

PASTOR'S COLUMN

The Need for Patience as we process the "Meet and Greet" Visits

There's a joke about a man who prayed for patience, "O Lord, grant me patience – and grant it to me *quick!*" Many of us struggle being patient. We see the good to be done and want it done as fast as possible and often faster than possible. I pray daily for patience. I ask for your patience as Fr. Thien and I and others evaluate the ideas that have surfaced in the "Meet and Greet" visits with parishioners.

Fr. Thien and I have visited 23 homes in two and a half months, meeting well over 300 parishioners and receiving a lot of feedback about our parish and school. It has been a blessing to get to know many of you on a more personal basis. We are grateful for all who hosted these gatherings and for all who came to share ideas, hopes and dreams.

Now we begin the next phase of the transition process: reviewing the notes from the meetings, evaluating the ideas (especially where they diverge), prioritizing projects, and assessing our human and financial resources to do them. We already have implemented a number of suggestions, including some relating to the sound in the church, greeters at mass, and improvements to the parish website. In the coming weeks and months, Fr. Thien and I will review your ideas for the parish with our Parish Staff, Parish Council, Finance Council and ministry leaders. We will review your ideas for the school with our School leaders.

As we consider doing new things, we must (of course) continue to fulfill our current ministry responsibilities so that our present services don't diminish. For certain, if we are going to address some of the ideas that have surfaced, we will need to involve more people in the life of our parish community.

Analogous to our situation is a home renovation. Having the idea of a renovation is just the first step. Next comes the planning, refining of the plan, identifying the contractor, securing the financing, daily decisions and selections, change orders, and the delays and inconveniences inherent in all renovation projects. Some friends of mine are six months into a bathroom renovation that was supposed to take two months!

Change takes time. Some things can be modified or implemented faster than others. We ask for your patience and prayers as we move forward with the process of considering and responding to the ideas we have heard. May the Holy Spirit guide the process for the good of our parish and school.

God bless,

Fr. Joe