

# Our Ego Keeps Us From the Greatness We Were Made For

CONSTANCE T. HULL



**Our souls are expansive.** They are able to reach depths that we cannot fully fathom. When we begin to see this part of ourselves we often experience fear and awe. We do not know what to do with this part of ourselves because we are often blind to it in our daily lives. We are blind to it because — more often than any of us would like to admit — we allow our ego to rule us.

The ego keeps us from seeing the great love God has for us and the gift of giving ourselves over to others in love. The ego keeps us from the greatness we are made for. It keeps us blind to the true depths within each one of us.

The ego is where all of our fear, pride, vanity, grasping, envy, and selfishness dwell. It is the part of us that tells us to cling to what we want no matter what, even to the point of discarding and hurting other people. Our egos keep us from loving the people around us as we should because we'd rather hold onto some small modicum of control than give freely to the people God puts in our path.

## *Center of the Universe*

It is within our vocations whether lay, religious, or priestly that we learn to confront this part of ourselves.

The ego causes us to place ourselves at the center of the universe. It leads us to grasp at the smallest and pettiest of things, because when we allow our ego to be at the center of our being unchecked, we live in a place of fear and distrust; we see God and others as a threat. Bishop Robert Barron in his book *And Now I See* explains:

"But what exactly is the problem with the way we think and see?... perhaps a simple answer can be given in these terms: we see and know and perceive with a mind of fear rather than with a mind of trust. When we fear, we cling to who we are and what we have; when we are afraid, we see ourselves as the threatened center of a hostile universe, and thus we violently defend ourselves and lash out at potential adversaries. And fear — according to so many of the biblical authors and so many of the mystics and theologians of our tradition — is a function of living our lives at the surface level, a result of forgetting our deepest identity."

If we were to consciously pay attention to how we respond to people throughout our day, we would discover that we often interact with others from a place of fear. We allow our own ego to take the reins in our relationships, which is why we often experience conflict with others. Whether it's with our spouse, children, friends, co-workers, or our brothers and sisters in Christ, most of the issues that arise in our relationships are the result of our ego and the heaviest of sins: pride.



Pride is the most destructive sin we battle. It places us at the center of all things over God and all others. It is the sin that leads to great spiritual blindness and it is the sin that tears people apart the most. Pride is what got us into this mess in the first place. It is the desire to be God, to grasp at power. Pride leads us to fear because we view others—even the love of others—as a threat to our own illusion of control. This is why God tends to use dramatic means to rip this sin out of us through our relationships with everyone around us.

### *Love and Fear*

The irony is that we are the most happy, free, and at peace when we live with God at the center of our lives not our own ego. It is in opening ourselves up fully to God that we can then turn in love towards others free of the fear the ego causes within us. Bishop Barron states:

“At the root and ground of our being, at the “center” of who we are, there is what Christianity calls “the image and likeness of God.” This means that at the foundation of our existence, we are one with the divine power which continually creates and sustains the universe; we are held and cherished by the infinite love of God. When we rest in this center and realize its power, we know that, in an ultimate sense, we are safe, or, in more classical religious language “saved.” And therefore we can let go of fear and begin to live in radical trust.”

Much of the fear we experience as a result of our ego has to do with whether or not we know we are loved.

We question our worthiness of being loved by God and by others. In our Fallen state, we know that we place ourselves in an extremely vulnerable position by allowing other Fallen people love us. They will inevitably — even if they love us deeply — hurt us. Spouses hurt one another all of the time both inadvertently and intentionally. The same goes for all of our relationships with others.

The greatest fear we battle is in relation to God's love for us and our willingness to open ourselves up to Him. In our woundedness from the Fall and the lies the Enemy is constantly bombarding us with day-in-and-day-out, we question whether or not God truly loves us.

In our fear, the Cross isn't even proof enough for us. This is why we have to re-orient away from ourselves and make God our center. If we don't make the concerted effort to make this shift every single day, then we will become fearful and fall into sin. We will once again allow the ego to take the lead, and all of us know that it becomes a tyrant once we allow it to rule.

Our egos cause us to cave in on ourselves and to live in the shallows rather than the depths God calls us to. The ego makes us small, when we are made for greatness. It is the ego that keeps us from loving God and loving others as we are meant to. When we begin to wrestle free from its grip over us, we quickly see that it is the ego that most often keeps us from loving. Love is freedom because it comes first-and-foremost from God. It is perfect love that casts out all fear. We cannot grow in love as long as we allow our egos to keep us from the love of God and love of others.

We don't think so, but in reality, loving others is much easier than trying not to love others. Any broken relationships in our lives should be proof of this truth. It is much more exhausting to stay angry at or distant from a family member, friend, co-worker, or brother and sister in Christ than it is to choose to love them and relinquish the hurt and anger that's been caused. Letting go of our pride is to choose freedom. It is to choose to love and to admit that we are not the center of the universe, God is the center. He forgives. He loves and so should we. That's where we will find the peace and joy He wants for us. It is in this relinquishment that God heals us and heals our relationships with others.

Our egos hold us back from living the life of holiness that God is calling each one of us to. He is inviting us to enter into the love of the Divine Persons. He's made us for communion with Him and communion with one another. We cannot enter into that dynamic encounter with Him if we place our egos at the center of our lives. We also cannot find the courage to love others in the way we are meant to because fear will hold us back. Charity always requires fortitude and there's nothing that blocks fortitude more than our own ego. Let us place God at the very center of our lives so that we can live in His love and radiate that love out towards others.

# November 2020

## Church of the Japanese Martyrs

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> All Saints Day/Daylight Saving Time Ends  2pm 1 <sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Parent mtg 4pm sung Vespers at SM 6:30pm Youth Group at SM	<b>2</b> All Soul' 	<b>3</b> Election Day <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Vern & LaDonna Domeier	<b>4</b> 7pm-8:15pm JM/SP CCD	<b>5</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Albert Sellner	<b>6</b> 	<b>7</b>  <b>8:00pm Mass</b> †Alice Sellner
<b>8</b> 32 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in OT  4pm sung Vespers at SM 6:30pm Youth Group at SM	<b>9</b>  7pm KC meeting at SM	<b>10</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Jerome "Choky" Koll	<b>11</b> Veterans Day  7pm-8:15pm JM/SP CCD	<b>12</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> CUF L & †D	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>  DMA video is shown  <b>8:00pm Mass</b> †Al Clennon
<b>15</b> 33 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in OT  4pm sung Vespers at SM 6:30pm Youth Group at SM	<b>16</b> 	<b>17</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Nadine Sellner	<b>18</b>  7pm-8:15pm JM/SP CCD	<b>19</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Bernice Augustin	<b>20</b> 	<b>21</b>  DMA commitment weekend  <b>8:00pm Mass</b> †Pat Steffl
<b>22</b> Jesus Christ the King  2pm AFC Confirmation mtg 4pm sung Vespers at SM 6:30pm Youth Group at SM	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>8:30am Mass</b> †Sylvan Schumacher	<b>25</b> NO RELIGIOUS ED <b>7:00pm Mass/Thanksgiving Vigil</b> †Gilbert & Marlene Windschitl	<b>26</b> Thanksgiving Day/Parish Office closed 	<b>27</b> Parish Office closed 	<b>28</b>  <b>8:00pm Mass</b> †Clarice Weisensel
<b>29</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent  4pm sung Vespers at SM 6:30pm Youth Group at SM	<b>30</b> 	We Remember those we have lost during the past year: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>             Albert Sellner              Rita Windschitl              Robert Mickelson              Blain Pyan              Irene Sprenger           </div> <div>             Mildred Augustin              Marlene Windschitl              Leonard Hillesheim              Lucille Nachreiner Schweiss           </div> </div>				

## Church of the Japanese Martyrs Ministry Schedule - November 2020

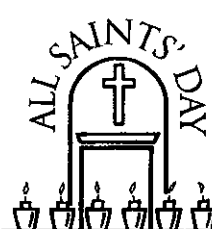





Date	Reader	Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	Servers	Gifts	Rosary	Music
11/7/20 8pm Mass	Randy Lax	not yet	Josh & Logan Moldan	On the Altar	Volunteer	Becky Sellner
11/14/20 8pm Mass	Rick Lax	not yet	Emma Fischer	On the Altar	Alice Hillesheim	Randy Lax
11/21/20 8pm Mass	Steve Lax	not yet	Emma Windschitl	On the Altar	Volunteer	Ronda Mathiowetz
11/25/20 7pm Thanksgiving Vigil Mass	Rhonda Lux	not yet	Mark Anderson	On the Altar	Stacy Tauer	Julie Anderson
11/28/20 8pm Mass	JoAnn Schumacher	not yet	Sidney Tauer & Nicholas Tauer	On the Altar	Volunteer	Julie Anderson

**If you are unable to do your assigned ministry, please find a replacement or switch with someone on the schedule.**

**\*\*USHERS - Volunteers please.**

**Thank you for your ministry to our church!!**

# november 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 10:30 AM MASS (w/Confessions after) +Leo E. Schroeffer 2-4pm AFC Parents only Mtg @ SESM for First Reconciliation All Saints Day Daylight Saving Time Ends	<b>2</b>  ALL SAINTS DAY	<b>3</b> 5:30 PM MASS +Mass for the Poor Souls  Election Day Remember to Vote!!	<b>4</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Richard Zwaschka  7-8:15 pm Rel Ed for Grades 1-11 at JM	<b>5</b> 7:00 pm CCW Prayer w/Meeting to follow-Soc. Hall	<b>6</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Carol Renberg	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 10:30 AM MASS (w/Confessions after) +Lenny Berberich	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 5:30 PM MASS +Val Rathman	<b>11</b> Veterans Day 8:30 AM MASS +Roman Zwaschka  (Office will be closed)  7-8:15 pm Rel Ed for Grades 1-11 at JM	<b>12</b>  Veterans Day	<b>13</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Charlotte (Callanan) Wandersee	<b>14</b>  I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving." Psalm 69:30 NKJV
<b>15</b> 10:30 AM MASS (w/Confessions after) +Alan McMullen	<b>16</b>  Fr. Zach away	<b>17</b> 5:30 PM MASS +Connie Suess	<b>18</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Rosemary Rathman  (Office will be closed)  7-8:15 pm Rel Ed for Grades 1-11 at JM	<b>19</b> 6:30 pm Admin. Council Mtg-Soc. Hall	<b>20</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Deceased Members of Pat Augustin family	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10:30 AM MASS +Eileen Fredin (w/Confessions after)  2:00 pm AFC Confirmation Meeting - SESM	<b>23</b>  THANKFUL Grateful BLESSED	<b>24</b> 5:30 PM MASS +Kyle Kopischke	<b>25</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Leonard & Bea Haala, Diane Arnold-Haala  No Rel Ed Classes	<b>26</b> Thanksgiving Day 8:30 AM MASS +Roman Zwaschka  Give thanks	<b>27</b> 8:30 AM MASS +Margaret Berberich  (Office will be closed)	<b>28</b> 
<b>29</b> 10:30 AM MASS (w/Confessions after) +Anna Richter & Clem & Dorothy Sellner  First Sunday of Advent	<b>30</b>  FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT	We Remember those we have lost since last November:  +Val Rathman                      +Marlene Rathman +Rosemary Rathman              +Charles Wellman +Roman Zwaschka                +Loren Wagner				

**Church of St. Paul – Comfrey, MN**

## Church of St. Paul, Comfrey - November, 2020

Date	Lector	Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	Servers	Ushers	Rosary	Gift Bearers
November 1st 10:30 AM MASS All Saints Day	Dale McMullen	None	Owen Veerkamp	Matt & Erin Eischen	Judy	On the Altar
November 8th 10:30 AM MASS 32nd Sunday in OT	Jean Kopischke	None	Jeremiah Veerkamp	Bob Zwaschka	Martha	On the Altar
November 15th 10:30 AM MASS 33rd Sunday in OT	LeAnn Helget	None	Matt Fischer	Dan Eischen	Marge	On the Altar
November 22nd 10:30 AM MASS Jesus Christ the King	Leah Eischen	None	Cody Nickel	Jeff Veerkamp	Judy	On the Altar
November 29th 10:30 AM MASS 1st Sunday of Advent	Sue McMullen	None	Adam Veerkamp	Darrell Platz	Martha	On the Altar

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**Thank you for your ministry to our church!!**