

MAY 31 STATEMENT FROM HOLY FAMILY PARISH PASTOR TO COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Welcome partners, friends and colleagues. Today is one of the fruits of what we've been striving for together for years, to seek the common good and a better community, alongside local government, our key Catholic allies at St. Peter's and Catholic Charities, and social-service professionals and people of goodwill everywhere.

Today, May 31, is the last day of national Mental Health Awareness month, and it's the Catholic feast of the Visitation today. A feast that celebrates the Biblical meeting of two women, the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth, who both inexplicably find themselves in the midst of the joy and burden of a pregnancy. This story of journey- encounter-accompaniment and new life is a real motif for today.

Since 2014, we have been faithful soldiers in Pope Francis' "revelation of tenderness" and we look upon our parish very much as a "field hospital." Today we are opening up a new frontline, a new level of response to what we have been doing. The world, country and the church could all use more mental-health resources and awareness. So here we are, continuing to be "a church of the poor, for the poor."

And in doing so, we are hoping to discover what the Archbishop of Chicago, Blaise Cupich, recently said, "When the church becomes a field hospital, it can radically change the way we view our community life."