



2015  
Lent/Easter

# If You Abide in Me...

Paul, in speaking to the Corinthians (1Cor. 16:5-7) says, "After I go through Macedonia, I will stay with you, for I will be going through Macedonia. Perhaps, I will stay with you a while or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go. For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits."

I am very taken with Paul's affection for his many disciples. Truly, a man whose heart has been transformed—a man who has had an encounter with God Himself, shows us his personal affection for the flock the Lord has given him. He does this throughout the various territories and peoples he instructs. It is evident in both his affirmation of them and also his sometimes harsh critique of their methods and motives.

To *Abide* in someone is to remain with them—always. It is to persevere and remain stable; to remain beside and near. In 1 John 2:24, Jesus says, "As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you will also abide in the Son and in the Father.

This is God's promise to us—that if we abide in Him, He will never leave us. He also, will abide in us! In order for this to happen we must come to know Him first—we must encounter the 'Living God.' We must know more than facts ABOUT him, we must KNOW HIM and experience Him.

We can have fellowship with someone we know.

There is no fellowship or relationship with facts. He waits patiently for us to come to Him and to long for Him.

In this holy season, the readings of scripture remind us not only of God's righteousness and justice, but also of His mercy. In the tradition of Mother Church we give alms, do penance, and practice abstinence of many things—all to help us examine our lives and hearts more carefully.

In order to 'abide' with God, we must be willing to leave sin behind and change our ways, as He cannot abide in these things. Therefore, to be with Him we must change our course—sometimes, very dramatically. We must experience a metanoia—a

complete 360 degrees. It is never too late to ask forgiveness—ever!

We see repeatedly in the Gospels, that His instruction to all those who seek Him is to "go and sin no more." The woman caught in the

very act of adultery, the poor invalid who has waited 38 years by the Pool of Bethesda, both hear the same thing—and they are restored, both physically and emotionally. They are

given back their dignity by the Great Physician. He is abiding with them in the whole journey, never forsaking them.

Our part in this equation is to have a contrite heart and be sorrowful for the way we have lived or the sin we have committed. True sorrow and grief is not just being found out—it is recognizing the deep anguish and pain we have caused the One Who Loves Us Best.



*Continued on page 2*

# “Open the Eyes To My Heart, Lord”

I attended a two and one-half day spiritual retreat at St. Francis Prayer Center in Flint, Michigan on 11-21-14. During the first evening of the retreat, I had an awesome spiritual experience. Arlene Apone, from the Arch Diocese of Detroit was our retreat master. The group was singing worship and praise songs. Then Arlene presented a teaching to us about Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The lyrics to one of the worship and praise songs goes, “Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you, I want to see you.” The song kept repeating over and over in my head while Arlene was feeding our spirit with words that the Lord wanted us to hear.

All of a sudden my spirit left my body and appeared at the foot of Jesus’ Cross. Jesus invited my spirit to kneel beside His Mother, the Virgin Mary. “You need to experience Me as I am,” Jesus said. From here on I will refer to “me” or “I” in place of my “spirit.”

Immediately I felt the pain Jesus felt as the crown of thorns were piercing the skin of His head. I saw the soldiers casting lots for Jesus’ garment and spitting on Him, while laughing, bringing humiliation to Our Lord. I experienced the intolerable pain felt by Jesus, when He was pierced with the lance in His side and water came pouring out; feeling the pain when He flinched.

Jesus then looked at me with love – saying, “You have experienced the love that the Father has for you. The Father loves you so much He sent Me for your salvation into eternal life. You now understand the length and breadth of the Father’s love for all. You are my friend as you experienced Me in My fullness through perfect love. As I did this for all,

I want you to experience My love for all in the world. Share this love for all in the world and with your, and my, brothers and sisters in the world.” Just as I appeared quickly before the Lord, my spirit returned as I heard Arlene teaching us about the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus would not let me sleep that night. When I went to bed at midnight, the song lyrics, “Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you. I want to see you,” kept playing over and over in my head. This is the song that I prayed while we were singing prior to Arlene speaking again. While Arlene was stretching our minds with the word of knowledge of truth, the song jumped into my mind again. It reminded me of the awesome experience I had at the foot of the cross. I was joyous and nervous at the same time.

I went to bed with that song playing over and over, and I couldn’t sleep. About 2:30 a.m., I told my wife, Mae, that I couldn’t sleep and I was going out to my recliner where I usually fall asleep easily. While I was resting, the song, *Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord*, started playing in my head. I started praying the song until I found my spirit at the foot of the cross. I didn’t understand at the time why I was at the foot of the cross the second time.

The Lord Jesus Christ revealed the following knowledge to me. He said, “I was truly born of man like you and didn’t fully understand completely who I was until being baptized by John the Baptist and receiving the Holy Spirit in its fullness. I suffered many crosses before this cross that I am sharing with you now. Those crosses are like the daily

*Continued on next page*

Jesus said with compassion,  
“Remember that I am at the  
foot of your crosses for you  
and feel your sufferings.  
You will have the final ultimate  
cross and I will be there  
to resurrect you as we arise.”

## If You Abide in Me...

*Continued from page 1*

The great lived mystery of Jesus Christ comes alive at every Eucharistic Liturgy. We have the tremendous opportunity to prepare, re-examine, forgive, ask forgiveness, and accept the mercy of God with only the asking...

My dear friend Vera, who passed away only a few months ago, once said to me, “Be careful what you pray for, Debbie, you may get it, but God is a gentleman. He respects your free will. He will

come only when he is asked.” I didn’t quite understand just then. I had not really encountered Him yet—I was very busy learning ‘about’ Him. Several months later, I had determined whatever it meant—I needed to ‘know Him,’ I wanted to be loved by Him, I wanted the Power of the Holy Spirit to be alive in my life—I wanted to encounter Him for real.



Come Holy Spirit, *come in power* to every person who reads this newsletter. Stir their heart to make you the Lord of their life, help them understand how to give themselves over to You and accept Your love and forgiveness—to encounter You maybe for the very first time, and know You for real, and that You are the One who always loves them best.

He waits, He longs, He forgives, He heals, He abides... He loves.

# “Open the Eyes To My Heart, Lord”

crosses you have in your daily life. The ones before the final cross were important to the Gospel writers as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write them down. I suffered many crosses before this final cross, like you experienced in your life.” My spirit was feeling Jesus’ emotions and pain as He named them off. The temptation of Satan in the desert; the anger at the money changers in the Temple robbing the poor; crying over the death of Lazarus, His friend; and the agony in the garden.

As I experienced these crosses, Jesus took me back to his “Final Cross,” the ultimate one. I experienced all the emotions He felt at each of these happenings. Then Jesus said, “I choose you to be at the foot of the cross, but you represent everyone that is faithful and belongs to me. All who know me can also experience the foot of the cross as you did. I want to give them an invitation also to be at *the foot of the cross*. They must be prepared to be intimate and ready to be my friend. As I shared my many crosses and the ultimate one where you are now, share that experience with our brothers and sisters in My Name.”

Jesus said with compassion, “Remember that I am at the foot of your crosses for you and feel your sufferings. You will have the final ultimate cross and I will be there to resurrect you as we arise. I will lead you to My Father’s House, which is yours at that time. Salvation is your hope and that is My gift to the faithful.

That very next morning, I woke at 4:00 a.m. I could not sleep again as the song, *Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord*, was playing over and over again. The eyes of my heart

opened. I suddenly appeared before our blessed Jesus and He gave me the word of knowledge. Jesus said, “Open the eyes of your heart and hear and heed what I am to tell you. I tell you, even though I do not know the time or the hour for my return, only the Father knows, but it is near. Be it the end times for you or when I shall return to correct the ways of the world by bringing peace and harmony to the world. That is when and where I will establish My Kingdom for all eternity. Be on guard and constantly keep the eyes of your heart on Me,” says the Lord. Then Jesus said, “Share this knowledge to all the faithful that I do not want to lose any of them – the faithful belong to me – Shalom.” My spirit returned to my body.

I feel most of the believers in the Church use their intellect (reasoning) as their source for believing. Yes, they are faithful and receive grace from the Lord, but they have to understand and experience the Holy Spirit in

order to use the grace the Lord has given them to the full potential it was intended. Jesus said, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul.”

Too many distractions in the world prevent humans from doing this. They must open the eyes of their hearts in order to rid the distractions and receive the fullness of God’s love. Then they will understand that Jesus desires to be their friend – trusted and true.

Amen.

Written and experienced by  
Deacon James S. Brown  
Diocese of Lansing, Michigan



## Leadership School – *Knowing the Shepherd*

*Twenty-one attendees and 6 dioceses representatives were at SFPC for a 5-day Leadership School with Arlene Apone (Arch Diocese of Detroit). Extensive study of the scriptures and numerous workshops regarding Leadership, the Holy Scriptures and Knowing the Shepherd kept the days very full. Mass at 8:00 am began our day. Ministry until 8:00 in the evening closed our time together each day. This was the 1st of 6 Leadership Schools to be offered here at SFPC. The 2nd will be held March 16-20. The 3rd Session is July 20-24.*



# Those We Hold In Living Memory

March 1, 2014 through February 28, 2015

Don Barnett  
Deacon Jim Brown  
Emmanuel Prayer Group  
Members  
Foster Family  
Joshua Gallagher  
Barbara Hallwood  
Donna Halprin  
Debra Hawley  
Ethel Hooker  
Norris Hyatt  
Elizabeth Lamson

Bill Leifelt  
John Leifelt  
Linda & Tom Leifelt  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Marks  
Constance Marx  
Leo Marx  
Sam Marx  
Nancy McLean  
Elizabeth Nemecek  
Richard Petrowski

Monica Pung  
Fr. Phil Schmitter  
Fr. Paul Schwermer  
Connie Shippy  
Paul Solomon

Helen Stalzer  
Shelly Tackleberry  
Veronica & Family  
Zachery  
Mary Zuwala



# Those We Hold In Eternal Memory

March 2014 through February 2015

Dr. Richard Antell  
Ruth A. Avetta  
Ralph Bartlett  
Diane Bayeh  
Delores Beattie  
James Edward Coffman  
Patrick J. Coggins  
Kathy Dallaire  
Betty Dunn  
Carole Dupcza  
Joe Dupcza  
Lee & Ritzo Eby  
Delores Eickhoff

Iris Elvig  
Helen Evans  
Norm Evans  
Carrie Hooffstetter  
Paul Hyde  
Joseph J. Ignace  
Eugene "Gene" Lemieux  
Martha Lloyd  
Felipa Lopez  
Ed McCauley  
Jack Milito  
Dave Moore  
Stanley F. Nemecek

Pearl Nicolai  
Jerry Nutt  
Katherine Paul  
Jean E. Payne  
Paul Pender  
Albert Ploucha  
Nancy Princing  
Donna Pustelnik  
Eugenia Putvin  
Richard Rapcka  
Marge Richardson  
Ben Schultz  
Vera Slattery

Darlene Stecco  
Donald Stratton  
Betty Stawasz  
Christopher Tafoya  
Delores Collardey  
Vaughan  
Alan Waterworth  
Jerry Weber  
Ivo Zucchet  
Olindo Zucchet

## Give the Gift of Prayer

Please consider using our Gift of Prayer Memorial Cards. The money is placed in the Prayer Center Memorial Fund. The principal is used as a "Gift that keeps on Giving" for years to come. The interest generated is used to further the ministries of the Prayer Center. The names of loved ones are kept on the altar at the Prayer Center and remembered in all of the Masses, Prayers, and Ministries of the Prayer Center.

We are very grateful to our friends who have named

the Prayer Center as a Charitable Organization to whom a donation could be made on the occasion of the death of a loved one or in honor of a living person (graduation, wedding, new baby, get well, anniversary, etc.).

If you would consider this thoughtful gift idea to help support the Prayer Center or need additional memorial cards, please give us a call 810-787-5330, write us at G-2381 E. Carpenter Rd., Flint, MI 48505, or send your request via e-mail to [stfrancisflint@comcast.net](mailto:stfrancisflint@comcast.net).

As we anticipate holding some warm-weather functions outside, we ask you to prayerfully consider sponsoring the purchase of 10 white, plastic 60-inch round tables. Thank you in the name of St. Francis, the beggar.

## Reaching Out!

Please know that the Prayer Center has you and your intentions at the center of what we do. There are quite a few hats to be worn around here and 'Prayer' is at the top of the list!

On a daily basis we are helping young mothers with food and clothing and beds for their children. On a daily basis we are providing Spiritual Food in the ways of Scripture studies; spiritual direction and formation classes in the faith.

There are very few places that offer retreats and ongoing spiritual development other than the big retreat house in DeWitt. Please consider helping us financially every month won't you?

In the Spirit and words of Fr. Solanus Casey... "I thank you ahead of time," knowing that God is already at work hearing this request, and is busy responding to it as we speak!

—Director, Deb



## Are You a Knight?

Many of our St. Francis Prayer Center (SFPC) friends are Knights of Columbus. Recently, I sent a letter of inquiry to each Grand Night and the Manager of his area in all of Genesee County. The letter was to ask if someone in the K of C would consider 'adopting' us at SFPC. Each church has a women's auxiliary and a men's group and a K of C group etc...

We are praying someone will see God's work being done here and be stirred to help us. We are a staff of women (2 retired) and the building and property must be maintained in order to stay operational. There are several needs that are as yet undone. Some include patio door replacement; window replacement; extensive work on the decks and a few more. Please prayerfully consider 'adopting' us and using your gifts and talents on our behalf, so we can continue to serve God's people.



**Can you help us reach our goal?**

**8 ppl  
@ \$500  
month**

**10 ppl  
@ \$200  
month**

**10 ppl  
@ \$100  
month**

**10 ppl  
@ \$50  
month**

**Our goal is \$90,000 per year.**

**Monthly Pledgers can help us reach our goal.**

***We reach out to others with spiritual and physical needs.***

St. Francis Prayer Center • G-2381 E. Carpenter Rd. • Flint, MI 48505 • 810-787-5330



# SFPC 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser

Celebrating 40 years of ministering with our community.

## Saturday, April 25, 2015

Holy Redeemer Family Life Center; 1227 E. Bristol Rd., Burton, MI

# Tickets \$100.00

Each ticket includes 2 dinner tickets **plus** 4 complimentary drink tickets.

Additional drink tickets may be purchased for \$2.00 each! Limited additional guest dinner tickets available for \$25.00 each.

**Free coffee, water and soft drinks! Please use the ticket order form below.**

**ELIMINATION DRAWING FOR UP TO \$7,000 IN CASH PRIZES!**

**Attention!** As an incentive, if you sell a **full table of tickets**, (4 tickets) your name will be entered into a drawing for \$100. Your name must appear on the "Sold by" line on ticket stub.

### We still need your help!

Selling all 350 tickets @ \$100 each will help make this a much more successful fundraiser. So come on, Prayer Center Friends, put on your ticket seller caps and help make this a very successful event. *Remember*, seating capacity at Holy Redeemer is limited to 400 people.

**Come – join us for "A Carnival Fun Night!" Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 25, 2015.**

### New Auction items to perk your interest!

- 55" LED Flat Screen Television
- Fishing Trip
- 3 BMX Bikes
- Racer Crazy Cart
- GM Mechanics Lift Kit – 4-piece
- 20 Gallon Air Compressor
- Leather Wallets
- Katcher 2500 PSI Pressure Washer
- 2 Vintage Candy Stations
- 24" Tyler Cart Grill
- Fine Jewelry including: Sapphire & Sterling Ring; Pink Sapphire & Sterling Ring; Square Cut Aquamarine & Peridot Ring; Pink Sapphire & Sterling Heart-Shape Ring; *and Many More!!!*

### Some old Favorites, too!

- 2 Decker Cottage Weekends
- Soaring Eagle Gift Certificates
- Chateau Chantal VIP Tour & Tasting
- Bay Mills Resort & Casino Certificate
- Atlas Valley CC Gift Certificate for 4

*Please clip and send your request to St. Francis Prayer Center, G-2381 E. Carpenter Road, Flint, MI 48505*

**BIG TICKET ORDER (Each ticket includes 2 Dinner and 4 Drink Tickets. Please Print.)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Big Tickets @ **\$100** each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send the two dinner and 4 drink tickets included with each Big Ticket, we **will be** attending the party

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send \_\_\_\_\_ guest **dinner tickets @ \$25** each (limited)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Sorry, we cannot attend, but will pray for your success.*

Amount Enclosed:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Raffle License # R29265

**BE SURE TO LET US KNOW IF YOU WILL BE ATTENDING! We need to let the caterer know.**

Some of the items we have for

# Live & Silent Auctions!



It's a jewelry bonanza!

## Rings!

## Rings!

## Rings!

### ANOTHER WAY TO HELP WITH BASKETS...

If you would rather purchase the items & let someone else put together the basket, we can make that happen, too! Contact the Prayer Center!

### HELP NEEDED IN OTHER WAYS, TOO!

We also invite your suggestions and ideas. If you would like to have a say or be willing to be a Chairperson or help on a committee, come to our next meeting March 30 @ the Prayer Center @ 6:00 pm. Some people chairing more than one committee.



We are trying **very hard** to have Credit Card capability and hope to have something in place by time the fundraiser gets here.

## Baskets-To-Go!

*Would you or your group be willing to donate a basket for our fundraiser?*

Some ideas include:

- Movie Night
- Wine & Cheese
- Evening Out
- Sports Package
- Baby Basket
- BFF Fun Night.
- Family Game Night

**DEADLINE to Respond: APRIL 9**

Let your imagination guide you.

Come – join us for

“A Carnival Fun Night!”

Mark your calendars for

**Saturday, April 25, 2015.**

Plan on Christmas shopping on April 25!



## ST. FRANCIS PRAYER CENTER

G-2381 E. Carpenter Rd., Flint, MI 48505  
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### Newsletters by E-mail

To receive your newsletter via email (PDF format) rather than hard copy, please send a request via email to stfrancisflint@comcast.net.

### Like Us On Facebook

[www.facebook.com/stfrancisprayer-center-flint](http://www.facebook.com/stfrancisprayer-center-flint) (no spaces).

### Our Web Site

[www.stfrancisprayerflint.com](http://www.stfrancisprayerflint.com)

## Save These Dates!

### ❖ Life in the Spirit

Starting April 22 for 6 Wednesdays; 6:30-8:45 pm @ Holy Family in Grand Blanc. Please call the Prayer Center to register.

### ❖ 34th Annual Fundraiser

Get your Big Tickets now to attend! It's held at Holy Redeemer Family Life Center on Bristol Road in Burton. For more information, see pages 6 & 7!

### ❖ Garden Memorial

May 30 is the date. While the details are still being finalized, there will be a mass – hopefully on the deck – and luncheon after.

### ❖ Leadership School

The 3rd of 6 Tracks with Arlene Apone; *Holy Spirit*, will be held July 20-24, 2015. Contact the Prayer Center for more information or to register.

## Holy Family Holds Staff Retreat



Fr. Gary Koenigsnecht, Fr. Jonathan Perrotta, and the staff of Holy Family parish in Grand Blanc. The Prayer Center was filled with fellowship, teaching, and prayer with Fr. Tim Nelson as Retreat Master for the day. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Mass and an Italian lunch completed a beautiful snowy day of retreat.

### Thank You

I wish to personally thank all those who sent cards and offered many prayers for me this January. I had a cancer scare in 3 areas—all at same time!! One of them did require very major surgery and a tumor removed, however, that tumor and both of the other locations were all benign—thanks be to God!

I am learning to not push quite so hard around here—but hard to do when so many great things are happening. —Deb