



For those parishioners who were unable to attend the second lecture of our Lenten Lecture Series, *Reclaiming Our First Love: God's Call to Holiness of Life, Conference #2 – Jesus, Our Model for Life as Lay Catholic Christians*, I have provided a brief overview of my lecture.

Lenten Lecture Series Introduction - Introduction

Throughout the Lenten Season we will travel the journey of our calling, by God, to enter into a deeper and more profound relationship with the Most Holy Trinity, as Christian women and men. When it comes to spiritual maturity, we can't simply take for granted that we're growing. To evaluate personal progress, I've compiled a brief inventory of spiritual benchmarks. Check the list for an idea of how you're doing: weekly Mass attendance, personal bible study, private prayer, moral conduct, evangelization, and giving. But remember, these items are just a place to start; see the Bible for a complete growth chart!

We know we're growing spiritually when we become increasingly aware of our sinfulness and weakness. As I read biographies of godly saints, it's clear that they don't "get better" with age and spiritual maturity. Instead, they become ever more sensitive to their dependence upon the Lord. Moreover, progress is apparent when we respond to sin with quick repentance. Failure to deal with sin is rebellion against God. Growing believers turn away from wrongdoing and embrace righteousness. As we live with the good results of dependence and repentance, our desire to obey intensifies and the attraction of sin lessens.

Growth is also marked by an increase in two things—joy and struggle. Faith is often developed through hardship because living out the principles of trust and endurance help us "get it." So we'll see maturity in our relationship with God when we view trials and temptations as opportunities for growth. Paul, David, Ruth, Esther and Daniel prove that adversity can help form spiritual giants. These women and men recognized sovereign God as the gatekeeper of their lives. We are maturing when we perceive whatever comes our way as being from Him, which also means that He's working it for good (Romans 8:28).

The Significance in Following Jesus

Christian life is quite closely associated with Jesus' life and work. Being a Christian has not so much to do with recognizing the message, but rather with forming a personal bond to Jesus; to follow him. This is one of the characteristics of the gospels. Jesus is much more than a teacher. Being a disciple of Jesus, however, is not a temporary or transitory nature. One chooses him as one's guide for life. The peculiar thing in the relationship of faith to Jesus is that one causes one's whole life to be oriented by his person. Thus, being one of Jesus' disciples means following him. Following has a twofold significance: a literal significance, and a more internal significance.

In the literal sense, the word might be used, for example, "to run after a girl" or "to follow strange gods." Where it applies to following God, the internal meaning becomes more distinct, because in that case, what is at issue is doing his will. Therefore, to follow the master is used to a certain extent to mean sharing the master's path. Nowhere does sharing the master's path acquire so deep a meaning as in the relationship between the faithful and Jesus. Following Jesus means attuning one's life to that of Jesus. As lay Catholics, following Jesus becomes the starting point of our own lives. So it is safe to say, in following Jesus, we begin to think, act, and live from the thoughts, actions, and life of Jesus. We begin to see through Jesus' eyes, to believe with his faith, to hope with his hope. This is more than following or slavishly repeating Jesus' words, it's rather that our own capabilities are enriched, and we acquire new capabilities besides. In the New Testament we can see a depiction of what faith truly is. In the NT, following Jesus is also used in the sense of believing, being a disciple, or belonging to the community of believers. Following Jesus is the duty of all the faithful. It is entering into Jesus' life work. It is participating in the newness of the kingdom of God, as presented by Jesus, and especially in the reality of his life and his Cross.

Let us pray for one another during this Holy Season, especially for the poor.

In Christ Jesus and St. Augustine,
Fr. Gregory Heidenblut, O.S.A.

LENTEN LECTURE SERIES

Reclaiming Our First Love: God's Call to Holiness of Life

Fr. Greg's final Lenten Lecture will continue on Wednesday, **March 25th**. The topic is *Socio-political dimension of the radical following of Jesus*. The lecture will begin at the end of our soup meal; around 7:15 p.m. and last until 8:30 p.m.

The Office of the Provincial
V. Rev. Kevin C. Mullins, O.S.A.
3266 Nutmeg Street
San Diego, CA 92104 – 5151

March 8, 2015

Dear Parishioners and Staff of Our Lady of Grace Parish:

May the grace and the peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you.

As the Provincial of the Province of St. Augustine, I have the most difficult task of informing you that the Augustinians of the California province will be withdrawing from ministry at Our Lady of Grace effective June 30th, 2015.

On July 1, 2015, pastoral care of the parish will return to personnel to be appointed by the Diocese of Oakland.

I would like to share some thoughts in regard to this matter:

1. Our province takes very seriously our pastoral responsibility at all our parishes and at our High Schools. Consequently, our decision-making regarding our ability to staff and sustain any ministry site has to be viewed in the context of two important questions (in view of our Province Mission Statement):

a. Are we able to meet the needs of the church in our ministry ?

b. Are we able to provide what is best for the stakeholders of a ministry site ?

For more than two years our Provincial Council has discussed our ability to continue serving as we have in years past at five parishes and two schools, as well as the ancillary responsibilities we have both within and outside our province itself. While we have previously gotten by with the available friars who now serve in these ministries, we also knew that it would be only a matter of time before circumstances would require changes. With Fr. Greg Heidenblut beginning a six-month long sabbatical on July 1st, 2015, we were faced with a very difficult dilemma. In all honesty, and in sincere humility, we must recognize and accept that in the current time we do not have a member or members to assign to OLG who will meet the criteria and level of responsibility we deem necessary to serve you well, and to serve you as you so very much deserve.

2. For thirty-five years your parish has been ably served by many fine Augustinians. You have had as pastors Frs. Vince McGarvey, Tom McLaughlin, Bob Gavotto, myself, Tom Verber, and Greg Heidenblut. Serving as well as associate pastors were Frs. Jim Clifford, John Ranallo, Ron Smedley, Tom Behan, Paul Quante, and Greg Heidenblut.

I am so very grateful to all these friars who made our unique Augustinian presence a reality in the life of OLG and its members. I trust that I can say for all the friars, based on my own experience, that we were blessed and privileged to minister in such a vibrant, collaborative, and supportive community. The relationships and friendships that developed through the past 35 years will always be considered a blessing and grace in our hearts !

3. At a very personal level, OLG holds a most special place in my heart. It was at OLG that I first encountered the Augustinians (in 1981) and, as the saying goes, 'the rest is history.' In 1984 I entered the Order from OLG; in 1986 I made my first profession of vows, as an Augustinian, at OLG; in September of 1990 I was ordained to the priesthood at OLG; and I had the privilege of serving as your pastor from 1999 to 2010. During that time I was able to strengthen the bonds of friendship with those I had known from 1981 and those I joyfully came to know and collaborate with while serving as pastor. I can truly say that I feel a profound sense of sadness in my heart as we come to this decision.

4. The Augustinians were given a wonderful parish by the Diocese in 1980. Now, in 2015, we return to the diocese a vibrant and generous parish community, a fine elementary school, and a parish that is on firm financial footing. Whoever assumes pastoral responsibility on July 1, 2015, will be truly blessed to enter into this enterprise !

As you must now prepare to receive new leadership, I know in my heart that you will welcome our successors with the same warm hospitality and support that you have always given the Augustinians.

5. Dialogue has already begun between the Diocese and a representative group of parishioners to discern the needs of the parish and to determine who best will be able to serve those needs. I invite your prayer as this process goes forward, asking the Holy Spirit to guide all of us along the way. I especially invite your prayer for our Province as we confront the many challenges ahead of us. The needs of God's holy people will always be greater than our ability to meet them, but we trust that in the power of God's grace we can do our best to try and serve God's people well.

Finally, as difficult as this decision has been to make, I assure that as a Province we believe it to be the best decision for OLG and for us. We rely on the truth and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help us along the way of God's will in our lives. I certainly welcome the gift of your prayer on behalf of the Province and on behalf of the Personnel Board of the Diocese of Oakland as they seek to identify and provide able and good shepherds for you.

The words of today's reading at Morning Prayer give me great hope:

***“Today is holy to the Lord your God. Do not be sad, and do not weep;
for today is holy to our Lord. Do not be saddened this day,
for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength !” (Nehemiah 8: 9, 10)
Wishing you God's richest and fullest blessings,***

Fr. Kevin, O.S.A.

Very Rev. Kevin C. Mullins, O.S.A.
Prior Provincial
Province of St. Augustine



LENTEN WEDNESDAY SOUP MEAL

Please plan on joining us for a simple meal of soup and bread each Wednesday during Lent. It will be a time for fellowship and families coming together. Our Soup Meal follows the 6:00pm Mass. This Wednesday, **March 18th** Soup Meal is sponsored by our Men of Faith Community. We thank them for their ministry of hospitality for this meal.

Donations will be accepted to benefit Operation Rice Bowl.

HOMELESSNESS IN OUR MIDST

Are you concerned about the growing problems of poverty and homelessness in our community? Do you wonder about the primary causes of homelessness today? Do you know how agencies in our area help the homeless and those at risk for becoming homeless? Are you interested in being part of the solution?

If so, then come to a Forum on Homelessness at OLG Church. Listen to first hand accounts of people who have struggled with poverty and homelessness as well as to representatives of 3 agencies who serve the poor in our community - FESCO, St. Vincent de Paul, and South Hayward Parish.

There will be time for discussion and questions. Wednesday, **March 18th**, 7:15 - 8:30 p.m. immediately following the 6:00 Mass and 6:45 soup meal to which all are welcome in Stack Center. Sponsored by the Pax Christi/Social Justice Group of OLG. For more information, call Denise at (510) 538-6071.

COMMUNAL LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE

Following is the schedule for Communal Lenten Penance services for the churches in our area.

- Church of the Transfiguration: Wednesday, March 25th at 7:30pm
- Our Lady of Grace: Saturday, March 21st at 3:00pm
- St. Felicitas: Monday, March 30th at 7:00pm in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish

SUNDAY COLLECTION

Stewardship of treasure involves trust in God. You have to really believe in God's Providence and trust that if you give ten percent of your income to the Church and charity for example, God will help you live on the rest.

Offerings of March 8th:

Sunday Plate:	\$ 8,012.00
Last Year this week	\$ 8,533.00
Weekly Budgeted Goal:	\$ 8,815.00
Year-to-date this year:	\$ 83,993.00
Year-to-date last year:	\$ 79,521.00

February Budgeted Expenses \$68,000.00

May God bless your continuing generosity.



Your Prayers Are Requested

Please lift up in your prayer those many among us who are ill and those who have asked for our prayerful remembrance:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Jose Cisneros | Nicholas Guinea |
| Kathleen Denning | Raymond Lowe |
| Estela Enriquez | Richard Martin |
| Mary Franks | Florence Sharp |
| Byron Griffith | James Van Wert |
| Liz Griffith | Yvonne Wheeler |

As we pray for an end to war and violence in our world, let us remember in prayer those family members of our parish community serving on active duty, including:

- DAVID SANCHEZ MICHAEL SANCHEZ**

Please remember in your prayers the recently deceased in our parish families and all who mourn the loss of a loved one.

CONNIE DEITRICK

**Gospel for The Fifth Sunday of Lent
(March 22nd) John 12:20-33**

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

“I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

**FESCO’S ANNUAL SHELTER SHUFFLE
IS COMING SOON!**

It’s time for the 18th Annual FESCO Shuffle Walkathon. The event will take place on May 2nd, at the San Leandro Marina.

The FESCO Shuffle Walkathon is FESCO’s primary fundraising event of the year and our success depends on the participation of event Sponsors, community groups and churches, and individuals, including those who walk, run, and shuffle – many with their dogs – around the paths at San Leandro’s Marina Park. The beautiful view of the Bay, the camaraderie of the participants, and the after-party BBQ in the park’s newly renovated picnic areas are just a few of the reasons why FESCO’s Shuffle Walkathon has the reputation for being a terrifically fun event.

Please send a message to our community that you are committed to ending family homelessness in Alameda County by pledging your support as a donor to FESCO’s 18th Annual Shuffle Walkathon.

For information or to be a walker, sponsor or donor contact Colleen Lindberg in the Parish office.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, March 15th:

Coffee & Donuts After All Masses

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
9:00am--Mass

Religious Education Classes
10:30am--Stack Center

Youth Ministry
After 9:00am Mass in the Gym

Tuesday, March 17th:

Bible Scripture Study
9:30am--Parish Office

Religious Education Classes
3:45pm--Stack Center

Wednesday, March 18th:

Lenten soup Meal
Following 6:00pm Mass

Pax/Christi Lenten Presentation
Following Soup Meal

Thursday, March 19th:

Serenity Group
8:15pm— Stack Center

Friday, March 20th:

Stations of the Cross
2:30pm--Church

Spanish Stations of the Cross
7:00pm--Church

Saturday, March 21st:

Eucharistic Adoration
Following 8:30 Mass in the Chapel

Communal Penance Service
3:00pm--Church

Sunday, March 22nd:

Coffee & Donuts After All Masses

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
9:00am--Mass

Religious Education Classes
10:30am--Stack Center

Youth Ministry
After 9:00am Mass in the Gym

Mass Intentions for the Week

Please note: During the school year, our 8:30am Monday Mass will be celebrated in the Church. Unless otherwise noted all other weekday masses will be held in the Chapel.

MONDAY, MARCH 16th (CHURCH)

8:30am Debi Telles (D)

TUESDAY, MARCH 17th

St. Patrick, Bishop

7:00am Tom & Mary Hayes (D)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18th

*St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop,
Doctor of the Church*

7:00am Irma Gomes (D)

6:00pm Dulcidea O. Chocha (D)

THURSDAY, MARCH 19th

7:00am Jose Duarte (D)

FRIDAY, MARCH 20th

*ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
PATRON OF THE AUGUSTINIAN ORDER*

7:00am Estela Velasquez (D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 21st

8:30am Jose Daniel Tellez (D)



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross are offered at Our Lady of Grace, Fridays at 2:30pm by our school community and 7:00pm in Spanish by our Hispanic Small Christian Community. Transfiguration Church offers Stations of the Cross at 7:30pm on Fridays.

EXECUTION ALERTS

The following executions are scheduled to take place in **March**:

March 17th	Cecil Clayton	MO
March 18th	Randall Mays	TX
March 19th	Bill Kuenzel	AL

We ask your prayers for these persons, for the victims of their crimes, and for their families.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

March 16th through March 22nd

- Monday: Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54
- Tuesday: Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16
- Wednesday: Isaiah 49:8-15; John 5:17-20
- Thursday: 2 Samuel 7:4-5z, 12-14a, 16; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a
- Friday: Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10 25-30
- Saturday: Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53
- Sunday: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT SATURDAY, MARCH 7th



Our next Holy Hour with the Blessed Sacrament: Saturday, **March 21st** Following the 8:30am Mass Private Devotions In the Chapel *All are welcome.*

WINGS (Women in God's Spirit)

We invite all women to join us for **WINGS**. **WINGS** is a faith enhancement group that encourages Spiritual growth through prayer, scripture study, catechesis, life sharing and community. We meet at Transfiguration Church Marion Room

Next Meeting: Thursday, **March 19th** 9:15 to 11:15 a.m.

Speaker: Fr. Terry O'Malley
Topic: *Ongoing Revelations: Every Blessing for this Season*

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This week we extend our gratitude to:
GROWING YEARS PRE-SCHOOL