

From Pieces to Peace
St. Joseph Parish
Parish Mission: Source and Summit
Night 3 - Go Forth on Mission - Fr. Joe Menkhous
3/10/2026

1. Introduction - Who is Fr. Joe?
 1. Family - 7 sibs, three marriages, two nieces, and two more on the way
 2. Hobbies - hiking, biking, lifting, running, moped, music, good shows, cooking, hanging out with good friends
 3. Called to Priesthood my senior year
 4. Where I have been
 1. 2019-20 - Intern here at St. Joe's
 2. 2020-21 - Seminary
 3. 2021-22 - Deacon at IHM
 4. 2022-26 - Parochial Vicar at St. Bernadette, Westlake; Hospital Chaplaincy Work
 5. 2024-26 - Chaplain at Holy Name High School
2. Prayer is not about answers; it is about presence and the Mass is THE highest prayer
 1. Retreat in Mid-february
 2. Looking for answers and solutions - and often, we don't get them in prayer
 3. "Jesus does not want to tell us something so much as He simply wants to give us Himself, to draw us more personally into relationship with him. This is a transformational relationship..." (Personal Prayer: A Guide for Receiving the Father's Love, Fr. Thomas Acklin and Fr. Boniface Hicks)
 4. Acts 3:6 - I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk.
 5. Our need and our poverty are magnets for his presence
 1. Avon Hospital Saturday afternoon - from pieces to peace.
3. We don't receive silver or gold at Mass - we receive Jesus who brings us peace
 1. Daniel 3:25, 34-43: Azariah stood up in the fire and prayed aloud: "For your name's sake, O Lord, do not deliver us up forever, or make void your covenant. Do not take away your mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham, your beloved, Isaac your servant, and Israel your holy one, To whom you promised to multiply their offspring like the stars of heaven, or the sand on the shore of the sea. For we are reduced, O Lord, beyond any other nation, brought low everywhere in the world this day because of our sins. We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, no burnt offering, sacrifice, oblation, or incense, no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you. **But with contrite heart and humble spirit let us be received;** As though it were burnt offerings of rams and bullocks, or thousands of fat lambs, **So let our sacrifice be in your presence today** as we follow you unreservedly; for those who trust in you cannot be put to shame. And now we follow you with our whole heart, we fear you and we pray to you. Do not let us be put to shame, but deal with us in your kindness and great mercy. Deliver us by your wonders, and bring glory to your name, O Lord."
 2. Azariah was a Jewish man who would have been accustomed to bringing worthy sacrifices to the temple to have them offered for the sake of his sins.
 1. In this moment, he and the others are in the fire because they refuse to worship other Gods
 2. So, the sacrifice is a humble and contrite heart - HIMSELF
 3. And what happens? His life is saved. God gives Himself - mercy and safety
 4. This same thing happens at Mass -I confess to almighty God...through my fault, through my fault

5. Then, we are presented in the offertory - our humble, meager, sinful selves
 6. Then this prayer is prayed: Mass: With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.
 7. We give the pieces of ourselves to God, who in return gives us the peace of Himself.
3. Two tough funerals and following the Blazes
4. Church as a field hospital
 1. "The thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else. Heal the wounds, heal the wounds. ... And you have to start from the ground up.
 1. From "[A Big Heart Open to God](#)," America magazine Sept. 19, 2013
 2. "Jesus will come to your home, into your heart, into your life. We must all be ready to open the door to find Jesus who is waiting for us."
 1. Pope Leo XIV to young people, 3/8/2026
 1. He wants to bring us from pieces to peace
 3. Estelle and her wounds - Longing for presence - from pieces to peace
5. What is peace?
 1. Definitions:
 1. Firmness
 2. Absence of worry, fear, anxiety, pain
 2. Hebrew, shalom
 1. be made whole, pieces to peace, being healed and brought together by God
 3. The whole point of this talk is to talk about going forth on mission.
 1. The Deacon or priest sends us on mission by saying, "Go in Peace"
 2. In other words, "Go in wholeness"
 4. Story of Anthony and Eucharist with JP II (St. Bernadette Parish, Westlake Podcast)
6. Ite missa est - "Go, the Mass is ended"
 1. Just do the next right thing - sometimes clear, sometimes not
 2. Matthew 36-40: **36** "Teacher,[a] which commandment in the law is the greatest?" **37** He said to him,[b] "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. **38** This is the greatest and the first commandment. **39** The second is like it:[c] You shall love your neighbor as yourself. **40** [d]The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."
 3. My Stories: Avon Hospital, Two Tough Funerals, Estelle and her wounds, Anthony
 1. I was just doing my best to love God and love my neighbor
 2. But it all started with "transformational relationship" with Jesus.
 3. That is what brings peaces to piece
7. So, tonight, go in peace like you never have before.
 1. Know that whether you are in pieces or at peace, Jesus can more than handle you
 2. Sometimes we think that we are too broken or there is too much that is messed up
 3. Think of sin like a splinter in your foot
 4. And let God take care of that little piece, so that you can experience and share his love and peace.