

## ***From the Pastor's Desk***

*As I was praying this week, I was thinking about how proud I am of all of you, my friends at Visitation Parish. There is a plethora of reasons for this sentiment; however, allow me to sight but a few of them. I am so proud of you liturgically. We are exactly we need to be in terms of being in accord with the norms of worship of the Roman Catholic Church. We follow all the directions of the Roman Missal. We know our liturgical posture. We know when we are to sing, when we are to pray, and when we should be silent, and we strive to do our best to follow these directives. We are reverent when we pray yet filled with dynamism and excitement at the presence of Christ in our midst. We value the importance of community, showing hospitality to one another and to those outside of our parish family who gather to pray with us. We listen attentively to the readings and respect the time and effort that is placed in the preparation of liturgy and in the preparation and preaching of the homily. We truly believe that we are one with the Lord when we receive his body and blood and say Amen. I am proud to say that we are something of a “first among equals” in terms of our liturgical relationship to other parishes. You have done well, good and faithful servants of the Lord. And you know, **Lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi...**” **The law of worship is the law of belief and is the law of living.***

*I am also most proud of you, my dear friends of the Visitation Community, in terms of your embrace of the virtue of Justice. I say this for so many reasons. As a matter of course, I must first commend you on your love for the poor. I think back to so many times that we have had collections for those who struggle financially, and how generous you are. I also would be remiss if I were not to commend you on your most recent generosity toward those who suffered as a result of the tragic wildfire that devastated the Los Angeles region of the state of California. You, the beautiful people of Visitation Parish, in dealing with inflation, the cost of living, energy bills, and so many other expenses in life – you contributed \$1700 to the emergency fund that has been sent to Catholic Charities USA, 100% of which goes directly to the victims of the inferno. This was not an expectation. Rather it was an expression of love on your part because you know that we are all sisters and brothers in Christ and indeed we are one another's keepers. If anyone is in touch with Catholic Social Teaching, it is clearly the membership of Visitation Parish. Finally, as I have expressed so many times before, and this does come under the banner of justice, is your personal generosity to me. I mean that on so many levels, but especially in terms of prayerful support and secondarily in terms of your financial generosity. When I think of both of these gestures on your part, I am awestruck. I will never be able to thank God enough for the blessing that you have been in my life. You are to be commended for being the persons that you are, deeply human and deeply Christian. I am so happy to be part of this family.*

*Sometimes we need to showcase and celebrate who we are and what we do, for in doing so we give praise to God for all the good that He has set before us, and I am glad that the Lord has moved me to do just that this weekend. Some pastors are not so*

*fortunate as I am to have such a loving, faithful, hopeful, hospitable, generous, and authentic community of parishioners such as you. I count my blessings every day and I pray for you every day. I ask for your continued prayers as I strive to be an authentic leader and humble shepherd here at Visitation Parish.*

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*While the dynamic celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of my personal faith and my priesthood, I find myself more and more drawn to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament in Adoration. I think that is because the two times that we have Adoration here at the parish during the week, it flows from the celebration of the Eucharist and helps me to reflect more upon becoming like Him whom I have just received, that is, my most intimate friend, Jesus Christ. I want to take this opportunity to invite all members of the parish to join in this experience. On Wednesday evenings at 5:30 PM we celebrate Mass, followed by a series of prayers to St. Joseph (who the Church celebrates every Wednesday as its universal patron), followed by 1/2 hour of Eucharistic Adoration. On Fridays, we celebrate Mass at 12:05 PM followed by an hour of Eucharistic Adoration. I want to tell you that these moments are some of the best moments of the week. I quietly listen to what the Lord has to say to me, I engage in spiritual reading, and I engage in conversation with my closest friend who I know showers His love upon me in so many ways. I WANT TO INVITE ALL TO JOIN ME IN THAT EXPERIENCE. And I am not asking that you make a commitment all the time, but when you consider all the blessings bestowed upon you during your life, is an extra hour with the Lord that much to ask? I know that anyone who could give the Lord even ten (10) extra minutes in His presence would see his or her life change dramatically. I guarantee it! I would love to see this happen at any time during the year; but, perhaps you could think about coming to Adoration as part of your Lenten discipline. It is only a month away. Think about it. Maybe you could give the Lord that extra time then. Don't worry about anything. I'll save you a seat. You'll be glad you came.*

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### **Important Parish Meetings**

**ALL PARISH MEETINGS ARE IN THE ELIZABETHAN SUITE (FORMERLY THE RECTORY MEETING ROOM) AND OCCUR AT 6:00PM**

**Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup> – Basket Part Organizational Meeting.** This is an open meeting and all who are interested in planning or participating in the Basket party is welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup> – Parish Pastoral Council.** This is a closed meeting. All parish council members should be in attendance unless otherwise excused. If you cannot participate in this meeting, please contact the parish office as soon as possible.

**Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> – Combined Council.** This is a closed meeting. All parish pastoral and finance council members should be in attendance for this meeting unless otherwise excused. If you are unable to participate in this meeting, please contact the parish office as soon as possible.