

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 1, 2019

Dear Parishioners and Families,

The Gospel today relates that on Sabbath Day Jesus went to dine at the home of a leading Pharisee and the people there were observing him carefully. This statement invited a question. Jesus knew the Pharisees in general were highly antagonistic toward him. Why would he accept an invitation from one of the leading Pharisees and walk into a hostile environment. I leave it to you to ponder an answer.

To friend and foe alike Jesus communicated. Communication is one of the chief characteristics of the human person. When communication goes forward between people, people grow. When it breaks down, nothing happens except division.

Today's life challenges us in communication like never before. Technologies have helped and hurt communication.

In preparing people for marriage, I stress that communication is probably the most important element that must persist through their entire life. If they communicate together, they will grow. If communication fails, they will divide. All of us have seen how at times one or another spouse gives the silent treatment. This is bad thinking and bad communication.

Teachers have told me that even in very young children in pre-school, they see beginnings of non-communication and division. Some children shrug off a perceived slight. Others go off into a pout. Pouts are childish; communication is adult. We have all see examples of children getting angry, storming up to their room, shutting the door with a slam and locking it. Childish! Adults do likewise.

The use of technology today has also limited our communication. We text message when we are sitting next to each other. Sometimes in response to a message, we simply answer one word, OK, or no, or yes. Such one word responses give an answer but are not communication. How much better it would be to add a few words of graciousness together with a response.

In family life with children, it is important that the parents find time to get away with each other. If the parents stop communicating between them because they are too busy, the marriage is lessened and the children suffer majorly. The integrity of a family is not based on the love of the children, but on the love and understanding of the parents. This spills over to the children. Non-communication leads to divorce and this is very destructive to the children and to the family.

Jesus communicated even to those he felt would not receive his message. He was always hoping. We do know some Pharisees were quite receptive. Nicodemus, one of the leading Pharisees, came to Jesus by night. The only person Jesus refused to speak to was Herod. He spoke to Pilate but he would not speak to Herod. Ask yourself the question, why?

My friends, one of our prime objectives at St. Joseph School is to develop *Eloquentia Perfecta*. That word is almost untranslatable but it means to develop communication with noble grace. When you experience *Eloquentia Perfecta* you know and feel its force. It is uplifting and awesome. It is important to talk with each other face to face and present our visage and our expression. I encourage you not to be dehumanized by depending upon technology, especially distant technology for that human grace of communication.