



HOLY FAMILY PARISH

Pope Francis' vision in action

4 July 2014

“All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. [And] be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.” -- Letter to the Ephesians 4:31-32.

In the first six months of Holy Family Parish, we've tried to focus more intentionally on these words from the Letter to the Ephesians. Removing malice, practicing kindness toward one another...these are important parts of the “fresh new tone” I envision for our community.

I want to thank those who have heeded the message, borne the adjustments that come with a new parish structure and have striven to live as kind, compassionate believers.

I am especially grateful for how this has been expressed through the work of the pastoral associate for charity and justice, Alexi Motta. As we know time and time again from the teaching of the prophets and especially from Jesus, how we treat the “least among us” is indicative of how we honor Christ among us overall. Thanks to Alexi, her Vincentian colleagues and others, our care to the poor and vulnerable in our midst has been caring and unflagging.

Because Alexi's work has been fruitful and attracted more to our doors, I am happy to announce that we are establishing another pastoral team position in this area, a director of caritas. Catholic Charities will continue to fund Alexi's position, and the new rental income from the Rutgers Catholic students at the Sacred Heart house will support the caritas position.

Hopefully, no matter how parishioners interact with any of our pastoral team, they come away feeling respected, valued and cared for. Hopefully, no matter who comes to the Pastoral Center, they will be well-served both in the manner and the content of their visit.

I'm personally energized by the work ethic and kindness of all my colleagues in ministry who serve at the Throop Ave. Center, including the Catholic Charities employees whose work often overlaps with ours. Invariably, at minimum, I hear that those who work here are “nice,” which I take to be kind and compassionate.

I am thankful for the kindnesses also expressed by parishioners in various new forms of being good team players. This can range from the increasing numbers of those who are worshiping at more than one of our churches now, to the initiative of the Hungarian community to participate in a recent diocesan Multi-Cultural Mass, to the involvement of parishioners in neighborhood improvement through the Esperanza Project.



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The more we jump into action that serves the common good, the more the common good comes closer to being realized.

This weekend of July 4-6 we honor the birth of the United States. This is also the first “ordered” Sunday since before Lent started. And yet our readings for this 14th Sunday of Ordinary Time are still quite remarkable: Jesus is calling us to find rest in him from our burdens (Mt 11:25-30); Paul is reminding us that we are to live in the Spirit (Rom 8:9, 11-13), and Zechariah foresees the power of a messiah coming meekly in our midst (Zec 9:9-10).

In their own ways, these readings continue to point the way to an ongoing practice of kindness and compassion, as a royal road to becoming more like Christ, who came not to be served, but to serve.

May God who has begun the new work in Holy Family Parish bring it to completion.

Peace in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Kerrigan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Msgr. Joseph Kerrigan