

From the Pastor's Desk:

We are challenged today to keep the Lord's word and told that the Holy Spirit has been sent to us to help teach us all things. It is one of the great ways that Jesus continues to be present to us. Jesus is present in his Word, he is physically present in the Eucharist, and he is present in the Body of the Church. Through this Church he touches us and we can be his own hands and feet, and through the Holy Spirit acting through the teaching office of the Church Jesus continues to communicate with us and reveal Godself to us - unpacking and applying the Scriptures, and unfolding his revelation through the centuries. It is an amazing plan, it is an amazing way that Jesus stays present to us and continues to teach us through the Church - what a privilege to receive such a gift.

On Sunday the 19th we had 5 baptisms and 19 children who made their First Holy Communion. Deacon Stan and I were speaking that evening about how encouraging a sight that is, and how much we need to remember that God always has the ability to make all things new. I also attended the youth concert we hosted on that afternoon (in which a few of our young parishioners preformed) - so good to see this activity. We have had a high school youth social event and I am trying to put together a group who will work with Jamison LaRoche and Paul Hartin in building youth ministry. If you would like to participate, please send an e-mail to youthministry@annunciationgardner.org. We also are planning two Theology on Taps for the summer for young adults, and are open to other ideas as well.

We are also planning activities for the upcoming summer (there was the Golf Tournament that just happened, the Bravehearts Game in a couple of weeks, Parish Picnic - date to be announced, and maybe some others). I received a report from our Faith Formation team with a preliminary set of suggested faith formation activities for the coming year (Fall, Winter, Spring) and there are some good options on there. More on this as things are finalized. Bids will be going out to contractors for both Convent renovation and the long-awaited handicaps access project. Once these are in, Finance Council and I will be able to select the most reasonable individual to do these jobs. The Capitol Improvements committee has formed and will be meeting this week to get to updated list of improvements needed and a plan for addressing these.

If you have not given a pledge or gift to the Partners-in-Charity campaign please consider doing so (envelopes are in the pews, or you can give electronically on the website). We are approaching our parish goal and I think it would give us a great sense of collective achievement to hit it. The many ministries that are supported by this drive are so important.

Look for announcements soon for Fr. Ramos' send off party and for a celebration to honor Mick Beck (as of this weekend *Deacon* Mick Beck). I have been asked about who will be Fr. Ramos' replacement. Now that all announcements have been made, I can let you know. Our new Associate Pastor will be Fr. Miguel Pegan who is currently serving at St. Cecelia's in Leominster. Fr. Miguel and I had a lunch meeting in late March to do some preliminary discussions, and I think you will all like him. He is a kind and humble man who is known to be a dedicated and prayerful priest. You will get to meet him as he transitions to be with us. Let us all continue to give thanks for the presence of the Holy Spirit who is with us and supports us.

God Bless,

Fr. Steve