



“Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future.”

LUKE 13:8–9A



## A Gardener God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**C**harles Baudelaire was a French poet and essayist in the mid-1800s. He once observed that life is like a hospital in which each patient is possessed by the desire to change beds. In other words, he thought everyone seemed to think life would be so much better if only they had a different set of circumstances, a different job, a different marriage, a different place in life. Like trees, however, not everyone grows and matures at the same pace. There are forty-year-olds who still act and think like teenagers, and there are ten-year-olds who have an attitude toward life like that of an elder. Over time, we all grow into the lives we're given.

In this week's Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, some think God is like the owner who planted the tree, as

if God is impatient with us to begin bearing fruit and quick to uproot us if we fail. A case could be made, however, for God to be the gardener who patiently fertilizes and nurtures. In the beginning, it was God who had a garden called Eden, filled with all kinds of trees and plants among which God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. After the resurrection, it was Mary Magdalene who went looking for the body of Jesus and mistook him for the gardener. It is God who hovers over us, watering and nudging and nurturing, waiting until in God's good time, we begin to bear fruit. ●

### Reflect

***What needs nurturing in my life,  
and what needs weeding out?***



# Saint Francis Village Catholic Chapel

4125 St. Francis Village Rd., Crowley, TX 76036

<https://stfrancisvillagecatholicchapel.com>

(817) 292-3274

Father Ken Robinson, Chaplain

## REFLECTIONS

### Taking Time for Prayer

A Catholic priest, a Protestant minister and a spiritual guru were discussing prayer, in particular the stance and attitude in which prayer was most effective.

The priest insisted that the best way to pray was in a kneeling position. "Humbling ourselves before almighty God is the only way to go," he emphasized.

The minister was in agreement that humility was necessary but insisted that the most appropriate prayer stance was standing with hands outstretched, lifted to heaven. "Then and only then," he insisted, "are you really praying."

The guru, while not deprecating the advice of either the priest or the minister, offered his own recommendation for prayer stance. "No, no," he emphasized, "the only really effective stance for prayer is the lotus position sitting passively on the floor. In that way," he insisted, "the body and the soul are open to the divine."

A telephone repairman happened to overhear this heated discussion about the proper stance for prayer. He didn't have any particular religious or spiritual training but thought that since he had some personal experience, it wouldn't hurt to offer it. "You guys are entirely wrong," he said. That got their attention and after a moment of staring at the man, one of them politely announced, "Alright, what have you to offer on the proper stance for prayer?"

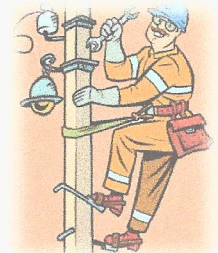
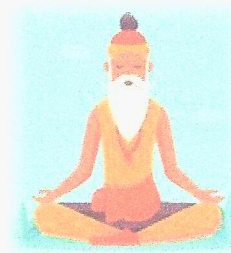
The repairman offered the following: "The best prayin' I ever did was the time I slipped and was hanging upside down from a telephone pole."

Like the repairman, we often do our best – sadly perhaps our only – praying when we are in trouble, when dealing with the situation has moved well beyond our capabilities. In such circumstances it is not unusual to call on God to save us from our difficulties, difficulties often flowing from our own, earlier, bad decisions. We know instinctively

that God will respond, not always in the way we ask, to be sure, but that God will always answer prayer.

But imagine how much better and more peaceful our lives would be if our entire lives were focused through prayer. How much better and more peaceful our lives if we prayed as though our lives depended upon our relationship with God. Prayer is communication, seeking out God's will for our lives and, at the same time, opening ourselves to God's grace that we might then accomplish the divine plan.

*From Father Ken*



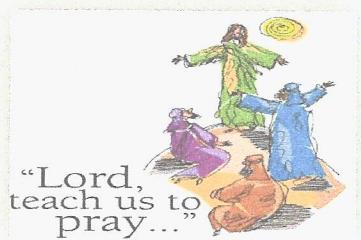
*God will always  
answer prayer*



## My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have entered the Third Week of Lent. Let us reflect on our Lenten commitments and endeavor to fulfill them.

The Lord's Prayer is identified in the Catechism of the Catholic Church as the "Fundamental Christian Prayer" (No.2759). Tertullian (a prolific early Christian author) said "the Our Father is a Summary of the whole Gospel". St. Thomas Aquinas said "It is the most perfect of Prayers." Shane Owens reflecting on the Lord's Prayer said "We should take some time to slowly pray the Our Father and ask ourselves if there is a particular word of Petition that moves our hearts and will." Let us all contemplate the riches this Lent of the Prayer "Our Father" given to us by Jesus.



On Tuesday March 25th at 9:00 AM during Holy Mass, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. It is the day, nine months before Christmas, on which we commemorate the Angel Gabriel's Announcement to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive a son (named Jesus) through a Virgin Birth. Mary's acceptance is momentous because she would be the Mother of the Son of God Himself.



*Celebrate the  
Solemnity of the  
Annunciation of  
Our Lord*

**Reminder:** On Tuesday March 25th at 7:00 PM in the PAX Center, the Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring our monthly opportunity to make 500 Sandwiches for the Presbyterian Night Shelter in Fort Worth. Your assistance in this endeavor will be appreciated.

We have three weeks remaining for our Lenten Friday Fish Fries sponsored by the SFV Board of Directors. Join us to enjoy the good food and a time of fellowship. Meals are served from 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM. Please pre-register at the SFV Residents' Business Office a week prior to the event. The cost is \$5.00 for SFV residents and \$15.00 for guests.



*Thanks goes out to all the Volunteers who are joining the SFV Board members in making the Friday Fish Fries so successful.*

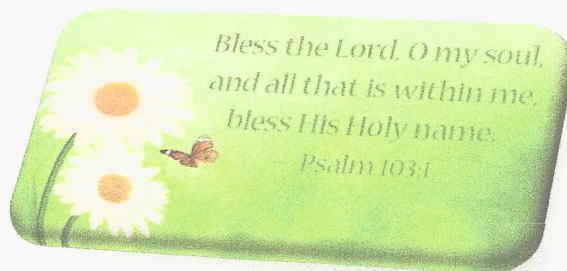
If you are interested in participating as a volunteer in Chapel Ministries please contact Cat in the Chapel office.

In closing, I have talked to a number of people recently who are going through difficult times, due to health issues or deaths of family members. I came across the following reflections by an unknown author that I thought might help with the trials we encounter in life:

*When life breaks you down, it is because you are ready to be put back together differently. Every piece of you that feels shattered is a piece that will find a new place, a new purpose, a new meaning. Trust that the cracks are where the light gets in, and sometimes in our brokenness we find our greatest wellness. We find courage to rebuild, to rethink, to re-imagine and to redefine what it means to be strong. You are not broken; you are breaking through.*

*May Christ's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

*God Give You Peace.  
Mike Pierson*



## THE LORD IS KIND AND MERCIFUL!

Mass Intentions	
Mar. 23, 2025	SFV Catholic Chapel Community
Mar. 24, 2025	Intention of Joe McCreary
Mar. 25, 2025	Father Bob Strittmatter
Mar. 26, 2025	Repose of the Soul of Harold Bindel By Schwartz Family
Mar. 27, 2025	Repose of the Soul of Marie Benetz By C. Karnezis
Mar. 28, 2025	Health of Dawn Knudson
Mar. 29, 2025	SFV Catholic Chapel Community (5:00 PM Vigil Mass)



# Dear Padre,

***May I receive Communion if I'm divorced and haven't gotten an annulment?***

Yes, you may. Divorce, in itself, is not an impediment to the reception of Communion. Divorce, although regrettable because of the many ramifications that may be part of the experience, is not in itself a sin. There are situations when divorce may be the most loving choice and make it possible for all parties involved to live the lives God is calling them to live.

Remarriage, when a person is not free to marry because of the presence of a previous bond, is an impediment to the reception of holy Communion. Although this situation is more and more common, it does not mean that the law of the Church, representative of the teaching of Jesus, can be set aside. As part of the process of healing from your divorce and moving on with your life, you may want to seek an annulment, particularly if you think you might want to marry again. The annulment process can often be healing and a source of great blessing. It also provides a rare opportunity to reflect on what was lost as a result of the original divorce and what can be learned as a way of moving forward and building a second marriage that is strong and life-giving.

*Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org*



STEVE LOVEGROVE / SHUTTERSTOCK

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
Lenten Weekday	The	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Fourth Sunday of Lent
2 Kgs 5:1-15b	Annunciation of the Lord	Dt 4:1, 5-9	Jer 7:23-28	Hos 14:2-10	Hos 6:1-6	Jos 5:9a, 10-12
Lk 4:24-30	Is 7:10-14; 8:10	Mt 5:17-19	Lk 11:14-23	Mk 12:28-34	Lk 18:9-14	2 Cor 5:17-21
	Heb 10:4-10					Lk 15:1-3,
	Lk 1:26-38					11-32



VATICAN MEDIA

## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*I like to think that a nice name for God could be “the God of another possibility”.... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached, but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past, but confidently bets on your future.*

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 20, 2022