



HOLY IS ANY PLACE WHERE IT IS SAFE TO TELL YOUR STORY.

HOLY IS ANY PLACE THAT CREATES JUSTICE.

St. Stanislaus Church

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St. Stanislaus Church Bulletin
St. Stanislaus Church
398 Superior Street
St. Paul, MN 55102

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Dear People Whom God Loves,

One Christian's Journey, a Different Perspective

In the past, I have written about my spiritual journey from a top-down perspective, that is, the journey of growing into deeper and broader compassion, mercy and understanding influenced by my perception of God.

This perception has changed several times. First, my perception of God was that of a distant powerful being who rewards and punishes us, based on our doing or not doing what he wants us to do.

Next I perceived God as a distant powerful being who loves us with no strings or conditions. This Love is spirit, not a being. It is not only the source of all beings, but also lives in us and all creation. It is constantly working in all of us to bring us to the state of total love and compassion.

I now write about my spiritual journey from the perspective that I call bottom-up, that is, befriending our body. I believe this requires befriending all of who and what we are.

It helps me to understand this full humanness by looking at our brain. There are three main parts: the oldest part is the reptilian brain, also called the brain stem. We, along with lizards and other mammals, have this brain. It is essential for staying alive and without it our internal organs would not work. This is the instinctive part of us and the source of our bodily sensations. It alerts our bodies to danger with amazing quickness, which helps us to survive.

Recent studies and experiments help us understand this. When we touch something hot we recoil at once to keep from suffering a worse burn. We formerly thought we recoiled because of the pain. We now know that we recoil a

half second before we feel the pain. The pain is valuable because it helps us to be careful around hot things, but the reptilian brain reacts more quickly than the felt pain.

These primitive sensations grow into our emotions of anger and fear, which trigger great strength to fight or run away from the danger. This along with the drive for food helps us as individuals to survive.

Survival of the species is also crucial. That is why sexual drives are essential. If we didn't have sexual drives, we wouldn't be here.

All of this is the fruit of evolutionary survival. We need it to survive. Spiritual wholeness requires that we accept these lizard parts of us. They must be integrated with the newer parts. I also believe that we can't integrate them if we don't accept them as valuable and good. Without this integration, spiritual growth is hindered.

We moved now to the newer (middle) part of our brain. This is called the mammalian brain or the limbic system. Cats, dogs, tigers and other mammals also have this part of the brain. This middle part of the brain enables us to have more than just bodily sensations. We have emotions as well. We feel anger, fear, emotional warmth and closeness. This makes it possible for us to like to hug and cuddle and be with family. It is why we like status. It allows us to feel sad. It is what makes it possible to feel the thrill of falling in love.

All of the things that come from the brain stem and limbic system have no morality about them. They are just there, a part of being human. When we deny them we lose a part of our humanity. We lose our wholeness.

More to come.

Smile, God loves you,

Father Clay

DECEMBER CALENDAR

MONDAYS

- Al-Anon: 11:30am - 12:30pm, online.

TUESDAYS

- Women's Spirituality Group: 5:00 - 6:30pm, Parish Center library on December 7, 14 and 21. Please call Lindsay Lopez at 651-292-1913 with any questions.

WEDNESDAYS

- Youth Group: Meets 6:30 - 8:00pm, Grades 7-12, Parish Center.

THURSDAYS

- Women's Spirituality Group: 9:30 -11:00 am online and in person, Parish Center library on December 2, 9, and 16.
- Centering Prayer: 12:00 - 1:00pm, Parish Center on December 2, 9 and 16 and 7:00 - 8:00pm currently meeting online.
- Lectio Divina: 6:00 - 6:50pm currently meeting online. Please call Lindsay Lopez at 651-292-1913 with any questions.

SATURDAYS

- Penance: 3:00 - 3:30pm
- Mass: 4:00pm

SUNDAYS

- Mass: 8:00am and 10:00am

DECEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

- Holy Day of Obligation, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Mass: Wednesday, December 8, 5:30pm.
- Communal Penance: Sunday, December 12 at 11:00am. Correction--this will **not** be live streamed.
- Youth Group Broomball and Gift Exchange: December 15, 6:00pm, Palace Recreation Center.
- Christmas Eve Mass: Friday, December 24, 4:00pm.
- Christmas Day Mass: Saturday, December 25 10:00am. No 4:00pm Mass or Penance.

- Day after Christmas Mass Times: Sunday, December 26 regular Mass times 8am & 10am
- New Year's Day: Saturday, January 1, 10:00am. No 4pm Mass or Penance.
- Regular Mass times resume Sunday, January 2 at 8am & 10am.

Mass Readings: Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-18a (9C)

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

MASSES—DECEMBER 11—DECEMBER 19, 2021

Sat. 4:00 Donna Frid

Sat. 4:00 Joyce Doherty

Sun. 8:00 Dennis Dempsey

Sun. 8:00 Kevin O'Brien

10:00 Clarice Gombold

10:00 Mary Hayek

LECTIO DIVINA

The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.



MANY, MANY THANKS

As we approach the ending of another year, St. Stan's would like to acknowledge and thank the many devoted volunteers who contribute their time and talents to the special community that is St. Stan's:

- ❖ **St. Stan's Trustees**—Dave Bredemus, Treasurer and Rebecca Nordstrom, Secretary.
- ❖ **Finance Council Members**—Angela Anderson; Dave Dietz; Shelly Peterson and Dave Freier.
- ❖ **Parish Council Members**—Joyce Maddox; Shelly Peterson; Zoey Ryan; Mark Thiel; and Fr. Dan Haugan.

We also express our gratitude to those who serve as Eucharistic Ministers; Greeters; Lectors; Funeral Luncheon helpers; Religious Education teachers; Youth Group volunteers and *all* who help in the many special ways that keep us moving along together on our spiritual journeys.

A GREAT WAY TO GET TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW PARISHIONERS

AT ST. STAN'S – GREETERS NEEDED!

*** *Volunteer Opportunity* ***

St. Stan's is looking for new people to participate in its Greeter Ministry. Greeters welcome people to church on weekends, and provide the first contact to newcomers, people returning to the church after an absence, and regular attendees. This one-to-one ministry acknowledges the importance of each person attending mass. What an honor! We are looking for new greeters at all of our weekend masses: 4 pm Saturday mass, 8 am Sunday mass and 10 am Sunday mass. Please contact Pat Tommet at 651-698-1969 or ptommet@tc.umn.edu for more information and to sign up. Thank you!

SAFETY PRACTICES AT MASS CONTINUE

We continue to practice social distancing at St. Stan's, and **we strongly encourage wearing masks**, especially if you have not been vaccinated. However, presently masks are not required. This is subject to change given the recent variants and virus surges. We have a designated basket to collect all donations in lieu of ushers and our holy water fonts remain emptied. We also continue to live stream our Saturday 4pm Mass. Pews are marked to maintain social distancing. We regularly review the Minnesota Department of Health safety protocol guidelines to maintain a safe worship environment for all. Missals and songbooks have been temporarily removed from the pews as a precaution. We will not be singing until safe to do so. Please feel free to contact Kim Myers, Parish Administrator at 651-224-7998 or kimmyers@ststans.org with any questions or concerns.

ST. STAN'S STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

This fall a group of St. Stan's parishioners and staff gathered together for five Wednesday evenings to address what St. Stan's is doing well, what we might want to stop doing, and what are our current and future needs. The committee concluded the first two priorities should be improving Communication and Enhancing our Community Outreach. The Stewardship Committee plans to address the parish community and will continue to meet throughout 2022 to identify how the St. Stan's community can continue to work together to fulfill our Mission Statement.

ARCHDIOCESAN SYNOD

Thank you to all who attended the Archdiocesan Synod small group parish consultation meetings over the last six Sundays. St. Stan's written feedback from each of the sessions has been provided to the Archdiocese to help inform the Deanery consultation. Next step in the three year Synod process comes in January/February 2022 with the Deanery Consultation Process. Pastors and parish representatives will gather one Saturday to learn, pray, and discuss the focus areas. **We are looking for representatives from St. Stan's to attend the Deanery Consultation on February 12, 2022 at Cretin-Derham High School from 9:30am to 3:30pm.** Please contact Kim Myers at 651-224-7998 or kimmyers@ststans.org if you are interested in serving as a representative for St. Stan's. Deanery feedback will help determine the Synod topics.

THIS YEAR'S 38TH BOB AND DOROTHY CASPER THANKSGIVING DINNER

St. Stan's is so very grateful to Parishioner, Dave Freier, for overseeing the community outreach and volunteer help to provide Thanksgiving meals for this year's holiday event. We also thank our generous St. Stan's volunteers. Your gifts of time and service are so important and appreciated. Blessings!



THE GIVING TREE

Our Giving Tree will be available for your kind donations through the weekend of **December 18 & 19**. We will be collecting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, blankets and socks. Your donations will be distributed to those in need in our community.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE!

We invite you to pick up a copy of *Our Greatest Gift—A Wonderful Life in Christ*, this season's Christmas devotions by Michael Hoy. Copies are located in the church vestibule. The devotions center around the lovely Christmas time film, *It's A Wonderful Life* based on the 1943 short story "The Greatest Gift." From the third Sunday of Advent reading...George Bailey is lost and is unable to escape the difficult truth of his own actions which have resulted in his company's loss. "Still, there is the child, the shepherd of the lost sheep, who looks upon him with love and seeks to bring him back into the fold. This child is with us, too, in all the ways we have gone astray." Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death unto life. Amen.

Peace and Merry Christmas to All!