

PASTOR'S COLUMN

A Farewell, Welcome, and November Things

A Farewell. Our Parish Secretary/Receptionist of 16 years, Barbara Kirn, has decided to retire effective October 31. This is something she has been thinking about for a couple of years. Barbara is a very dedicated employee who has given her all to serving St. Francis Parish. She will be greatly missed. At Barbara's request, we will have a private thank-you. Please pray that Barbara enjoys the well-deserved fruits of her retirement.

A Welcome. In order to find a successor to Barbara, members of our Parish Staff and our Finance Council Chairperson interviewed several applicants. We decided on Rachel Griffin, who worked at St. Francis before Katrina and has the requisite skills along with a knowledge of the parish. She is the daughter of our Parish D.R.E., Claudia Todaro. She is married and the mother of one child. Rachel will begin here on October 29. Please extend a warm welcome to Rachel.
November

November Things. The Church calendar year ends in November. The readings and prayers at Masses in November focus on dying, death and final things.

We begin November with the celebration of *All Saints Day* (November 1), a day to celebrate all canonized and unnamed saints who are in heaven adoring God and praying for us. It is a day when Catholics bring flowers to cemeteries in remembrance of their deceased loved ones. We will have a Vigil Mass at 4:00 PM on October 31 and Masses at 6:30 AM, 8:00 AM, 9:45 AM and 7:00 PM on November 1. I am looking forward to the 9:45 AM Mass because the school children will attend dressed as saints!

November 2 is All Souls Day, a day to pray for all the departed who are in purgatory and not yet in heaven. Although their sins have been forgiven by God, they still need purification (from the harm caused by their sins) before they enter into the fullness of God's holy presence in heaven (Catechism Nos. 1030-1032). The Church teaches that our prayers assist those in purgatory, whereas those already in heaven do not need our prayers – we need theirs! The Masses on All Souls Day will be at 6:30 AM and 8:00 AM.

Finally, we will have a Parish "Book of Life" in Church near the baptismal font throughout November. Feel free to write in the names of your deceased loved ones. We will pray for them at all the Masses in November. May they rest in God's eternal peace.

God bless, Fr. Joe