speaking can help others to hear what we have to say but they can also be a big hindrance. What Ignatius would say to us is that we have to be willing to see the good in what the other person is saying. What is the value are they trying to convey.

To do this we have to be aware that the words people use or even the way they say them may be triggers for our defenses, causing us not listening to them or dismissing what they have to say. And when our defenses are triggered, it takes lots of courage to keep our heart open to what the other person is saying.

The folks in the Marriage Encounter Movement had a saying that what can shut down communication is listening to your spouse "with your motor running." By this they meant that all

the while we were listening to what the other person had to say, we were busy framing our rebuttal to it in our mind. And that can shut down any kind of real listening.

In the end Ignatius would tell us that the grace God gives us can be found in engaging with others and doing the hard work of really listening to each other. And Ignatius would tell us that God gives us this grace in great abundance!

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