

Bring faith to life.  
Find life in faith.

# Impact

## Living stones

What are you building? Lasting relationships, a career, a family? Do you build others up? Are you building a better world? What we build says a lot about who we are.



Each of us has only so many hours in a day, and we do not know when our last day on earth will be. We make many choices in the course of our days and weeks, months and years. How will we use our time? What needs our attention? Who needs our presence and care? We may build something that matters, or waste the opportunities we have in favor of passing things. **Through our decisions and actions, we build a life, the total sum of all that we are and do.**

**Jesus shows us that there is more to life** than the focus on ourselves and those closest to us that often consumes our time and attention. That life that you're building? Make it about more than your narrow concerns. Let yourself build something that has much greater impact. In the second reading for May 14, St. Peter says, "like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Pet 2: 4-5) **What we build and how we build it is an expression of what is most important to us.**

**When we turn to Christ, the living stone, our priorities change.** In faith, we grow in a desire to give for the sake of others, to sacrifice beyond what we think we can, trusting that God will take our offering and build something wonderful. In the words of Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, God's cause becomes the only concern of our hearts. Christ calls us to build up the reign of God through our actions and interactions, in what we say and what we do. We may choose to give our time and resources to help others build a better life. We may contribute to parish ministries and Church initiatives to serve the poor, promote peace and advocate for justice. If we pour ourselves out, our hearts will be filled. If we resolve to build the reign of God, the reign of selfishness, material wealth, and need for security dissolve into the promise of a brighter tomorrow. **We have but one life in which to make a difference. Build something for lasting impact.**

## Decide to make a difference

**The early Christians understood it. Surely we can too. It takes each of us, doing what we can, to help the world.**

In the Acts of the Apostles, from which we read throughout the season of Easter, we hear that the Twelve came to an important insight. They were shown the neglect of the widows in their community, but they needed to be free to preach and teach. So, the faithful gathered in prayer and chose seven men to serve the needs of the poor in the community.

We now recognize the men as the first deacons, and one of them, Stephen, was the first Christian martyr.

This experience of the early Church has much to teach us about living as a Christian in our time. Each of us has particular gifts which we can use in all of the aspects of our lives, including the way we serve the needs of others.

“It is an incredible challenge to live in imitation of Christ. We all face obstacles, opportunities and challenges, living in a

fast-paced environment with many responsibilities. Our spiritual hunger does not always get a chance to be nourished through prayer and action. A clear sense of purpose – nourished by the Eucharist and our rich

Catholic tradition – opens the door for us to actively commit to a life of gratitude and responsibility; to thank God for his endless gifts, and then to decide what we can do to help the world.” (Stewardship and Young Adults)



## Impact this month

Pay attention. Pray. Grow in Gratitude. Sacrifice. Trust.

**Be attentive to the needs of others.** There are many in our local community, country, and world who are in great need. Pay attention.

**Consider your own gifts, and respond in the best way that you can.** Each of us has different talents, strengths, and skills. Pray that you may grow in

gratitude for your many blessings. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you who needs the gift that only you can give.

**Stretch yourself. Sacrifice.** Remember that God's way is the way of self-giving love. There is much in our culture that tells us to focus on our wants, rather than on the needs of others. Give more than you think is possible. God will take care of the rest.

**Trust that Christ is with you.** We all have moments in which we feel alone and wonder if we're on the right track. Jesus said, "I will be with you always."

