Lenten Faith Formation Week 5
St. Paul's Letter to the Romans
Conclusion: Chapters 9-16***

***There are numerous questions regarding the authenticity of Chapters 15 and 16.

1)   A version of Paul's letter to the church at Rome containing 14 chapters was in use until mid-fourth century. Origin and Tertullian both refer to Paul's letter as having 14 chapters.

2)   A 15-chapter version also existed and the arguments for its authenticity are compelling. Note that the Pauline Benediction found in Chapter 15: 33 is quite similar to Benedictions given by Paul in his letters to other early churches.

3)   Chapter 16 is filled with Paul's greetings to individuals and families, indicating that he knew and was familiar with these people. Perhaps they were early Christians of other congregations and Chapter 16 is not intended for the Church at Rome.

4)   Several early manuscripts indicate that the letter was written by Phoebus, the deacon. (Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Ephraemi.)

5)   And the fact that Paul's entire theology is contained in Chapters 1-14 cannot be discounted.
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Chapter 9:
- Paul returns to his concern for the Jews
- As the Chosen People, the Jews had been given 7 privileges that Hellenistic Christians did not share
    1)   they were Israelites (Jn. 1:47)
    2)   they had been given adoption (God's firstborn sons among the nations. "Israel is My son, My Firstborn" (Ex. 4: 22)
    3)   they had the "glory" ("shekinah" = the glory of the presence of God in the sanctuary of the Temple) (Lev. 16:2)
    4)   they had the Covenants (1) Abraham; 2) Israel at Mt. Sinai; 3) David
    5)   they had been given custody of The Law (Rom. 3: 1,2)
    6)   they had been given the privilege of service to God (Ex. 19:6; Heb. 9:1)
    7)   they had been given God's promises of which he had broken none

God's Sovereignty
- Chapter 3:   God's right to judge
- Chapter 9:   God's right to show mercy

Paul's plan of salvation (Chapter 10)
    1)   confess Him as Lord and "calling upon Him"
    2)   belief in the Resurrection

Israel's fall and the grafting on of the Gentiles (Chapter 11)
- The Jews had all the tools for salvation and failed; the Gentiles are now included in the "people of God"

    Paul uses 2 metaphors to describe the inclusion of the Gentiles
- The "Lump" (the entire crop)
- The olive tree

At the end of Chapter 11, Paul's teaching to the Church at Rome is finished. He now turns his attention to those in Rome who will read his letter.

- Romans 12 – 16 are the consequence of Chapters 1 – 11
- Chapter 12:   conversion should produce commitment
- Doctrine: makes a difference
-                        Makes disciples
-                        Motivates devotion

Romans 12: 1-2

- This is the foundation of Christian life
- "I beseech you"…Greek word beseech = parakaleo
- "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God"
-          Greek word: "suschematizo = what is in fashion (to conform one's mind to current fashion)
- Romans 12: 4 = 4 areas of relationship with God
    1)   to be right with God
    2)   to be right with one's self
    3)   to be right with fellow believers
    4)   to be right with fellow unbelievers
- Romans Chapter 13 adds:
    5)   to be right with authority
    6)   to be right with society

Romans Chapter 14

Paul's instructions on:

The development of the Christian mind =	2 verses
The right estimate of oneself and others =	6 verses
To love one another =	13 verses
Questions of church and state =	7 verses
Right conduct in light of Second Coming =	7 verses
How Christians are to accept and support other Christians when they do not think or behave as we think they should (all of Chapter 14 and half of 15)	35 verses

Paul warns Christians to be VERY careful of what we allow to become divisions among Christians.

How to discern major questions, issues, arguable points in matters where there is no actual commandment.
    1)   We should be convinced in our own mind
    2)   We should be sure that whatever we do or don't do, we are serving God
    3)   We should be able to give God thanks.

Above all, the Christian should not look down on, make disparaging remarks about, or make light (fun) of the gifts of another.