



"I shall reflect on myself and ask: 'What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?'" -St. Stanislaus Kostka



NewStan

The Newsletter of St. Stanislaus Parish
El Boletín de la Parroquia de San Estanislao

Spring / Primavera 2022

Does It Even Matter What I Believe?

by Phil Ricciardi

Many Christians encounter non-believers in their daily life. These people can be friends, co-workers, or even members of your own family. And sometimes they ask some very tough questions about our faith. How should we react to them? Do we just quote the Bible to them? Get angry? Dismiss them as lost causes?

Scripture actually instructs us what to do in these cases. 1 Peter 3:15 states "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." Yes, God expects you to be ready for these challenges, and to respond as a reasonable person. In this new series, we would like to discuss some common, difficult questions that may be posed to you and possible ways you can respond. You may be the first believer in the non-believer's life to provide them with something to think about and possibly bring them into the faith. It's a big responsibility, and we all share in it.

A person who would rather not commit to any God or philosophy may ask questions like this:

- ❖ Does it even matter what I believe?
- ❖ Isn't it OK to believe whatever I want, as long as I'm happy?
- ❖ Isn't just being a good person good enough for any God that may exist?



The fallacy of these questions is an assumption that all beliefs are equally valid, and will therefore have equal outcomes. Consider an analogy about a house. Suppose you see the home of your dreams on line. You're so excited you take the money you've been saving for a down payment and send it in. The house is yours. But when you actually go to the address and step inside you find the paint peeling, pipes dripping, holes in the wall, and the entire electrical system shorted out. You've been defrauded!

You believed this house was perfect, but you committed before you found out if your belief was true. What you believed about the house determined what you did with your money. It's the same thing with life. What you believe about the purpose of your life, how to act in the world we live in, and who to obey determines how you live your life and what your future will be. Future? How about eternity? What could be more important?

Remember in scripture when Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" He didn't wait for Jesus to answer. He probably didn't think the question had an answer, but I have one for him – when your thoughts about reality match reality itself, then you have truth. And since your beliefs will affect your eternal future, I would say it's quite important to spend some time ensuring that your beliefs are true.

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Now the Green Blade Rises

A hymn of Easter and triumph over death

by Norm Berger

For this spring issue of *NewStan*, someone had suggested the idea of exploring a seasonal hymn. Because I like to sing, I was asked to suggest such a hymn to explore a little. Well, the hymn that immediately came to mind for me was “Now the Green Blade Rises (No. 184 in our *Breaking Bread* hymnal). This is because as we shall see, words of the hymn call to mind the coming of spring from the deadness of winter, a perfect reflection in Nature of what happens at Easter.

But, to start at the beginning, the forerunner of the melody of the hymn comes from the song, “*Noël Nouvelet*” dating from the late 15th and early 16th centuries. The French word *nouvelet* has the same root as Noël, both stemming from the word for new and newness. This carol celebrates all of the figures in the crèche, the handmade nativity scenes found throughout France, where they are part of the Christmas celebration in homes and in town squares. In English, this version of the song is called “Sing We Now of Christmas.”

An Anglican clergyman, John MacLeod Campbell Crum (1872-1958) supplied a new set of lyrics using the original melody of “*Noël Nouvelet*”. The newer lyrics, written in 1928, now pointed to the death and resurrection of Christ and became the Easter-themed hymn named “Now the Green Blade Rises.”

What attracted me to the hymn was first of all the haunting melody. The first line of the hymn is:



which is then repeated once. If you read music, you can hum the above to get a sense of the melody; otherwise you can bring up a choral rendering of the whole melody in YouTube here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtKqTISRHsM.

The melody at this point is reminiscent of the sound of bells pealing (and I love the sound of church bells). This above line is then repeated followed by:



followed by the first line above repeated.

Now, let's look at the first stanza as penned by Father Crum in 1928:

*Now the green blade rises, from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again like wheat arising green.*

The first line is most graphic depicting what is a common sight in Nature in early spring. We are eager for the first signs of growth after the dead scenes of winter. We envision crocuses and other spring flowers breaking the ground with small shoots of green and we feel that spring cannot be far behind; although an edible grain is the chosen sprout mentioned in the first two lines above. The second line mentions the rain lying in the “dark earth”. The human echo of this condition of wheat in the ground is found in Psalm 88 which touches on a human lying in the dark ground of the tomb as was Our Lord after His death on the Cross.

However, all is not dead. Certainly, the grain of wheat is not dead in the ground because it has to somehow build up the energy to send a shoot reaching up to finally break through the ground in the metamorphosis from dark grain to the green of burgeoning leaf.

The same was certainly true of Our Lord. His body may have lain lifeless in the tomb, but his spirit was alive and as the Apostle's Creed states “He descended into Hell.” As a perusal of paragraph 632 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches He was “among the dead,” but passed among them giving one and all the joyous message that they would soon be released from this “dead ground” and be raised on high.

And now we are in that Easter season for 49 days and as the hymn says “Life is come again!”✠



From <https://youtu.be/B7Oibepyl6g>

Parishioner Spotlight

Rose Chapman

by **Dianne Spotts**

Rose Stieger Chapman has been a woman on the move! Since 1963 when she moved to St Stan's as a newlywed, she has covered a lot of ground.

Her parents, Oscar and Lina Stieger were immigrants. Oscar was born in Austria and Lina hailed from the Heidelberg/Mannheim area of Germany.

She was born in Frenchtown New Jersey. St. Magdalen de Pazzi parish (in Flemington) was where she attended elementary school, followed by Hunterdon Central High (graduating in 1959). Rose still has friends from those early days (some as far back as kindergarten) who meet occasionally for lunch.

Rose and the love of her life, husband David, moved to Lansdale and St. Stanislaus in August of 1963. Their first home was an apartment on West Main Street for 2 years, then to West Mount Vernon, where Rose still lives.

Their children began arriving in 1966: Eric (now wed to Christine), Matthew (now wed to Anne Marie) and Suzanna (wed to Trevor). They have 13 grandchildren and one great grandson.

Neighbors Owen and Kitty Coyle were truly a gift to them. Kitty helped her through the early years of motherhood by listening and offering good advice. Her famous saying was "A good friend is your best psychiatrist!"

David came into full communion with the Church on a beautiful day in 1996, through Monsignor Murray. They were blessed with 53 years of marriage before David's passing.

According to Rose, St. Stanislaus is her second home. She believes "the benefits of volunteering are countless!" And Rose truly practices what she preaches, as throughout her nearly sixty years in Lansdale and at Stanislaus Parish you could find her volunteering somewhere.

Her volunteer resume includes:

- ❖ Pro-life activities, including prayer protests at North Penn Hospital and attending the annual March for Life in Washington D.C.
- ❖ In the Altar and Rosary Society she has filled every position available at least once
- ❖ She worked Bingo and the Summer Festival (two years working the garage sale), mostly counting money
- ❖ Money counter for weekend collections
- ❖ Parish Receptionist for many years
- ❖ Member of the Lansdale Historical Society



Being on the move includes her daily walk. I'm impressed with the distance she covers. I also admire Rose for still sending handwritten notes to family and friends.

Rose's hobbies include flea markets and collecting (antiques, angel figurines, and Hummels) – her home is full! Rose is an accomplished jigsaw and picture puzzler, as well as a Scrabble player.

A journey to remember: Rose's Mom took her and her sister Elsie to Germany for the summer when she was 12. She has many souvenirs from that trip, including framed pictures of relatives from the 1800's. She mastered the German language, to the point that she had to relearn English when they returned.

Other trips of fond memory were to Fatima, Lourdes, Hungary and the Czech Republic with Deacon Mathieu.

Rose's devotion to Our Lady, daily recitation of the rosary, and steady faith in Our Lord (and commitment to His Church) has carried her through.

They say that though we must live life moving forward, you understand it better when looking back. Thank you Rose for sharing your 'look back' with your parish family. Here's to each step of those daily walks, and whatever is ahead. May the blessings continue!✠

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS

Thanks to Social Media, The Good News at Mater Dei Can Be Shared With Alum

With all the great things happening at Mater Dei School, the variety of today's social media platforms gives the school's many alumni a chance to stay connected to its alma mater. If you or someone you know went to one of our four legacy schools ~ St. Rose, SASH, St. Maria Goretti, and St. Stan's ~ you can find memories and more on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Click on the links below, join, and share the Good News always on the grow at Mater Dei!

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Online Giving at St. Stanislaus: Did you know that you have the option to use Online Giving for contributions to St. Stanislaus Parish?

We encourage Online Giving because it is: 1) easy to use; 2) safe and secure; 3) accessible via the internet.

To get started with Parish Giving visit www.ststanislaus.com and click on the link underneath the Parish Giving logo.

Surfing Around?

The Summer Festival is right around the corner. Many hands make light the work for the oldest carnival in the North Penn Area. If you are interested in lending one of your hands, send an email to: 01festival01@gmail.com.
Come join the crew!



NEWSTAN

MISSION STATEMENT

In response to the St. John Paul II's call to evangelization, St. Stanislaus Parish started publishing *NewStan* to serve members of the parish community and the community at large, to inform parishioners and members of the North Penn region about new developments in the parish, and to serve as a channel for communications among St. Stanislaus parishioners and benefactors.



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Those who wish to contribute items for publication should forward them to the *NewStan* mailbox in the St. Stanislaus Parish Center. The inclusion of submitted material is subject to the judgment of the editors in consultation with Father Sean and the St. Stanislaus Communications Director. The editors reserve the right to edit all submitted material for length and content.

Visit St. Stanislaus Parish on the web at

www.ststanislaus.com

Follow us on Facebook: St. Stanislaus Lansdale



Do you have a question about St. Stanislaus Parish, or about the Catholic faith in general?

Forward your questions to the *NewStan* mailbox in the Parish Center, anonymously if desired. We will direct the questions to the right person and publish the answers in a future issue.

The Little Flower and Her Hall

by Anne K. Kaler

Ever wonder what happened to the Little Flower High School which opened in 1949 with one Franciscan nun, Sr. Therese Clare OSF in charge?

St. Stanislaus Parish Grade School occupied the finished brick schoolhouse on Lansdale Avenue until it was needed for the coming of the unnamed High School.

When the name was announced, parishioners scurried to their books to find out more about this unknown saint. After all, why name a co-educational parish high school after a young French Carmelite nun who died virtually unknown and who was canonized in 1925?

St. Therese of Lisieux aka the Little Flower was born on January 2, 1873 and died at twenty-four years of age in 1897. Her celebrity status spread quickly with the publishing of her autobiography *The Story of a Soul*, which earned her a proclamation as a Doctor of the Church because of its unique dealing with God's relationship with her soul. Her simple story has entranced and encouraged many souls toward her "little" way toward closer relationships with God.

When the new high school was announced, St. Stanislaus already had a working grade school in the building and the church basement. The high school had laid out plans for a new building further down on Lansdale Avenue opposite the St. Mary's School for the Blind, but that would not be ready to open when school began, so the first class of high



Little Flower Hall today

school students occupied one of the second-floor classrooms in Little Flower Hall. The statue of St. Therese stood in the center common room downstairs. The first high school class took possession of Little Flower Hall in 1949 until the newer and larger school was ready in 1961 and moved to the new, larger school building at Seventh St. and Lansdale Avenue.

It was at that time the only parish high school and only later was the name changed to Lansdale Catholic High School to distinguish it from the primary grade St. Stanislaus Grade School.

In 2012 St. Stanislaus Parish School became Mater Dei Catholic School and Little Flower Hall has served various purposes since having variously housed the sixth-grade classes, the band room, the art room, and CARES after care. In the fall of 2022, Little Flower Hall will be transformed once again, not restored to a High School – but a Junior High School of sorts as the Mater Dei 7th and 8th grade classes will move there – complete with their own lockers!

St. Therese, nearing death, consoled her followers with the promise that “I will let fall a shower of roses. I will spend my heaven doing good upon the earth. I will raise up a mighty host of little saints My mission is to make God loved.” So when you are confused or down-hearted, think of Little St. Therese, and perhaps look towards Little Flower Hall, and let your mood be changed to a happy one with her “shower of roses.” ✕



The Little Flower statue is still displayed on the second floor of Little Flower Hall

Parish Focus Group: The Gardening Group

by Sandy Sasso

Imagine stately St. Stanislaus Catholic Church without the flowering landscape around it? Wouldn't it be uninviting and drab? Luckily, we have a small group of women and men who make sure that image does not come to pass: the Gardening Group.

Jeanne-Marie Motley is the caretaker in charge of gardening with a few volunteers coming and going to join her. Currently there are ten volunteers, down from fourteen in 2021. Gardening has always been done on Wednesday mornings right after the eight o'clock Mass. They dig, plant and rake up the withered plants from Winter, starting anew for Spring, and tending the gardens until the Fall around Halloween

Jeanne-Marie started gardening about 30 years ago when two women, in the church parking lot, requested some volunteers for the flower garden around the church. One woman happened to be a horticulturist. Jeanne-Marie loved gardening but wondered how she could participate with a 3-year-old child. She found out, to her surprise, that the other two women also had three-year-olds, *and* had a *babysitter* who lived across the street from church who took care of the children while they worked the garden. It worked out perfectly for Jeanne-Marie.

The Gardening Group's budget is small. One day they were surprised with a donation from a gardener who passed away and specified funds go to the group!

Most of the plants used are especially cultivated for the altars at Easter. There are annuals, perennials, and some plants that can be

reseeded and re-grown. Jeanne-Marie plants marigolds as they stand-out vividly to drivers on the adjacent streets.

There's a very interesting origin-story behind the rose garden where the Blessed Mother statue stands. Shortly after the Adoration Chapel was built, while walking into the Chapel, Bob Iannozzi noticed the Blessed Mother statue leaning against the Chapel's brick wall, on a pile of

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Does It Matter What I Believe

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Let's look at the famous Heaven's Gate cult as an example. They believed that a spaceship following comet Hale-Bopp was ready to take their spirits to an advanced evolutionary state in "next level" bodies. However, the transition would require the rejection of their human forms. So, in 1997 as the comet approached the sun the members of the group committed suicide. Had any "next level" beings visited them to ensure them the ascension was possible? Did they perform any astrological sightings to determine if there really was a spaceship following the comet? And were their beliefs consistent over time? As far as I can see, the answer to all these questions is no. They simply liked the idea of ascending to a higher plane of existence, and they sacrificed everything to achieve what they wanted with no evidence it would actually work.

Beliefs don't work out if they are not grounded in truth. False beliefs will lead you down a wrong path. And the more important the issue, the greater the danger is in

believing something that's false. But don't be afraid! God doesn't expect you to figure it out for yourself. He wants to lead you. As Jesus said, "Ask, and you will be given what you ask for. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened." (*Matthew 7:7*). But you can only ask for God's help if you have a relationship with Him. And that leads us to the next tough question we will address in a future edition: "Aren't all religions basically the same?"

We will leave off here with the words of the great C.S. Lewis: "Christianity is of no importance if false, and of infinite importance if true. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important."✠

Apologetics is a genre of religious writing which involves the formation of reasonable, logical arguments for the truth of faith. As Catholics in modern times, we probably even more frequently than in the past are confronted with tough questions from non-believers. Have you been faced with such a question? We are introducing this new feature in NewStan to perhaps help with some of these conversations. If you have any questions you'd like addressed, please drop them off in NewStan mailbox in the Parish Center.- Ed.

Nehustan (not *NewStan*)

by Tom Pepe

Happy Easter! Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Easter baskets filled with chocolate, marshmallow, coconut cream, that nasty plastic grass, etc. The smiles on the children's faces as they consume more sugar in one sitting that a family of four could have afforded 100 years ago.

Hmmmm. This seems a good time to ask the question: What is idolatry, and how does it happen?

There is an odd thread in the Bible. It starts in the Sinai Peninsula, round about 1400 BC and ends with a quote of Jesus, blessed be his name, by John who wrote just before the close of the Roman empire.

Key passages:

Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he may take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it upon a poll, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a poll. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

(Numbers 21:6)

Now we fast-forward, oh say, eight, nine hundred years: Joshua takes Jericho; five Kings come and go; Promised Land conquered; David (the Sherman of his day) on cleanup; Solomon does the best he can; the kingdom divides; northern kingdom (Israel) falls; Judea hangs by a thread... and we reach our second passage of interest.

Our setting, the last revival. The end of the line for the kings of Judea: Hezekiah. With a little help, he decides to get the Temple fired back up. But it was a very sad job. As the years went by not only did the sacrifices stop, but they had used the holy chamber for storage; imagine your kids leaving junk in your attic or garage that you have to tell your grandkids to take home with them. That sort of junk.

And they come across....

He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan).

(2 Kings 18:4)

The people of the Promised Land wanted so much to please God that they were worshipping a placebo, *for several hundred years!*

For you see the 603,500 "fighting men" that crossed the Red Sea were slaves that had never survived on their own. It was the first time *they had to feed themselves*. And they were a very, very, frightened people.

And, if you don't believe me, believe Jesus,

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

(John 3:14)

You know, the core foundational doctrine of Christianity.

I close with a question. Are Jesus' words above a rebuke of the people of his day, or a prophecy? Maybe the chocolate bunnies in baskets are not that surprising after all?✘

The Gardening Group

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dirt left from the construction crew. While praying in the Chapel he could not get his mind off of the Blessed Virgin Mary's statue. He decided to call Jeanne-Marie Motley and ask if he could plan a rose garden around the statue. Jeanne-Marie said, "If you think you can grow roses there, go for it!"

Bob worked the soil to cultivate the roses enabling them to flourish. The statue needed repair, so Bob worked on that too. The lone statue was placed in the center of the rose garden, when eventually Fr. Doyne added the pillar upon which Mary stands.

Why was the statue just leaning against the wall? Well, it all began when a Lansdale police officer saw a young man carrying it down Main St., and wondered why this young man would be carrying a Blessed Mother statue. He pulled over, spoke to him, and took back the statue, knowing it belonged to St. Stanislaus Catholic Church!

The Blessed Mother interceded in the spirit of Bob Iannozzi to set up this beautiful tribute to our Mother. Bob says "I know that Mary is right where She wanted to be," and "Mary's intercession in our lives can be just as profound—we only need to let her in!"

There no requirement for divine intervention or to be a horticulturist. If you are interested in helping maintain the beauty around our church, no expertise in gardening is necessary to come join the Gardening Group. There is especially one job that requires no skill – pulling weeds. ✘

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Parish Census Data for January 2022 – March 2022



Jean Bereschak
 Kenneth Broughton II
 Kathleen Kane
 Maria Kim
 Marianne Kratz
 Clara Lease
 Mary Ann Major
 Bernard Narolewski
 Rosemarie O'Donnell
 Oscar Palacios
 Mary Reynolds
 Susan Thomson



Welcome
 Our New
 Members

Charles & Molly Adams	Sam & Joanne Lin
Stephen & Joan Aubertin	Kathryn Loesch-James
Taylor & Sonya Beimler	Shawn & Karen
Vincent Bevivino	McGlade
Alan & Kristina	Joseph & Jaimie
Birnbrauer	Partridge
John & Summer Burke	Jonathan & Emily
Sean & Shannon Deegan	Patteson
Mary Jane Feraco	Giuliano & Crystal
Michael Ferraro	Presta
Michael & Colleen	Christopher Ritchie
Frawley - Kelley	Janet Smiley Feliciano
Theresa Greenfield	William & Kathleen
William Hammond	Tobin
Andrew & Lindsay Irick	Judith Ventresca
Jason & Jill Jones	Patrick & Elese White
Shannon Kelly	Oliver & Yuliya Bilan Yu
Robert & Olivia Lawler	



Yoram Sebastian Nova
 Alarcon
 Olivia Riddett Bean
 Elizabeth Grace Beimler
 Andrei Bilan-Yu
 Preston Stailey Clipp
 Kris Yael Colon Manzanarez
 Lindsey Echeverria
 Rowan Frances Gorman
 Ryann Rose Kirby
 Raissa Lemailoux
 Alexander Joseph Lin
 Alvaro Flores Manzanarez
 Vaeda Jane McNulty
 Caroline Alexandra Miller
 Luke Boris Rosenblum
 Marlen Lucia Olivares Sanchez
 Henry Tomas Gamez Vasquez