

From the Pastor's Desk:

After my first Holy Week here at Annunciation I have been reflecting on what God may have been saying to me. First of all, God has shown me the talent of the parishioners who pulled together to make what could be a stressful (and not so prayerful) set of liturgies into wonderful experiences for us all. Skillful decoration by our Art and Environment ministry, expert liturgical leadership from Fr. Ramos, focused and dedicated service by our deacons and Altar Servers, beautiful Music Ministry, uplifting proclamation of the scriptures by our Lectors, and the participation of so many of our brothers and sisters - all this gave me an experience of the living presence of God in our liturgy.

God has also helped me to realize that when we come together as one parish community to worship, to pray, to experience the Holy Spirit in our midst, and especially to share the Eucharist together - our divisions melt away and we truly become one body of believers. Our participation together in the Eucharist is one of the most powerful things that we can do to continue to heal as a community. The more we join together to be the living presence of the risen Christ, and receive his Body and Blood, the more we feel the love of Christ bind us together.

Fr. Ramos and I also celebrated Holy Week Liturgies at the prison in Gardner this week (all except the Easter Vigil). I was told that this was the first time in 17 years the men had been able to experience these liturgies on Good Friday and Holy Thursday. I said the Sunday Mass there and witnessed the power of Christ to touch people that others may have written off. We continue to work to shore up our Hospital Ministry and Ministry to the Sick and Homebound to help these individuals (who are also unable to join us regularly) to experience the touch of Jesus' Church through the hands of his ministers.

At our meeting this week the Pastoral Council will be taking up a few matters that have been voiced. These include: painting and decoration of our halls, the use of the Regan Street convent, possible evening Sunday Mass, requests for Extraordinary Form liturgy, increased parish social activities, the Mission Statement, and a parish survey. Please feel free to contact council members to voice your opinions. Contact information is available on the website and also at the office.

Paper brochures describing parish ministries have been placed in the back of both church buildings, as promised - more detailed information is available on the website in the "ministries" section. In the joy of this Easter let us continue to let ourselves to be drawn into the unity of the Risen Christ - may we all have a fruitful and happy Easter Season!

Peace,

Fr. Steve