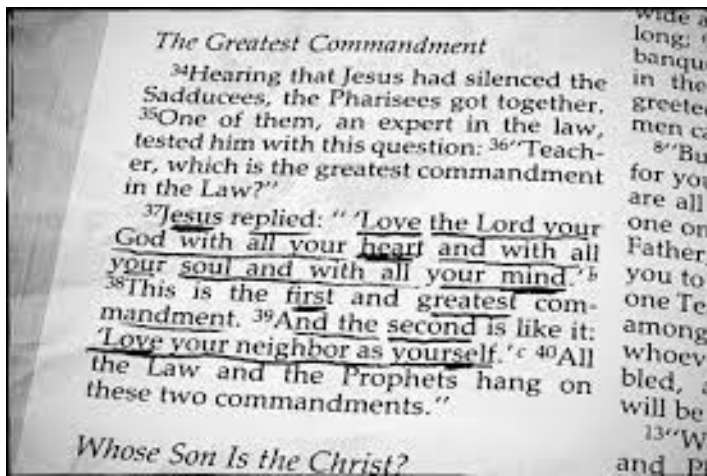


# NOTRE DAME PARISH

## 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

*What Is the Greatest Commandment?*



When we ignore the rhetoric and simply look at someone's lifestyle (ourselves or others), we'll soon learn the answer to the question: what's most important? The question asks more than values. It points toward a life orientation. It helps to answer the greater question: what is the purpose of life? In a relationship with God, we can ask the same

question: what's most important? How does that question impact our prayer life, our family life, our social life? What one principle or character trait tells others we are followers of Christ?

A scribe asked Jesus that question. Jesus gave the answer changed more than his followers. It changed the world.

## MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, October 30 @ 4PM

Judy Haas

Sunday, October 31 @ 9:30AM

Deceased parishioners of Notre Dame

Monday, November 1 @ 8AM

John Benish Sr.

Tuesday, November 2 @ 8AM

Frank Parkerson  
Skipper Amberg

Wednesday, November 3 @ 8:30AM

Family of Agnes Daniels

Thursday, November 4 @ 8:30AM

Patrick McDonald

Friday, November 5 @ 8AM

For the health of Sara Funck

Saturday, November 6

8AM, Joan and Mike King

4PM, Jack O'Hara

Patricia Janowiak

## Let Us Pray

- For effective strategies to emerge from the Conference on Climate Change
- For recently deceased parishioner Geraldine Pawicke
- For the oppressed peoples of Afghanistan, Haiti, and Sudan
- For the protection of children, and their safety during Halloween events
- For those who have never known the gift of self-giving love
- For a return to observance of the Sabbath rest as a day of worship and renewal
- For Christians who act prophetically on behalf of the poor and oppressed

## Legend of the Headless Monk

Old, established institutions such as ghost towns, rusting steel mills, monasteries, and abandoned Victorian homes, generate legends of ghosts. It is the core of Halloween that unsettled spirits, caught between life and death, wander to haunt the living.

At Saint Meinrad Abbey, the medieval architecture, its remote location, its population of hooded and habited monks, vast forests, and gated cemetery evoked many years ago the legend of the headless monk from generations of seminarians. There is no extended story about this headless monk: Who was he? Why is he haunting the abbey? What is he capable of?

Nevertheless, whenever the moon is full, leaves are falling, and a mist is in the air, the

headless monk might appear, especially if you are passing the cemetery!

One Thanksgiving, some relatives were visiting me, staying at a guest house on the property at Saint Meinrad. In the evening several family members decided to take a walk. There was a thick fog; one could hardly see one's own hand in front of your face. It was quiet and spooky, like a London fog.

Like children, it was as if we were daring the Headless Monk to appear! We went into the cemetery, the rusty iron gate creaking behind us. The sandstone-fashioned headstones of the tombs tried to appear out of the fog. Dead silence.



Then we faintly heard the sound of footsteps on asphalt. Within the misty fog a silhouetted figure appeared. Someone of my group cried out, "Who's there?"

A voice answered tremulously: "I'm the ghost of Thanksgiving past."

Then my Dad revealed himself! *Father Keith & Rocco*

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## Have You Ever Thought of Your Church as Haunted?

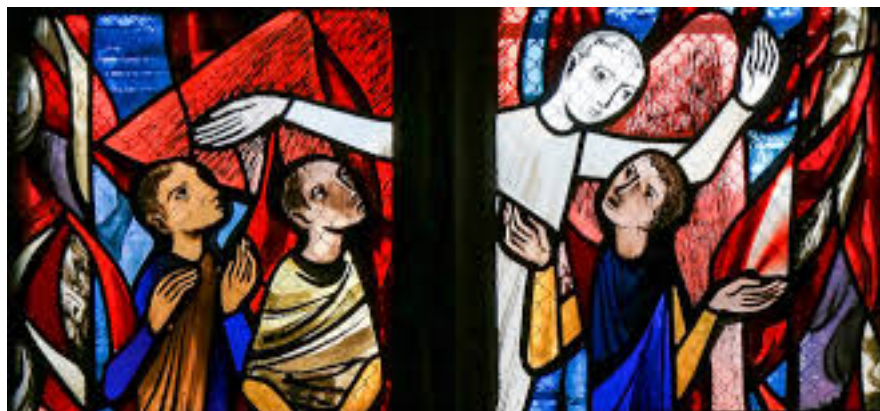


*Haunted is a word that denotes a presence that is not quite a presence.*

Fall is here. Watching the trees turn from a uniform green to all varieties of gold, yellow, brown and red is a spectacular experience. One can almost be blinded by the fiery brilliance. Such a site gives new meaning to the burning bush – not just one, but a world of burning bushes.

During this brilliant season are Halloween and All Saints Eve. According to many stories, the vale between worlds is thinner; the harvest moon is steady and stable as the clouds hold it. Halloween, children are excited in this costumed season of magic masks, ghosts, goblins, superheroes/heroines, pumpkins, night sea journeys and haunted houses; child-like stories are told to intensify the imagination's excitement of the

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## Why Pray for the Souls in Purgatory?

If religion did not speak to the deepest sighs and longings of the human heart then it would be as well not to speak at all. Of these sighs few are more profound than those offered up for the death of one we love. My father, William Hepburn, died earlier this year and, since by tradition Catholics devote the month of November in particular to remembering our dead, the forthcoming November becomes a special one for me. It is one of the examples in Catholic life where theological truths and natural human emotions combine in such a way as to produce the inner peace we all desire and the calm acceptance that what has happened has happened.

It is no coincidence that this time

precedes Advent, a liturgical season that prepares believers for light to appear in the midst of darkness. We move from the De Profundis of Psalm 129, "Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord", to the anticipation of Isaiah 9, "The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen".

Outside the church we bereaved ones are insistently urged to move on, to reach closure, not to be morbid. But inside our faith family we have this time of the year where parishes unite around prayer and remembrance for the dead. It is not considered gauche or uncool to bring to mind those whose passing made us weep.

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Death is placed in a context not only of eternity but of community. We pray for each of the dead, not simply for our own ones.

The church consists not merely of those now alive on earth but of those alive to God in heaven and in purgatory, something marked out by the twin feasts of All Saints and All Souls on 1 and 2 November. In particular the prayers we offer are for those souls still in purgatory.

Whatever one may think of the theological basis for the doctrine of purgatory, it offers a psychologically realistic parallel between those gone and those left behind. As we endure suffering after and because of their passing, so too they suffer before reaching the goal of the beatific vision. We and they are in solidarity, a solidarity of both pain and hope.

As a convert, this raises a vital question for me. My dear father was not a Catholic. The customary alliance of hardline fundamentalists and militant atheists will no doubt unite to suggest that the logical consequence of my belief system would thrust him into that third and much less

popular destination of hell, and so offering up prayers on his behalf represents either hypocrisy on my part or a lack of belief that any of this stuff is actually true. These are questions I faced and reflected deeply upon when my equally non-Catholic mother, Irena Hepburn, died in 1998.

My instant response then was as it is now. My parents were always faithful to me and to virtue as they understood it. Selfless faithfulness is a product of love and, consciously or unconsciously, is therefore grounded upon God the faithful and loving.

My prayers for them, and for anyone else for whom I am asked to pray, are offered up in a perfect trust that love is never wasted and that He who is the fount of all love gladly receives back unto Himself each of His children who follow His model.

*This article, by Steven Hepburn appeared in "The Guardian" in 2011.*

**From Saint Catherine of Genoa's Vision of Purgatory**

This holy soul still in the flesh, found herself placed in Purgatory by the fiery Divine Love, which burned her all over and purified what in her was to be purified, in order that, when passing from this life, she might be presented before God, her sweet Love, by means of this loving fire she understood in her soul the state of the souls of the faithful who dwell in Purgatory, to cleanse every rust and stain of sin, which in this life they had not yet purified. And thus as she, placed in this loving Purgatory of the Divine fire, was united to the Divine Love, and satisfied with everything that He performed in her, in this way she understood the state of the souls who are in Purgatory. And she said: 2. The souls who are in Purgatory (as I seem to understand) cannot have any other choice than be in that place; and this is by the plan of God, Who did this justly. They cannot anymore turn inward towards themselves, nor say: I committed these sins for which I deserve to stay here. Neither can they say: I wish I did not commit them, because I would now go to Paradise. Nor can they say: That one will leave here sooner than me; or: I will leave here sooner than he. They cannot have any memory of themselves, nor of others likewise, whether of good or evil, because it would cause in them greater pain than ordinarily. But they have so much satisfaction in being in the will of God, and that He should do all that pleases Him, as it pleases Him that they cannot think of themselves with greater suffering. And they only see the working of the Divine Goodness, which offers much mercy to human beings to lead them to Himself.

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night.

All Saints, All Souls, a time to remember, a time to honor all Saints, both known and unknown; All Saints is a time of collective memory, as many as the sands of the sea—the memory of who was, who is and who we want to be.

This October haunting is the word that ignites my imagination — Its meaning, its intended description. Haunted, is there such a thing? Was there an experience those early earth walkers saw that evoked such an image? Is the word “haunted” and “haunting” still relevant for us, and what kind of experience is it describing?

Think of those Biblical stories such as in the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20), “My name is Legion, for we are many,” and casting the spirit into swine as they run into the sea; the harrowing “night sea journey” in which Jesus silenced a storm as if it were a demon (Mark 4:39) and many other biblical narratives that are as eerie, spooky and evoke imagination as much as any creative Halloween story told.

Somewhat tongue and cheek, I have heard clergy say, “My church seems haunted.” Interesting image! Some congregations might fit such a description. It is as if something is living in them they cannot put to rest that roams and stirs apart from their choosing. Like a Dickens novel, it walks about and rattles its chains at night, raising the anxiety, unwilling to sleep — nor let us. Regardless of what the people do, this unknown presence seems to be loud, invisible and unable to find a home or a place to sleep.

Instead of haunted, we use more sophisticated language such as unresolved issues or some untold trauma that lives on, wanting and needing to be brought to light so as to rest or get unstuck.

Haunted is a word that denotes a presence that is not quite a presence. It is a visitation by the as yet unspeakable. It is also emblematic of the longing for incarnation, of an unbearable substrate of wanting; not finding a home in this world or in the next; something that walks the halls of our houses or the corridors of our hearts and minds looking for that which will help to lay its own self to rest.

What haunts our congregations and us is

something seeking its own consummation. Maybe a bad departure of a previous minister, misconduct of the pastor or a leader; some unresolved hurt from the past; unacknowledged injustice or historical harm; deep trust broken; a traumatic event or other experiences that have not been put to rest, processed or found their place. As individuals and congregations, sometimes we have a hunger to put it to rest, but we might not know how—how to create a container or space to hold it, to engage it, to converse about it in a generative, healing way or to consummate it.

If we feel continually haunted over time, individually or as a community, we become ghost-like ourselves and roam with intent while not quite knowing the object of our intention. Looking into the mirror, our face begins to look like our life. We walk not quite existing in the world we visit. Like the ghosts we describe through that strange, beautiful word haunt/haunting: this part of our congregations and us wants to go home or rest, but we sometimes cannot find a place to rest, to belong, to call home. The exorcism of an unknown spirit is consistent the world over: an invitation to return home; for it and for us to find our way back, to cease our restless ways and to quit disturbing others’ minds and walking their halls at night. It is a call to attention, to not be ignored, to be named, honored and given its place. Then, hopefully, there will be no more chains rattling, no more roaming the halls at midnight, no more unnecessary anxiety stirred.

Our congregations and we cease to be haunted when we cease to be afraid of our past; our present and our possible future, our horizon, or those we wronged, those we did not help or those who we think might wrong us. We forgive ourselves and our congregations forgive themselves by changing the pattern, and we change the pattern by forgiving others and ourselves. Our fear is the measure of our absence.

Our communities and we cease to be afraid when we pay attention, give away what was never ours in the first place and begin to be present to our own lives just as we find them, even in the midst of the unknown, even when we do not know the way. We take the next most necessary step. This is mission and ministry. When we make a friend of the unknown, what previously haunted us becomes an

invisible ally to our future horizon. In the words of Rainer Maria Rilke, "Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love." We banish the misalignment when we align with what we are called to be and do. And I believe we are all "called to live life. Our mere being says we are invited." Or, in Albert Camus' language, "to live to the point of tears."

We become visible and real when we give our gift and stop waiting for the gift to be given to us, individually and collectively, waking into our lives again, as if for the first time, as if half remembering something that this day will ask us to speak, make real, honor and live.

To be human  
is to become visible,  
while carrying  
what is hidden  
and unknown  
as a gift to others.

To be human,  
is to be,  
while living what  
is within us  
trying to incarnate.

Self-realization,  
correctly understood,  
amounts to God's incarnation.  
This is the opposite of being  
haunted,  
of being ghost-like,  
of being homeless,  
of not having a place to belong.

Our place of belonging  
is who we are  
by the grace of God.

As we accept  
who we are,  
as we find our voice,  
as we open our hearts,  
as we become vulnerable,  
we become  
visible and human,  
a gift to others and ourselves—  
which is incarnation.

*Dr. W. Craig Gilliam is on the staff of  
JustPeace Center for Mediation and  
Conflict Transformation housed in  
Washington, D.C.*

## NOTRE DAME NEWS

We are still \$3200 short on meeting our Parish CSA goal. The CSA funds important charities that individual parishes could not sustain on their own. If you haven't done so, please consider a gift.

November is the month when the Church in a particular way remembers the Holy Souls in purgatory. One way to remember our loved ones is to arrange for a Mass(es) with Kitty Cate. We have many openings in the coming months. "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead."