



## Things to Ponder

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### Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time – Luke 13:22-30

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Dear Parish Family,

In today's gospel, we are presented with a familiar and challenging image of the spiritual life. Jesus said:

*“Strive to enter through the narrow gate,  
for many, I tell you will attempt to enter  
but will not be strong enough.”*  
(Luke 13, 24)

Earlier this summer I was hiking up a steep section of a somewhat obscure trail with my brother and his youngest daughter. Half-way up an incredibly perilous boulder field, we realized that we had veered off the trail. I was the last one to scale a particularly difficult rock. I thought about turning around to find the trail, but realized that it would be just as dangerous to go down as to go up; my companions were already ahead of me. After much coaching and with all the determination I could muster, I ascended that steep pitch. Eventually we found the true trail after a short effort through the brush once atop the ridge.

The sheer will-power required to succeed at that challenging moment is an analogy for the discipline required of the spiritual sojourner. We need the daily moments of private prayer as well as those regular gatherings for common prayer that unite us as a people. Our social concerns ministers often meet people in dire circumstances. When I am confronted by desperate situations, I am reminded that we always seem to do better if we have a prayer-life rooted in a radical trust in God and belong to a faith community that sustains us.

*“So strengthen your drooping hands  
and your weak knees. Make straight paths for  
your feet, that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed.”*  
(Hebrews 12, 12-13)

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Bill Foley*

From the Pastor's Note—Weekly Bulletin—August 21, 2016, St. Patrick's Church,  
Olney, Maryland  
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