



St. Gertrude Chicago

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Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 22, 2022

From Fr. Rich

Today's first reading, from the Acts of the Apostles, relates the story of what is considered the first Council of the Church. We refer to it as the Council of Jerusalem and it was held in the year 67A.D. It is so important

because it gives us the first real insight into how the early church, those closest to Our Lord and those who were his earliest believers, came to sort through the many community-building decisions that confronted them.

All faiths had dietary laws as well as certain understandings of what was required if two people were to be married. The hard task was trying to figure out which, of the many available options, they should follow. This was especially from those who had joined His followers as faithful members of the Jewish faith. The challenge facing them was whether new members of the Church had to first convert to Judaism before they could become followers of Jesus.

In strikingly clear language, the results of their first Council were proclaimed. That proclamation was to keep things as simple as possible and, "not to place on top of you any burden beyond these necessities, namely, to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols, from blood, from meat of strangled animals, and from unlawful marriage." And the final line is always worth reflecting on, "If you keep free of these, you will be doing what is right. Farewell." By inference, this eliminated the need for anyone to first convert to Judaism, to be circumcised, etc.

It is worth reflecting on our own expectations for others -- especially for our family members, our friends and neighbors and our co-workers. Are we asking of them more than is required or needed? If so, why are we doing that? And how can we make the changes that would lessen other's burdens and be more welcoming to who they are?

On a different topic, last week our nation marked the one millionth American who has died from the Covid virus and Covid-related illnesses. It is a staggering number! So much grief and loss for so many families and friends and co-workers. As we are mindful of this gruesome statistic, let us offer prayers for all those grieving the loss of their loved ones, and pray that we better prepare ourselves as a nation for these kinds of national health emergencies.

Office Hours Change: The Rectory office will temporarily close at 4:30 pm Monday-Thursday. Weekend office hours may be limited. We apologize for the inconvenience.

From Fr. Rich (cont.)

Ascension is Next Weekend -- Now Always on the Weekend

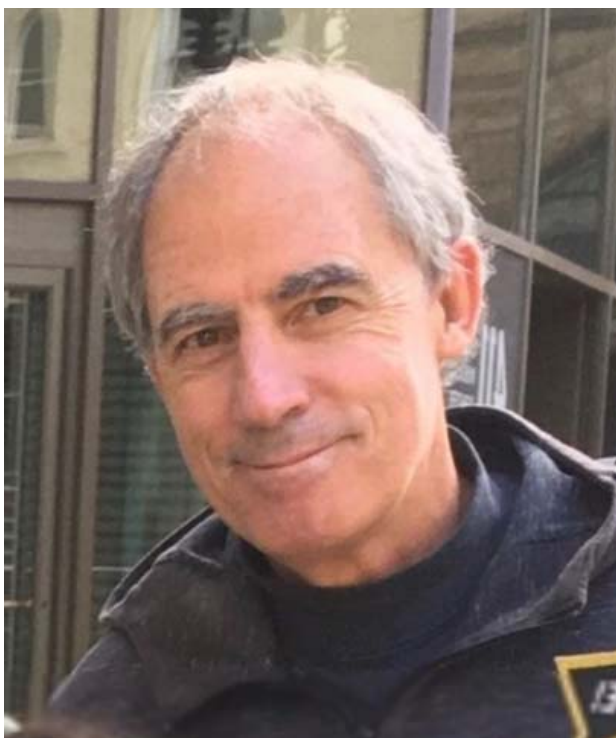
If you grew up knowing the Ascension Holy Day was always Ascension Thursday, that is no longer the case! The Feast of the Ascension of the Lord has permanently moved from Thursday to the following weekend. This year, that will be next weekend, May 28-29.

Help for Ukraine

If you would like to donate to the care of the Ukrainian people, please consider making a contribution to Catholic Relief Services for emergency aid to the people in Ukraine at <https://support.crs.org/donate/donate-ukraine>.



Pictured: Refugees from Mykolaiv, Ukraine being helped by Catholic Relief Services in Poland.



Growing in Faith

On "Michael" was a young man when chronic symptoms of diabetes crashed into his life. Full of ambition and ability, he was a man with a plan, ready to make his mark. The debilitation caused by his illness nearly crushed his spirit.

But then, Michael surprised even himself by surrendering his life to its source, deciding that God was sincere in creating him and remained so even as physical limits undercut his dreams.

"For a while, my emotions spiked up and down like the Chicago weather. Then I found peace. I don't understand it. But I'm so totally grateful for it. No more daily pity-parties. It may sound corny, but I am learning that my life is not about me. It took some doing to get here, but eventually, God opened a way. Or should I say, God in the form of my

girlfriend! As much as I tried to push her away, she kept saying we were gonna get through this. After a while, I believed her. I didn't worry anymore about, 'Does my life matter?' She helped me realize it does."

Some might call Michael's new attitude contentment, others acceptance. Like the "peace" that Jesus invited his followers into, it isn't devoid of deep feelings – "table-turning" anger, or "weeping-over-Jerusalem" sorrow. It has more to do with a grounded self-identity, knowing who he is. Just as wedding rings remind us of who we are and who we belong to, Michael proudly acknowledges that he belongs to the God who married his heart!

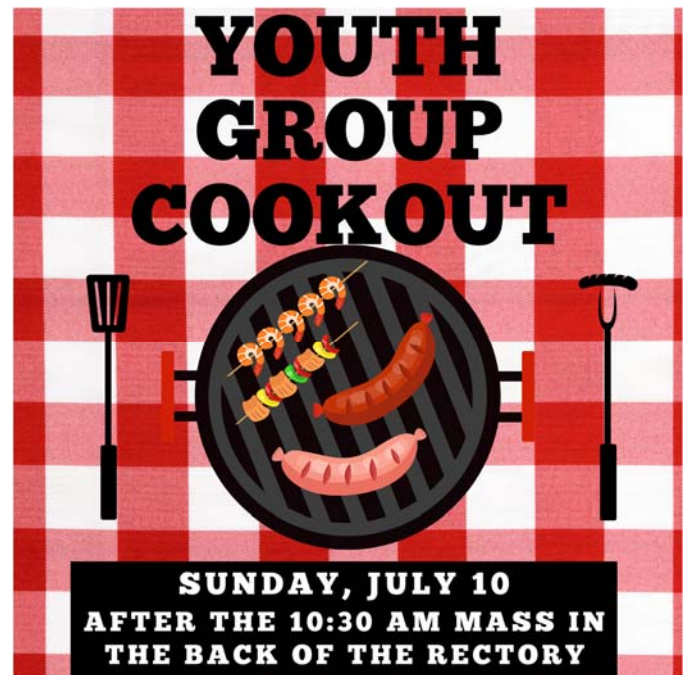
~ Peter Buttitta

Save the Date! Youth Group Cookout Planned for Summer

Join the St. Gertrude Youth Group for food, friends, fun, and faith! Teens in 7th grade and older are invited to the parish youth group cookout, planned for Sunday, July 10 after the 10:30 am Mass in the back of the Rectory.

Additional youth group gatherings have been planned for August 20, September 11, October 15, November 6, and December 10.

For more information, contact Eloy Escamilla at eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org.



Summer Mission Trip Cancelled

The Summer Mission Trip has been cancelled. Unfortunately, we did not reach the minimum number of participants.

We hope to have our Mission Trip next year.

~ Eloy Escamilla, Pastoral Associate for Religious Education and Youth Ministry

St. Gertrude Class of 1952 - Celebrating Their 70th Reunion

The class of 1952 celebrated their 70th reunion on Thursday, May 19!

Fifteen members gathered to remember their times in grammar school, including three current parishioners - Bernard Joyce, Richard Merrill, and Joanne Steenveld.





Pictured: The new composter and last summer's garden.

St. Gertrude Composting Program/Garden Planting Day is Saturday, June 4

All are welcome to be a part of our parish composting program! Those who join our program are welcome to use the parish's new compost tumbler, a user-friendly option that will produce compost at a quicker pace.

Those interested can watch a short video on how to use the composter here: <https://youtu.be/qDptFmSOixE>.

We are hoping to plant lots of vegetables and herbs on Saturday, June 4 from 9:00-11:00 am. Bring your garden trowels, tools, and knee pads and help us get our parish garden up and running. The vegetables and herbs grown from our garden will once again shared with both Care for Real and the St. Thomas of Canterbury soup kitchen! Additionally, we will need people to weed, plant, and water over the growing season.

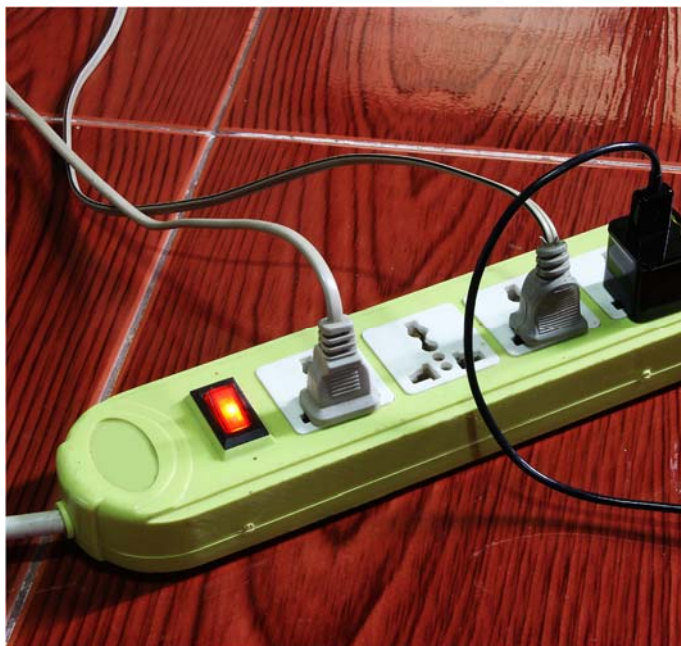
If you are interested in our composting program or wish to help with our garden, please reach out to Mary Clare Barker at mcbarker@stgertrudechicago.org.

Care for our Common Home

Did you know that even electronics you have shut off are still draining energy if you leave them plugged in?

If you use an electronic power strip for electronic equipment, you can help reduce "phantom loads" and save up to \$100 per year just by plugging electronic devices into the strip and then turning it off when it's not in use. Consider smart power strips that let you set timers and monitor energy usage or purchase one that senses currents and automatically shuts off.

Saving energy is just one way of caring for our common home.



Mental Health Awareness Month

We have entered into the “busy” time of the year! May has so many special celebrations - Mother’s Day, weddings, graduations, etc. These are celebrations of gratitude and thanksgiving.

For some people, these “extra” celebrations also cause extra anxiety when they already have so much on their plates. There is a need for all of us to be aware that we may feel over-burdened and undone by trying to balance a few more items into already over-scheduled lives. It is vitally important for each of us to take our “mental health temperature” on a regular basis.

The arrival and duration of the COVID pandemic has caused an enormous increase in cases of depression and other mental health challenges. For many, being isolated only got worse during the highly contagious time of the virus. And for everyone, grappling with the daily sensation that we were no longer in control of our own lives was extremely unsettling.

We are also, possibly, at the end of the pandemic phase of the COVID virus. But that simply means we have entered the endemic phase -- and we are going to have to adjust to the virus being around for a long time -- even if not as threatening as when the virus was causing so much sickness and death.

On top of those issues, is that nearly everyone had to find a way to deal with is that so many people also were either sick themselves from the virus or had close friends and relatives that got sick. Many lost important and significant people in their lives to the virus. Now, the added awareness of the horrible situation in Ukraine has become a constant in our lives. Taken together, this may well be an unprecedented level of burden upon our mental health. And each of us needs loving and caring support to re-establish we are not alone and that we are cared for.

If you or someone you know has been adversely affected and still hurting from these various situations, please consider consulting with a mental health professional. Visiting a counselor may be a good option for many. In some cases, medication may help to lift you out of your depression or other ailment. ~ Fr. Rich



Online Families Anonymous Meetings—Tuesdays at 6:00 pm via Zoom: Families Anonymous (FA) is a free 12-step program designed to help and heal family and friends of those suffering from substance abuse and other addictive behavioral issues. The Chicago Near North meetings are held on Tuesdays via Zoom and start promptly at 6:00 pm. Meetings last one hour, but some of the group stays on for a while after the meeting to socialize and to answer any questions from visitors or newcomers. Interested participants can join here:

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81634932105?pwd=MHIUY2YyN2NReUMzRDhBaEVkMXhDZz09>
- Meeting ID: 816 3493 2105, Passcode: 705592
- Call in at +13126266799

Refugee & Immigrant Ministry Update

Our Local Ministry:

We recently met and reflected on all the sorrow in the world right now. We also talked about some concrete steps we might take.

In terms of refugees from Ukraine, we still don't know what the timeline will be on that. Biden had said the U.S. will accept 100,000, but we don't know when or if that will materialize. (The expectation is that most of the Ukrainian refugees will want to remain in Europe.)

With that in mind, we have sufficient resources to support more families, and Catholic Charities is in a bit of a lull (Brother Joe reports that the main influx of Afghans ended around January). We're going to reach out to Refugee One, World Relief, and Heartland Alliance to see if we can partner with them to sponsor a family and also the Ismaeli Center to see if there are needs.

In regards to families currently being sponsored, Refugee & Immigrant Ministry member Catrine Guzik has continued to regularly assist Kadidja and her daughters, whom, she said, need rides to different activities. Contact Catrine at cjguzik@yahoo.com to help.

Illinois School of the Americas Watch (ILSOAW) and the national organization have long been in the trenches of justice work in Latin America. On October 8-9th, they will be at the AZ-Mexico border in collaboration with Border Patrol Victims' Network on the 10th anniversary of the murder of Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez by US Border Patrol.

Our Neighborhood:

Perhaps you've heard of the free store for refugees in Rogers Park (<https://bit.ly/FreeRogersParkStorearticle>). They are running out of space and need to find new space soon. Contact Allen Stryczek at astryczek@sbcglobal.net if you have any ideas.

Information & Upcoming Events:

We've all seen so much suffering for the Ukrainian people. The Social Justice Resource Center's newsletter, conta.cc/3yr5ADi, has information on the Ukrainian refugee situation.

And of course, there are still terrible conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Africa, and other parts of the world. All of these people are our brothers and sisters.

You also might be interested in an event sponsored by the Illinois Holocaust Museum on Wednesday, June 8 at 6:30 pm at Navy Pier. The program is entitled "In Our Voices: Stories of Survival & Resilience featuring descendants and survivors of genocides in Armenia, Bosnia, and Rwanda. Details are here, <https://bit.ly/IllinoisHolocaustMuseumJune8>.

So much need, but also so much good work going on! That's the Easter message - together we can be the light of love and hope.

On behalf of the refugee ministry team, thank you!

~ Denise Goodman



Peace & Justice Ministry: Pentecost Sign-Up Event & Next Meeting

On Saturday, June 4th and Sunday, June 5th, we will celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. It is also a reminder that when we receive the Holy Spirit, we see things differently.

As the disciples huddled together, they were unsure of their future. They knew tragedy, pain, and sorrow. They also knew hope when, miraculously, Jesus returned, only to leave them once more while promising to send the Holy Spirit among them. Doubt and confusion threatened to break their will and their sense of solidarity.



What shock they felt, when the Spirit was upon them—especially as it came not with a gentle rustle or in a soft hush, but as a “rush of a violent wind” and on “tongues, as of fire” (Acts 2:2–3). In this moment, their group became a church, and their doubt turned to resolve. That Spirit charged each disciple with specific missions.

The Peace and Justice Ministry is offering opportunities for those charged by the Holy Spirit to put their faith into action. In the back of the Church on Pentecost weekend, we will host five organizations who have connections to this parish and will be offering opportunities to put our faith into action. The groups include Ignatian Spirituality Project, Midwest Workers Association, United Power for Action and Justice, Kolbe House, and Refugee and Immigrant Ministry. More information about each organization will be shared in upcoming bulletins.

Please consider joining us at the next Peace and Justice meeting, planned for Monday, May 23rd at 6:30 pm in the Ministry Center.

~ Fr. Mike Gabriel

This Weekend's Cantors, Ministers of the Word, and Eucharistic Ministers

Ministers of the Word:

- Saturday, May 21 at 5:00 pm - Steve Monti
- Sunday, May 22 at 8:00 am - Jacalyn Meier
- Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 am - Rafael Melendez
- Sunday, May 22 10:30 am Gym Mass - TBA

Eucharistic Ministers:

- Saturday, May 21 at 5:00 pm - Kathy Wall
- Sunday, May 22 at 8:00 am - Brian DeVarenne
- Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 am - Bob Backis, Debra Novak
- Sunday, May 22 Gym Mass at 10:30 am - TBA

Cantors:

- Saturday, May 21 at 5:00 pm - Bernie O'Connor
- Sunday, May 22 at 8:00 am - Amir Ghazaleh
- Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 am - Kate Hibbs Davis
- Sunday, May 22 10:30 am Gym Mass - TBA

Mass Intentions

- Monday, May 23: 7:30 am - Mary Ann Maloney +
- Tuesday, May 24: 7:30 am - Daniel Goodman
- Wednesday, May 25: 7:30 am - Peter & Mary Tunney +
- Thursday, May 26: 7:30 am - Communion Service
- Friday, May 27: 7:30 am - Aida Calvopina
- Saturday, May 28: 7:30 am - Living and deceased parents of St. Gertrude parishioners; 5:00 pm - Arlene Tierney +
- Sunday, May 29: 8:00 am - Josephine Chginwe Okoye +; 10:30 am in Church - Chibeze Anazar & Wife (Blessings on their wedding); 10:30 am Gym Mass - For all who have served in the armed forces

(+ indicates the person is deceased)

Rest in Peace

- Patricia Messbarger
- David Ingram, brother of Forest Ingram

New Parishioner

- Lellia Aihevba

Donate to our Parish

Parishioners can donate to St. Gertrude:

- Text the word *Donate* to 1.773.741.9505.
- PayPal link - visit our parish website at www.stgertrudechicago.org
- GiveCentral: www.givecentral.org/location/8/allevnts

Email esoto@stgertrudechicago.org for additional information.

Parish Staff

Rev. Richard J. Prendergast, Pastor
Rev. Michael Gabriel, Associate Pastor
Mary Clare Barker, Minister of Music
Jane Callahan-Moore, Director, Heart to Heart
Kevin Cheers, Pastoral Associate
Eloy Escamilla, Pastoral Associate for Religious Education and Youth Ministry
Maria Garcia, Rectory Office Manager
Laurie Hasbrook, Heart to Heart Lending Closet Manager
Andy Mueller, Parish Buildings Engineer
Tracy Shields, Communications
Eduardo Soto, Director of Parish Management

Visit stgertrudechicago.org for staff emails.

Please Pray for our Parishioners and Friends

- Pamela Sherrod Anderson
- Helen Banta
- Zara Bradley
- Sharon Brown
- Connie Bueck
- Lilly Buie
- Claire Bushey
- Maggie Callaway
- Aida Calvopina
- KC Conway
- Connie Cool
- Caloy Desembrana
- Ann Collins Dole
- Christine Frisoni
- Shirley Marie Gonzales
- Gina Heidkamp
- Maria Hertl
- Daniel Hidalgo
- Patricia Irwin
- Bernice Kiedysz
- Sheila McGuire
- Dean Mattoni
- Larry McCauley
- Molly Morris
- Karey Myers
- Tina Piemonte
- Charley Scantlebury
- Richard Seitz
- Peggy Stoffel
- The Sullivan family
- Elinora E. Tolentino
- Manuel & Norma Viray
- Valerie Williams
- Ken & Vyes Yoza