

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – OCTOBER 21, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

Within our parish over the last two weeks the Lord has chosen to take to himself in the Kingdom of Heaven several of our long-time parishioners. At the same time, the Lord has chosen young parents to bring their new children into the Church with the Sacrament of Baptism. For those who have journeyed to the portal of death, they have arrived in the Kingdom of Life. To those who are baptized, the Christian journey has begun.

Those who read this bulletin are somewhere in between the beginning here on earth and the Kingdom of Heaven to come. Each of us has the task to preach the good news and the joy of the Gospel. Let me turn to an early part of Pope Frances's Exhortation on the **Joy of the Gospel**.

“The first setting of evangelization is the ordinary pastoral ministry, which is “animated by the fire of the Spirit so to enflame the hearts of the faithful who regularly take part in community worship and gather on the Lord’s Day to be nourished by His word and by the Bread of Eternal Life. In this category we can also include those members of faithful who preserve a deep and a sincere faith, expressing it in different ways, but seldom taking part in worship. Ordinary pastoral ministry seeks to help believers to grow spiritually so they can respond to God’s love evermore fully in their lives.”
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The final salute, the funeral service often brings together families with various strengths in their belief. For some, this is the first time back into the Catholic Church of their heritage in quite some time. We welcome them. How might we encourage them to become more regular in receiving the Sacraments of the Church?

Now let me turn to the Holy Father’s recent Exhortation Rejoice and Be Glad. “Grace acts in history; ordinarily it takes hold of us and transforms us progressively. If we reject this historical and progressive reality, we can actually refuse and block grace, even as we extol it by our words.”

Clearly, the depth of our faith grows in spurts. Most of us have noted this in our own lives. May we thank the Lord for the spurt in our life and at the same time encourage this growth of faith in those who are less frequent.

Last week we celebrated the Feast of St. Luke, one of the four evangelists. He is the Patron of Doctors, the Patron of artists, and he had a special insight for women. No evangelist places more or better emphasis on the important role of women. In families, the woman and mother is most frequently the heart of Christian life. We thank our mothers and the women in our life who have passed their love and their faith to us. St. Luke, pray for us!

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
October 21, 2018