

Bulletin for the Catholic Parishes of Oklee, Grygla, and Goodridge

Contact Information

Clergy: Fr. Adam Hamness
frhamness@oggcatholic.org

Bookkeeper/Secretary: Deb Whalen
parishstaff@oggcatholic.org

Address: Post Office Box 126
301 Governor Street
Oklee, MN 56742

Website: www.oggcatholic.org

Telephone: (218) 796-5844

Emergency Line: (218) 209-2686

Office Hours

Tuesday & Wednesday 8:30 a.m. — 3:30 p.m.
Thursday 8:30 a.m. — 11:30a.m.

Bulletin Deadline

Wednesday: Noon

CLERGY COLUMN

We hear of shepherds in both the first reading and the Gospel today. In my time in seminary I was classmates with a real-life, old-fashioned shepherd. My classmate, Fr. Albert, is from Ghana, and as a child he lived in a rural village and took the flock out to pasture each day. He spent all day in the pastures with his family's flock, and seems to have had a pleasant childhood. I am sure there were many hardships he was too pious to mention, but his descriptions of being with the flock were wholesome and beautiful. Even if it was physically taxing and difficult, it was a good way to grow up. (On a side note, his home village is famous for having friendly crocodiles that are tame enough to be petted and touched by tourists.)

The Lord uses the metaphor of being a shepherd for his role in our lives, and it is a notion that has been preserved. The word, Pastor, comes from pastoral, which is an adjective describing a pasture. In the idealized pasture, there is bountiful food, water and shelter. The air is crisp, everything is green, and there is an ease of life where the flock can be nourished, grow and flourish. That is the Lord's intention for his flock, and that is the goal of every present-day shepherd or pastor...to guide the flock in pathways of goodness and peace.

On Tuesday evening I am heading to John Paul II Camp to assist with confessions for the middle school campers. Since I will be gone quite late into the night, there will not be Mass on Wednesday morning.

St. Francis Xavier Parish in Oklee

Mass Times Confessions

Sun: 8:00 a.m. 7:30 a.m.
Tues: 8:00 a.m. 7:45 a.m.
Wed: 8:00 a.m. 7:45 a.m.
Thurs: 8:00 a.m. 7:45 a.m.

St. Clement Parish in Grygla

Mass Times Confessions

Sun: 10:15 a.m. 10:00 a.m.

St. Ann Parish in Goodridge

Mass Times Confessions

Sun: 12:00 p.m. 11:45 a.m.

GOD, ARE YOU THERE?

I feel alone. I pray, but God is silent. At these times, I wonder if God is even there.

You're lonely. You're worried. You're frustrated. You're desperate. You don't know where to turn, so you call out to God. You pray your best prayers. And . . . crickets. Nothing. As far as you can tell, God is silent. He's indifferent.

That is a perfectly logical conclusion. After all, if you told a friend all your troubles and they sat silent as a stone—no advice, no gesture of empathy, no words of encouragement—wouldn't you wonder if they'd gone deaf, or worse, just didn't care? What, then, are we to make of the silence of God?

WHO'S THERE?

When someone gives us "the silent treatment," we run through a mental checklist: Have I offended him? Failed to keep a promise? Behaved badly? We imagine that if we can attribute the silent party's unresponsiveness to some egregious action of our own, perhaps we can make amends and return to speaking terms. The burden, we believe, is on us.

But "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind."¹ Perhaps the first error we make in understanding God's silence is failing to understand his nature. We forget that God is not a man, and we attribute human motives and emotions to him in an attempt to explain his actions. But our ways, he says plainly, are *not* his ways.²

And while other human beings might predicate their responses to us on our behavior—good or bad—God does not. His behavior is an outflowing of *his* character, not our own. And his very nature is love.³

SILENCE AND THE SAINTS

"It's not very loving," you might say, "for someone who loves you to be silent." But silence from God has been experienced by many devoted God-followers to whom you might assume God would *never* stop speaking. Even Mother Teresa wrote privately that she failed to sense God's presence in her life for more than fifty years—an astounding confession from a woman whose love for God produced so many good works.

"Jesus has a very special love for you," she wrote to one of her mentors, [but] as for me, the silence and the emptiness is so great that I look and do not see, listen and do not hear."⁴ Mother Teresa could not explain God's silence, but she did not question his love—perhaps because she knew that God's ways were not her ways.

Scottish theologian Oswald Chambers argued that "God's silences are His answers."⁵ Silence

from God, therefore, may be an overture of intimacy, not a retreat from it: "Are you mourning before God because you have not had an audible response? You will find that God has trusted you in the most intimate way possible, with an absolute silence, not of despair, but of pleasure, because He saw that you could stand a bigger revelation. If God has given you a silence, praise Him, He is bringing you into the great run of His purposes."⁶

From this view, God's silence is not punishment or abandonment but an intimate gift of trust.

WHEN ALL IS QUIET

So when God seems silent, what should we do? To begin with, we could use the silence as an occasion to remember the ways he has spoken in the past. When you are separated from a loved one and cannot converse, it's common to remember conversations or moments of intimacy from your previous times together.

Instead of wondering "where God went," consider using the perceived "lull" in communication to remember those times. Remind yourself of the moments when you keenly felt his presence, the times you believe you heard his instruction, encouragement, or affirmation. Let those memories fill the void and strengthen your faith.

As you remember, thank God for those times. Praise him, too, for his attributes, his character, his mighty acts of the past, and the ways he has been faithful to you. Let gratitude—not fear or doubt—begin to fill the emptiness you may be feeling. His character is not dependent upon your perception of him—something else for which to be thankful!

Understand that your faith is being exercised when God seems absent. During the silent times, you must trust something beyond your own feelings and emotions. "Anyone who comes to [God]," said the writer of Hebrews, "must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."⁷

Belief in times of silence is hard. When God is silent, we're tempted to stop believing that he exists or that he cares. "What makes [unbelief] in many was more appealing [than belief] is that whereas to believe in something requires some measure of understanding and effort, not to believe doesn't require much of anything at all."⁸ Take the hard road. Let your faith be strengthened as you believe without seeing or hearing.

It is also important to continue to obey God—especially during those times when his presence is not felt. Don't fall into the trap of saying, "If you're not going to talk to me, I'm not going to try to listen to you!" So much of

God's will and instruction is given to us not individually, but corporately. Within the pages of His Word, he has said much about how he wants his people to live.

He speaks through the Bible, through other people, through his created world, and through the "still, small voice" of his Spirit. Often what we imagine as silence from God is far from it. Obey what he has already said, and you will be poised to hear even more from him.

REMEMBER. PRAISE. OBEY. REPEAT.

"I've done all these things," you might say. "Doesn't God owe me proof of his presence now? Doesn't he have something just for me?" No. And yes.

No, he does not owe us proof that he is. (He gives us this in many ways, but it is not owed.) What we are due on the basis of our performance is, thankfully, not what he gives those of us who put our trust in Christ.

He offers grace to the person who confesses their shortcomings and asks for mercy. He gives himself to those who ask. Yes, he does have something just for you. If his voice is not clear, if his plan is not plain—keep doing the things you know. Keep remembering his goodness and love. Keep praising him. Keep obeying as much of his will as you know.

And as you focus on these things, keep the ear of your heart tuned God-ward. You will hear his voice again. Until then, receive the silence. It teaches, too.



Oklee	Sunday	07/18/21	8:00 a.m.	<i>Pro Populo</i>
Grygla	Sunday	07/18/21	10:15 a.m.	† Paul Rundell
Goodridge	Sunday	07/18/21	12:00 p.m.	† Dennis Bakke
Oklee	Tuesday	07/20/21	8:00 a.m.	† Mary Peterson.
Oklee	Wednesday	07/21/21	NO MASS	NO MASS
Oklee	Thursday	07/22/21	8:00 a.m.	† Bob Peterson
Oklee	Friday	07/23/21	8:00 a.m.	† Anita Gunkel
Oklee	Sunday	07/25/21	8:00 a.m.	† Joey Johnson
Grygla	Sunday	07/25/21	10:15 a.m.	<i>Pro Populo</i>
Goodridge	Sunday	07/25/21	12:00 p.m.	† Linda Turi

Tithing

St. Francis Xavier's in Oklee July 11, 2021


Adults Envelopes	\$1609.00
Retired Priests	\$100.00
Peter's Pence	\$241.00
Flowers Altar	\$25.00
Endowment	\$105.00
Loose Plate	\$40.00
Total	\$2120.00

St. Ann's in Goodridge July 11, 2021

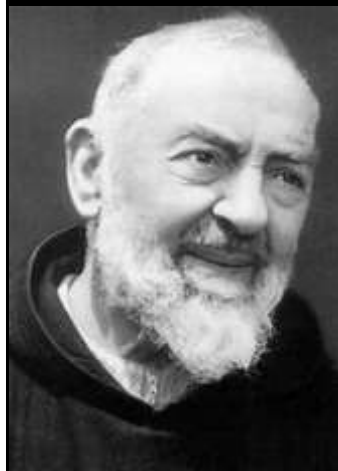
Adults Envelopes	\$1340.00
Retired Priests	\$10.00
Loose Plate	\$3.00
Total	\$1353.00

St. Clement's in Goodridge July 11, 2021

Adults Envelopes	\$895.00
Loose Plate	\$640.00
Peter's Pence	\$200.00
Total	\$1705.00

 **Burial Announcement**

A burial service will be held for Tim Whalen on Saturday, July 24 at 11:00 a.m. Following, a luncheon will be served at the church and all family and friends are welcome to attend.



Prayer of Pope John Paul II to St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Teach us, we pray, humility of heart, so that we may be counted among the little ones of the Gospel to whom the Father promised to reveal the mysteries of His Kingdom. Help us to pray without ceasing, certain that God knows what we need even before we ask Him. Obtain for us the eyes of faith that will help us recognize in the poor and suffering, the very face of Jesus. Sustain us in the hour of trouble and trial and, if we fall, let us experience the joy of the sacrament of forgiveness. Grant us your tender devotion to Mary, mother of Jesus and our Mother. Accompany us on our earthly pilgrimage toward the blessed Homeland, where we too, hope to arrive to contemplate forever the Glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Pope John Paul II recited this prayer on the occasion of the canonization of Padre Pio, June 16, 2002.

Let us always keep before our eyes the fact that here on earth we are on a battlefield and that in paradise we shall receive the crown of victory; that this is a testing-ground and the prize will be awarded up above; that we are now in a land of exile while our true homeland is Heaven to which we must continually aspire.

St. Padre Pio

St Francis Xavier's
Oklee, MN

Sunday, July 18, 2021
Lector: Bob Melby
Counters: Lora J. & Margaret B.

Sunday, July 25, 2021
Lector: Jacob Melby
Counters: Anne H. & Delores G.

Sunday, August 1, 2021
Lector: Jan Dulka
Counters: Shirley Cyr & Jan Dulka

St Ann's
Goodridge, MN

Sunday, July 18, 2021
Lector: Carol

Sunday, July 25, 2021
Lector: Eliza

Sunday, August 1, 2021
Lector: Carol

St Clement's
Grygla, MN

Sunday, July 18, 2021
Lector: Jim C.

Sunday, July 25, 2021
Lector: Jody

Sunday, August 1, 2021
Lector: Gary

Weekly Reflections

“He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” MARK 6:31

Do you spend time, every day, alone and in silence listening to how God is calling you? If not, you are missing out on a wonderful opportunity to develop a more personal relationship with Him. Unless we talk and more importantly, listen to God every day, how else will we know how He is calling us? Consider making a retreat this year, spend some “alone” time with God.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church Prayer Blankets

You Matter. We care. You are not alone.

There are prayer blankets in the back of the church for those whom are sick, suffering or dying. Please sign the book to whom it is given to so we know who the prayers are for.

Thank you!!

We are the Hands of Christ

Are you good at making people feel welcome? When you meet someone new, a new neighbor, a new work colleague, a new parishioner, do you make them feel at home?

Many of us probably do a much better job at this. When we make people feel welcome, we make them feel like they are included instead of being excluded.

A simple “hello” goes a long way.



Recently Deceased Loved Ones

†Joey Johnson
†Allen Paquin
†Chris Tougas
†Larry O’Neill
†Yvonne Boucher
†Bonnie Buchmeier
†Janet Pearson
†David Dessellier
†Rita Bonagura Vaughn
†Ann Peterson
†Irene Dessellier
†Floyd Neuschwander
†Ted Lussier
†LaVonne Radniecki
†Brigitta Dobmeier
†Mary Jean Altendorf
†Mike Bourque
†Florence Dunham
†Betty Barsness
†Floyd Charest
†Jim Dulka
†Avis Frazer
†Lauretta Stucy
†Tom Toulouse
†Marlyn Dessellier
†Gerald Cote
†Phyllis Martell
†Theresa “Bergeron” Lucken
†Jerome Hruby
†Irene Kiesow
†Donnie Knutson
†Ron Rustan
†Joan Carpenter
†Leroy Irlbeck
†Lowell Smeby
†Dorothy Plante
†Jim Lussier
†Tim Whalen
†Iona Berry
†Kim Johs
†Elias Abboud

Pray For Those Who Are Sick

Delton Sebenaler
Donnie Tougas
Kenneth LaCoursiere
Shirley Dessellier
Michael Bachand
Annette LaCoursiere
Debra Olson
Jack Miller
Ambrose Beaudoin
Steve Sebenaler
Don LaCoursiere
Cindy Deterrman
Marie Adams
Grace Rundell
MaryAnn Lambert
Bailey Herried Drotts
George Pittman
Bambi Lambert
Lucille Christianson
Doris Dessellier
Danielle Swanson
Mark Stromberg
Sylvia Remick Morey
Penny Kalar
Jo Lambert
Richard Perreault
Tony Radniecki
Darren Tougas
Elaine Radniecki
Bob Radniecki
Rick Dulka
Greg Whalen
Richard Bourque
Tony Weber
Jason Moe

