

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## PATRON SAINT OF HOPELESS CASES...

*The story is told of Sean O'Toole who worked in a lumber yard for twenty years. All that time he'd been stealing wood and selling it. At last his conscience began to bother him and he went to confession to repent. "Father," he said, "It's been 15 years since my last confession and I've been stealing wood from the lumber yard for all those years." The priest decided to assign him a penance. So Father asked him, "my son, do you know how to make a novena?" The man replied, "No Father, but if you've got the plans I know where to get the lumber!"*

*I think most Catholics know what a novena is-nine days of prayer. Thanks to one of our parishioners here at Saint Charles, we have been conducting a novena to Saint Jude after Mass. Incidentally, Saint Jude's Feast Day is this Sunday, October 28th. Because it is Sunday, however, we celebrate the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time. I think that most Catholics have heard of Saint Jude. He is known as the patron saint of hopeless cases.*

*When I was in the seminary, I got a summer job one year working down at Our Lady of Victory Church which is near Wall Street in Manhattan. Our Lady of Victory was and still is a very busy parish catering to the spiritual needs of office workers in the downtown area.*

*Well, every day at Our Lady of Victory, they had a novena service in honor of a different saint. I used to help out with the collection. One day, I marveled about how Saint Jude brought in the most money. The associate priest, Monsignor Harry Cauley, turned to me and said, "I guess you didn't know there were so many hopeless cases!"*

*Who was Saint Jude? He is known also as "Jude Thaddeus." Our Lord called him to be an apostle. He was one of the twelve and is generally believed to be the brother of Saint James. He wrote the letter in the New Testament that bears his name.*

*We don't really have too much information about his life. According to one source, Saint Jude spread the gospel throughout the Middle East region and finally was martyred by crucifixion in Persia. He, like all the apostles, made the supreme sacrifice for the Lord Jesus by shedding his blood.*

*At the Last Supper, Jude asked Jesus a question. The question was: "Lord, do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" The apostles felt really comfortable in asking Jesus about things they didn't know about! This is how we too should act in relation to Jesus who is our teacher and our best friend.*

*The Lord gave this response which you can read in the gospel of Saint John: "If anyone loves me, he will hold to my words and my father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." The saints, like Jude, were people who "held to Jesus's words" and loved him deeply. They loved him more than anything in the world and there is a lesson there for all of us to always put the Lord first in our lives.*

*As we honor Saint Jude on his feast day, we might think at times that there are "hopeless cases" in our lives and we even might feel "hopeless" with all the problems and difficulties that we have encountered in this journey known as life. Let us not despair! Perhaps this little prayer could help: "Most Holy Apostle Jude, I place myself in your care. Pray for me. Help me to remember that I am not alone in my struggles!"*

*Sincerely in Christ,  
Father Jerome*