

Pastor's Letter

September 13, 2026 – 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

I was watching the comedian Jim Gaffigan talking about fast food and how we know it's bad for us, but still we can't resist it. We know it's unhealthy, but that doesn't keep us from going through the drive-through. I can definitely relate.

Anger and vengeance are like that. There's something delicious about holding onto a grudge. Our first reading from Sirach puts it well, "Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight." When we've been wronged it feels righteous to have that flash of anger at the injustice that has been done to us. But we know that's not what God expects of us. We've heard Jesus' call to turn the other cheek and go the extra mile so many times that it's become cliché. What's so great about forgiveness anyway? It doesn't give us nearly the rush that indignation and revenge does. But like fast food, while unforgiveness may feel good at first, it will eventually catch up with us and make us sick in spirit.

In our Gospel reading Jesus tells a parable that makes the connection between God's willingness to forgive us and our willingness to forgive others. He makes the same point when he teaches his disciples to pray the Our Father, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." The two are connected because when we forgive others we are showing that God is living in us and that we are allowing the love of God to guide us. Those who belong to Christ, look like Christ. We do the things that Jesus did. And the main thing Jesus did was show mercy and forgiveness. When we don't forgive, we are showing that we don't have the life of God in us.

I saw a t-shirt once that said, "If I knew I was going to live this long, I would have taken better care of myself." You and I are going to live forever. The choices that we make now will determine the kind of life we have for all eternity. If we choose to fill up on bitterness and hatred that's what our eternity will be. If, however, we choose love and forgiveness now, we will know love and forgiveness and peace and joy forever with God.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott



Catholic Heart Work Camp

Who is ready to join us next summer for an epic adventure at Catholic Heart Workcamp? We have chosen to serve in Waterloo, Iowa from June 13 to 18. On June 12 we will spend a fun day at Lost Island Theme Park and Waterpark and some team building time at a hotel. You must be signed up by September 28 as the camps fill quickly. Call or message Jeanne Cramsey at 217-653-3962 to reserve your spot.

Journey of Faith begins September 28

Have you ever had questions about the teachings, history, and structure of the Catholic Church? Maybe you are thinking about becoming Catholic, have family or friends who are Catholic, or maybe you are Catholic and want to go deeper in the practice of your faith. Our parishes will once again be offering a class called, "Journey of Faith" starting in September. This is our program for the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA). Our OCIA class is for anyone interested in learning about Catholic faith and life. Classes will begin on Monday, September 28 at 7 p.m. at St. Brigid's in the parish hall. The class will be led by Fr. Scott. This is a great opportunity to go deep into the teachings and practices of the Catholic faith. Bring your questions and join us! For more info contact Fr. Scott.