

PARISH FAMILY OF ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 20, 2008

2510 Middle Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116
Founded 1834

PARISH STAFF

Mrs. Barbara Belski, Dir. of Youth Ministries
Mr. Francis Dadowski, Deacon
Mr. James Finn, Pastoral Associate
Mr. Robert Kardasz, Dir. of Music Ministries
Father John Marcucci, Pastor
Ms. Antoinette Pilarski, Principal
Father Edward Schleicher, Parochial Vicar
Sr. Lois Spinnenweber, CDP, Apostolate Minister
Miss Rose Stegman, Dir. of Faith Formation



Web Site: stmaryglenshaw.org

E-Mail: rectory@stmaryglenshaw.org

Parish Family Administration Office: 412-486-4100

Religious Formation Office - 412-486-5521

Youth Ministry Office - 412-492-9344

Social Ministry Office - 412-486-4021

Parochial School - 412-486-7611

Marian Hall - 412-684-1112

Fax: 412-486-4150



SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

DAILY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Monday through Friday at 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

RECONCILIATION

Saturday at 11:00 a.m. until final penitent is finished

BAPTISM

On Sunday twice a month after parental interview

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Twice a year in a communal celebration
Individually upon request

MATRIMONY

Saturday weddings at 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m.
Notification at least 6 months in advance

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Monday at 12:00 noon

PARISH SURVEY RESULTS

The members of the Pastoral Council are still in the process of collating all of the surveys that were submitted by the parishioners. It will take them some time to summarize all of the various suggestions and ideas of the parishioners into general categories of parish life. Once the process is completed, the results will be shared with the Parish Family. The Council members will use the “majority views” of this survey to determine the “goals and objectives” of our parish life for future. This process is one of the important responsibilities given to the Parish Pastoral Council as mandated by the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ALWAYS OPEN

If there is any member of the Parish Family who would like possibly to serve on the Pastoral Council, that person should make the request known to a member of the Parish Staff. There is a process of “discernment” that potential candidates are asked to experience before they are empowered to serve on the Pastoral Council. Membership is always open to those who would be interested in this discernment process that outlines the role of the Council member.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE TAX

For those persons who have a concern about the Allegheny County Alcoholic Beverage Tax that is the responsibility of all churches who have a festival, all parishioners can be assured that *St. Mary of the Assumption* (after a long process that our Office Staff had to experience with the County) has complied with the law. We sent a check for \$184.90 to the County from the proceeds of our Parish Festival.

INCREASED OFFERTORY RECOMMENDED

As the members of the Finance Council worked to make sure that the budget for 2008-09 was balanced, it was become increasingly apparent to them that there is a need for an INCREASED offertory collection each week. The escalating costs of maintaining a Parish Family of this size with all of its facets of parish life continue to become more and more expensive. The Finance Council is hoping that parishioners who have been generous to the parish in the past might consider increasing their weekly contribution so that we can meet the increased costs now placed on the Parish Family.

THE NATIONAL DATABASE

All members of the Parish Family who are present to our young people in any type of parish program MUST be enrolled in the National Database as prescribed by the Diocese. This includes every paid personnel member of the parish and school, and every volunteer in the school, CCD, sports programs, and any type of training process for the young people that includes ADULT presence. There are basically four items for this enrollment: (a) the code of Pastoral Conduct; (b) PA State Police Criminal Clearance; (c) PA Child Abuse Clearance; and (d) Protecting God’s Children Workshop. Simply call the Parish Office to learn of the details of this process.

MARIAN HALL CLOSED

Because of the repairs being done in Marian Hall and the improvements being made to the kitchen area, Marian Hall will be closed all this week. Work should be completed during this coming week, so that events may again be held in the Hall beginning next Sunday, July 27th with the blood drive.

MARRIED COUPLES TO REGISTER

We offer a kind reminder to all of those couples who have been married in the past year or so that they should make sure that they are registered in the Parish Family as a married couple. If they move away from our Parish Family after their marriage, we suggest that they call the closest parish to their new home and make sure that they register there.

OUR FESTIVE CELEBRATION

We alert all parishioners to the fact that our FEAST DAY, August 15th, this year will fall on a Friday. Our “Festive Celebration” in honor of Mary will be on Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. We hope that all members of the Parish Family plan to be with us for this great day in honor of Mary, the patroness of our Parish Family for these 174 years!

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

Each year the Little Sisters of the Poor stand at the doors of our church “begging for alms” for the wonderful work that they do among the poor. The Little Sisters will be here next week with the hope that each of us will offer a generous support to their work. There is no envelope in our packet, so we might remember to bring some extra funds with us.

The kingdom of heaven is like a farmer who sowed good seed



LITURGIES FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, July 20, 2008 - Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 4:00 p.m. Patsy & Minnie Mignella - Daughters
- 6:00 p.m. Vincent Golobic - Family
- 7:30 a.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 9:00 a.m. George Duffy - Duffy Family
- 11:00 a.m. Robert Sperling - Wife, Patricia

Monday, July 21, 2008 - St. Lawrence of Brindisi

- 7:00 a.m. Roy Hartzell - Stebler Family
- 10:00 a.m. Joseph Martin - Mr. & Mr. John Basso

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 - St. Mary Magdalene

- 7:00 a.m. Robert Root - Mr. & Mrs. Edward Gregg
- 10:00 a.m. Sally Ann Molnar - Family

Wednesday, July 23, 2008 - St. Bridget of Sweden

- 7:00 a.m. Madlyne Campbell - Students & Staff of St. Mary School
- 10:00 a.m. Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Dugan - Family

Thursday, July 24, 2008 - St. Sharbel Makhluif

- 7:00 a.m. Ronald Boyle - Diane Siford
- 10:00 a.m. Betty Graf - Mr. & Mrs. John Graf

Friday, July 25, 2008 - St. James

- 7:00 a.m. Len Hotopp - Tom & Dona Hotopp
- 10:00 a.m. Bernie Meinert - Jack & Barb Jones

Saturday, July 26, 2008 - St. Joachim & St. Anne

- 8:00 a.m. Rita A. Adams - Stephen & Michael & Family
- 2:00 p.m. Wedding of Clark Yannotti & Stephanie Silay
- 4:00 p.m. Jean Lis - Daughter, Sally
- 6:00 p.m. Anna Mae Walsh - Family

Sunday, July 27, 2008 - Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30 a.m. Jack Bell - Sylvia Fragomeni
- 9:00 a.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 11:00 a.m. Charles & Doris Reddinger - Tom & Kathy Goral

Weekly Activities at a Glance

- Tuesday** (PAC) 5:00PM - PowerZone Sports Camp
- July 22 (Pantry) 6:00PM - Open Pantry
- (Plaza) 7:00PM - Burning Hearts Middle School Grp.
- (Rectory) 7:00PM - St. Vincent DePaul Meeting
- Wednesday** (Church) 9:30AM - Pray and Play Day
- July 23 (Courts) 3:00PM - CYM Drop-in Outdoor B'Ball
- Sunday** (Marian Hall) 8:00AM - Blood Bank
- July 27 (Church) 9:00AM - Liturgy of the Word for Children
- (Church) 11:00AM - Liturgy of the Word for Children

Banns of Marriage

III. Clark Yannotti (St. Mary) & Stephanie Silay (St. Mary)

Pine Richland Community Day

August 9th is Pine Richland Community Day and St. Mary's school has rented a booth to showcase our school. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and see some old friends. Any parent that would like to participate in helping out at the booth for the day please call Sandy Ondriezek at 412-487-8594 or e-mail ondriezek@comcast.net. It's a wonderful way to promote the school and enjoy a summer day at the park.

Widows/Widowers of St. Mary's are invited to meet on Sunday, July 27th at Hoover Restaurant on Route 8 at 5:00PM. For more information or questions, please call Barb 412-486-4902 or Marge at 412-486-5521.

R.I.P.: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Anthony Vacchiano, brother of Philomena Hoehn.

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE by Bud Ozar
Parents plant values in their children anticipating the tiny seeds of honesty, respect, commitment and fidelity. These values learned in the home, will grow with our child and become "a safe haven" to many.

FREE WILL

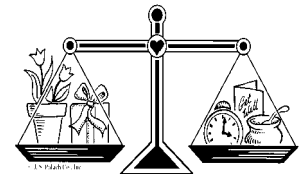
WE HAVE NOTHING OF OUR OWN BUT OUR WILL. IT IS THE ONE THING THAT GOD HAS SO PLACED IN OUR OWN POWER THAT WE CAN MAKE AN OFFERING OF IT.

~St. John Vianney

Offertory Collection

July 13, 2008	Envelopes	Contributions
Offertory	676	\$14,042.26
Cash/Loose Cks.	-	\$661.00
Children's Offertory	25	\$34.20
Peter's Pence	3	\$30.00
Parish Share 2008	21	\$13,945.00
Parish Needy	43	\$679.00
Total	768	\$29,391.46

Daily Readings



THOSE WHO ARE JUST MUST BE KIND
~Wisdom 12:19

- July 21: Mi 6:1-4, 6-8; Mt 12:38-42
- July 22: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Jn 20:1-2, 11-18
- July 23: Jer 1:1, 4-10; Mt 13:1-9
- July 24: Jer 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13; Mt 13:10-17
- July 25: 2 Cor 4:7-15; Mt 20:20-28
- July 26: Jer 7:1-11; Mt 13:24-30
- July 27: 1Kgs 3:5, 7-12; Rom 8:28-30; Mt 13:44-52 [44-46]

SACRAMENTAL LIFE



BAPTIZED IN CHRIST

Marissa Marie Bigante
Victoria Marie Peterson
Elizabeth Yukako Thomas

Congratulations to their parents, godparents, and grandparents. Please join us in welcoming them into our *Parish Family!*

A VOCATION VIEW

Good and evil exist together in the world. Pray that good may grow and take root in you like a mustard seed that, when full-grown, is the largest of plants. What are you doing to nurture good in our world? (Matt. 13:24-43)

FOCUS ON MATRIMONY

During the month of July we have been focusing on various aspects of the Sacrament of Matrimony. This coming week we will observe **NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING AWARENESS WEEK from July 23-29**. Natural family planning is the term that indicates methods of achieving or avoiding pregnancy that are in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church. To find out more, classes are scheduled at various parishes and at UPMC Mercy Hospital. For more information and a schedule of classes, visit the diocesan web page www.diopitt.org/education/nfp.htm or call (412)456-3160.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKENDS

Give your kids the best gift they can get—parents with a **GREAT** marriage! Attend a Worldwide Encounter weekend and spend 44 hours away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones—and focus only on each other. If you’d like greater depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationship, you’ll like the difference a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend can make. For more information or to register, contact: Lou and Mary Locante at (412)635-7775.

A MARRIAGE MOMENT

“Couples with two jobs, two cars and two kids say they’re often too tired, too stressed, too bored when they do manage to find one-on-one time.” (Dr. John Friel) If this sounds familiar do you have the courage to simplify your life? Just don’t get rid of the kids.

GOLDEN WEDDING CELEBRATION

The diocese of Pittsburgh is once again planning its annual Golden Wedding Celebration for couples who are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. This year’s celebration will begin with Mass at St. Paul Cathedral on **Sunday, October 12th at 3:00 p.m.**

Bishop Zubik will be the celebrant. A reception will follow in the lower level of the Cathedral. If you are one of the couples celebrating your 50th anniversary in 2008, and would like an invitation to this event, please call Jim Finn (412)486-4100 before the July 25th deadline.

MARRIAGES INVOLVE MIRACLES a retreat for married couples with Fr. Scott Seethaler, OFM Cap. Begins Friday, August 8th with registration at 4pm and supper at 6pm. The retreat ends on Sunday, August 10th, after a noontime lunch. This retreat will be held at the Paul VI Pastoral Center in nearby Wheeling, West Virginia. For more information, please feel free to contact: info@paulvi.org or call (304)277-3300.

RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Faith Sharing for 16th Week Ordinary Time

The Sunday scriptures reflect some of our cherished teachings of the Catholic Faith. This week ponder **how:** God is like both parent and spouse to each person. God is the **SOURCE** of all good. God loves us more than we can imagine, God **ALONE** satisfies our desire for happiness. God glorifies **US!** See some paragraphs in the *Catechism for the Catholic Church* for fuller enjoyment; paragraphs 370, 385, 733, 2782-2785, 1718, and 2012.

JULY 22 – Woman of Faith, Saint Mary Magdalene is celebrated as the first **WOMAN** disciple to whom our Risen Lord appeared and sent to tell the good news. In her honor, call someone today and share some **GOOD NEWS.**

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE open **THIS** Tuesday and Thursday **MORNINGS,** July 22 and 24.

The **YEAR OF SAINT PAUL** began June 29. Mark September 29 on your calendar as a time to come to a **SAINT PAUL BOWL.** Clip the passage which will appear in **THIS** column each week from one of his letters and memorize the passage. Be part of a game on Sept. 29, 7:15 PM; watch for future details.

✂️
: **Romans 8:26** “In certain ways we are :
: **weak, but the Spirit is there to help us.** :
:
✂️

CATECHISTS support families by sharing their love and experience of Jesus with children, youth and other adults. **Here in our own parish YOUR zeal is welcomed to be part of the Ministry of the Word. Our MONDAY sessions will be in need of a catechist for Grade 3 and perhaps another for an older group of youth. For details on bringing YOUR talents and zest to share the Word, call Rose Stegman at 412-486-5521.**

Faith Formation / C.C.D. Registrations are still being taken for the coming season for children and youth who attend public schools. Sessions will begin again in September with any of three programs to be part of: Weekly on Saturday morning, Monday evening, or once-a-month Family program for the entire family to participate. Adults and older teens welcome to assist in classes. Call 412-486-5521 for details.

SUMMER BIBLE PROGRAM, youth and kids-at-heart-beyond youth **HELP!** You are welcome to help **NOW** with preparations for **Son World Amusement Park, Daily 9:30 AM –Noon, August 11-15.** Call Lee Ann for **details, 412-492-8043.**

YOUTH MINISTRY**SUMMER FOCUS ON OUR
YOUNG ADULTS.**

All young adults [post high school graduation and into early 30's] are encouraged to call Barb Belski with an update on your status. Leave a message and contact number at 412-486-4100, ext. 409 or email Barb at belskib@verizon.net. See the CYM bulletin board for some selected photos of past youth ministry events from the years 1999, 2000 and 2001.

**Special request from the staff at the soar
shelter for homeless women:**

The ladies need small tubes of toothpaste and feminine sanitary pads. Please put your donations in plain bags and place in the marked box in the CYM lobby.

**OPEN GYM FOR
HIGH SCHOOL TEENS**

Mr. Phil Fitzgibbons invites all parish high school youth, boys and girls [who will be in Grade 9-12 for the 2008 - 2009 academic year] to our weekly Open Gym in the Parish Activity Center (PAC) every Wednesday from 5 - 6 PM.

**YOUTH GROUP
2008-2009****LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD ADULTS!**

If you are interested in helping us with our high school (Grade 9-12) program during the 2008-2009 school year, please call the CYM office. You will need to meet all of the diocesan requirements for adult volunteers and that can be arranged with our office staff. Special training in the LifeTeen program has been arranged for early September.

We especially need adults who:

- Are committed to their Catholic faith.
- Love teens.
- Read Scripture and pray regularly.
- Are willing to be trained in youth ministry practice.

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is a gathering of Catholic youth in Grades 9-12 from around the country; it will cost ~\$800 per student. The next gathering will be at Kansas City November 19-21 in 2009. We will begin our breakfast fundraisers in the fall to raise money for this trip, but youth who are interested need to register as soon as possible by calling the CYM office. The Diocese of Pittsburgh will begin registration this fall for this awesome event.

Call the CYM line for current information on our social, spiritual and service activities for teens and young adults at 412-492-9344 or 412-486-4100, ext. 409.

ST. MARY SCHOOL**SCHOOL CHOICES SO IMPORTANT**

Have you made a decision concerning your child's participation in a pre-school or kindergarten program for this year? It is not too late to investigate all that our school has to offer for the families with such children. Simply call the school number during regular office hours and you will be given the proper information concerning our value-orientated educational process. Our school is open to all persons of the area, not simply those who belong to our Parish Family. Come, discover the opportunities that are available for your child!

GROCERY AND SCRIP NEWS

Because of the importance of the "grocery and scrip" sales that take place on the weekends, the "Development Committee" has opened up the possibility that all parishioners might have access to this operation during the week. The "Development Committee" is the "brain and brawn trust" of our catholic school families all of whom have the responsibility to raise 10% of the total cost of the school through fund-raisers. With a school that costs over \$1,300,000, the fund raising must be over \$130,000. Raising this money is the responsibility of ALL the families in the school. The talented members of the Committee are hoping to involve all of us in this process. All those going shopping during the week might simply pass by the school, pick up your purchasing power certificates and use them immediately that day. For the customer there is no charge for this service and the customer does not lose any value in purchasing power. The store then reimburses the school for the use of these certificates. Thereby, without any cost to the parishioner, the school is able to support the necessary fund-raising component of the budget. Might you be a parishioner who will begin to use this service each shopping day???

SUMMER SCRIP HOURS

The Scrip office hours will be from 9:00 – 11:00AM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, located in the back of our school, adjacent to Providence Hall. Sales continue in the vestibule of church **between** the 4:00 & 6:00PM, and **between** the 9:00AM and 11:00AM liturgies.

SERVICE HOURS

If any 8th grade student would like to earn some service hours for Confirmation, help will be needed in school on Tuesday, August 12th, at 10:00 AM. Any student willing to volunteer is asked to call the school office by Friday, August 8th.

MATH-ON-THE-ROAD

The next Math – On – The – Road will be Tuesday, July 22, 2008 from 11:00 to 12:30. If you are interested in participating or hosting on Tuesday, please call Ms. Ondrizek 412-487-8594 or e-mail ondrizek@comcast.net. Ciara and Ms. Ondrizek are anxious to work with you!

OUR PARISH NEWS

**GOOD
NEWS
TO
SHARE**



Christian Mother's Women Organization

To follow is the sixth installment about the Confraternity of Christian Mothers. To follow are more advantages to joining the Confraternity as outlined in Mother Love.

....the benediction of the Holy Father and of many venerable Bishops. They are our spiritual Fathers, the ambassadors of Jesus Christ. Their desires for the salvation of souls cannot fail to be fulfilled by their Master.

....the care exercised over the mothers by the Spiritual Director, the daily intercession of the members one for another, and their good example. Whenever a member prays for herself and her children, all the other mothers and their children partake of the fruit of her petition. It is the same with regard to all the good works. Every member has as much share in the merit of the good performed by others as if it were, to a certain extent, her own individual work; and this union of love, prayer, and merit follows the departed mothers beyond the grave."

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME

if you have a child age five or under, why not plug into this ministry. Each Wednesday morning during the month of July, we gather at 9:30am in the Children's Liturgy Room for **PRAY AND PLAY DAY**. When we finish in church, we head over to Middle Road Park for fun and fellowship. Moms, dads, grandparents and care-givers are welcome, as well as older siblings. No reservations needed! Call Monica to find out more at (412) 492-0242.



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BLOOD DRIVE

Blood Drive

July 27, 2008

8:00AM to 1:00PM

The Blood Bank is in dire need of donors as the supply is critically low. A volunteer will be calling you. Please be generous as the life you save may be your own some day. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

GRADES 6-7-8 YOUTH... Meet with MARK Tobin, Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00 PM on the plaza or at the PAC center if rain. Plan to join youth going to a drive in Movie in AUGUSTSee the Permission forms and details in print. Pick up a copy in our church foyer BY the Children Liturgy Room in the blue box.

The **NEXT MARKET DAY** will be **August 21**, so there is still time to order some refreshing summer treats and easy meals. If YOU would like to assist on the 21st, please call Lee at 724-443-1147. This is a **vigorous** SERVICE opportunity for youth.

SMAA Golf Outing

When: Monday, Sept. 15, 2008
Where: Birds Foot Golf Club
Time: 12:00 Shot Gun Start
18 Hole Scramble
Cost: \$135.00
Hole Sponsor: \$135.00



Steak Dinner, Prizes, Beer and Soft Drinks every 3 Holes.
Supports all athletics at St. Mary's. Please contact Kelly Cannon
Ph: 412-551-3150. Email: kellycannon@verizon.net.

RETREAT NEWS

Did you make a resolution to grow closer in your relationship to Jesus? Why not plan to make a retreat?

WOMENS FALL RETREAT

November 7-8-9, 2008 are the dates for St. Mary's annual retreat for women. The retreat is held at the nearby St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, on Pittsburgh's Southside. We begin on Friday at 5:00pm and end on Sunday at 12:30pm. For more information please call: Irene Linkowski (412)487-1779, Elma Plietz (412) 486-3508 or Patricia Rafferty (724)443-6885. More information to come!

RETREAT INFORMATION is always available from our pastoral associate, Jim Finn. He has a list of dates and retreats centers in the diocese. Call (412)486-4100 for more information.

FAMILY FEST at St. Paul's Seminary

The Office for Family Life and Catechesis will sponsor a special day for families on Sat. August 23rd. Bishop Zubik invites all families (nuclear, step, blended, single parent, etc.) to a special Mass which he will celebrate at 12:00noon. The day will include a catered picnic lunch, a tour of the seminary, games and lots of fun for everyone! Be sure to mark this date on your calendar. Interested families can register for \$25.00 per family--\$5.00 single (we would like to include everyone; in case of financial hardship, please contact us for a confidential fee adjustment) Call Jim Finn at (412)486-4100 for a registration form.

VATICAN SPLENDORS - From St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums, as featured in the latest Pittsburgh Catholic, the Smiling Seniors of Holy Sepulcher Church invites us to join them for this day outing to Cleveland. This exhibit will only stop in two cities in its North American Tour. Mass and participation in the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament by the Poor Clare Nuns in residence is included. Also included are all admissions, shrine donations and lunch. Cost \$99.00/person. Call Millie McDonough (724) 443-1191 for reservations and further information.

ST. MARY'S TRAVELERS presents: **ISRAEL - A Journey to the Holy Land**, March 24th-April 2nd, 2009. This ten day tour begins in Tel Aviv and continues to Caesarea, Haifa, Tiberias, Nazareth, Jericho, the Dead Sea, Cana, Masada, Bethlehem and of course Jerusalem. We return from this Lenten pilgrimage just as Holy Week begins. Cost of \$3,429 includes 8 breakfasts, six dinners, all motor coach and guide gratuities while in Israel and round trip transportation to Greater Pittsburgh Airport. For further information call Arlene (12) 487-1891, Mary Ann (412) 486-0165 or Ruth (412) 486-0614. Space is limited!

Administrative Assistant

Part-time position - 25 hours per week. Must have computer skills and writing skills for letters, publications, diocesan reports. "People skills" also important for interactions with parishioners and parish staff. Please send resume to Fr. Kenneth R. White, Pastor, St. Scholastica Parish, 309 Brilliant Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15215. Please no phone calls.

The Power of Prayer and the Holy Spirit

by Barbara Belski M.A., Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

All three readings this week describe qualities of God. God is just, merciful, comes through the Spirit; God is here in the Kingdom now and waiting in the Kingdom to come. **How can these readings come alive for you and me this week?**

Do you really understand the implications of the wisdom of the centuries gathered under the umbrella of your Catholic tradition? When you need to make a decision or answer a question, where do you turn? My hope would be that you seek input from those who have lived the experience or who embrace the values of truthfulness, patience and kindness. Let's see what some of those great thinkers and writers of our church have to say this week.

"...and you taught your people...that those who are just must be kind..." Wisdom 13:19

What is God saying to you in today's First Reading? This section of the book of Wisdom relates the story of God's call to show mercy, especially when circumstances could lead to cruelty and domination by those in power. When do you find it easier to be unkind or absolutely without mercy? Often you encounter power struggles in your places of education and employment, even in your own families. Have you been hurt by those in power? Have you, from a position of power, acted in a vengeful manner? If God, who is all-powerful, can show mercy, can you find the strength to be both just and kind?

"...The Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, ...And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will." Romans 8: 26-27

What stops us from recognizing the Spirit described in this Second Reading? You cannot know the Spirit if you do not know how to pray. If you do not take the time to pray, you can never expect to recognize the Spirit. Do you lack confidence that your prayers are even heard? Listen to those who believe in the power of prayer; be assured by their sense of peacefulness. God does indeed "search our hearts" and God listens to our prayers.

"Whoever has ears ought to hear." Matthew 13:43

What can you learn from today's Gospel Reading? This reading from Matthew is filled with parables that are rich in meaning and demonstrate the ability of Jesus to teach us even today through His Living Word. And you must reflect on the entire reading of Matthew 13: 24-43. But, I love the concluding words noted above, calling us to listen, to really hear the Word of God.

Most of you know that I firmly believe that our CYM mission trips are Spirit filled and Spirit protected. Both our African and Appalachian mission teams faced many obstacles during the weeks before our departures. Halted peace talks, apprehensive family members, serious illness in our adult leaders and other difficulties could have brought our efforts to a screeching halt...if we did not pray and place ourselves confidently in God's hands. I am reminded of the night of June 22 at 7 PM. The H.O.P.E. mission team was gathered at our supper table at the Comboni mission in Gulu, Uganda. We realized that just at that point in time and on the other side of the world in Glenshaw, Pennsylvania, my husband, Ron was helping to send off the Appalachia team after their commissioning liturgy. Upon my return, I spoke with Aidan Kelly, one of our junior foremen, who told me that the team in Appalachia was also praying for us in Uganda. We were united in the Spirit on opposite sides of the world. Whoever has ears ought to hear.