



Gleanings from the Vineyard

Mercy and Evangelization

Meditation by Deacon Bill Rabjohn

Pastoral Associate, St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport, NY

In this year of mercy, it's been helpful for me to equate mercy with acceptance. Can I accept the other person, in all that they are? This doesn't mean approval of sin but it does mean not putting up holy walls to keep their dirt off of us. Love - the capacity to do good for the other - is seated upon justice - giving them what is due to them - and justice is seated upon mercy - accepting them for who they are in all that they are. If I can't accept them, I can give them what is due to them, and if I'm not open to give them what is due to them, I can't love them.

Often a couple comes to me to have their baby baptized but they themselves are not married or confirmed. If I can be present to them, accept them for who they are and where they're at spiritually, and begin to share with them a path to spiritual freedom found in Christ in a language developed from their own sharing and experiences, we can move together through their baby's baptism which leads to their marriage and then eventually confirmation. But this takes time to become invested in the relationship and trust that God will do the transformation, not the rituals or the clear cut processes to receive the sacraments.

What truly evangelizes is the communication of love - divine love - manifested in our own reception of it more fully each day. Unless we embrace the natural joy found in God's love and let go of the lesser gods of wealth, power, pleasure, and honor, we cannot witness the divine love to others. So, the best thing we can "do" to be evangelists is to

practice for ourselves the love of Christ, right here, right now, in this present moment.

The fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, kindness, perseverance, and self-control) are not stand alone fruit. They are sequential. From love, we experience joy, from joy we experience peace, from peace patience, from patience gentleness, gentleness leads to kindness, from kindness perseverance, from perseverance self-control. We all seek the fruit of the Spirit - believers and nonbelievers - we think we can attain them by work. If I had better self-control, I could persevere. If I persevere, I then have the capacity to be kind and gentle, then peaceful, then I will have joy and the ability to love. But it is not about our being in control at all. If we can embrace the divine love that resides in us, strengthened by the sacraments, then we have access to all the other fruit.

So, we become the evangelized in this way. People see the fruit and want it too. We can only point to the way. They have to practice it and we have to practice remaining in it through mindfulness.

Bill

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Godspeed

Marty Hughes, St. Mary/St. Matthew, Livonia

Anne Johnson, Holy Cross, Charlotte



THE SPIRIT WORKING AMONG US

By Cathy Kamp, Pastoral Associate, St. Joseph's Parish, Penfield

Chair of Pastoral Associates/Pastoral Ministers Association Executive Committee

The Holy Spirit was alive in our hearts and in our community during the recent Easter Season!

Many of us in pastoral ministry had the opportunity to journey with those becoming Catholic and to celebrate with them at the Great Easter Vigil. For me, the RCIA ministry is a great source of spiritual growth year after year for which I am most grateful.

Shortly after Easter, our Pastoral Associates/Ministers' Association gathered in Canandaigua at the Notre Dame Retreat House for our annual retreat day. We were led in reflection during this Jubilee Year of Mercy by Reverend John Rose and Ms. Meghan Robinson on the topic, "Our Vigilant

Christ: The Face of Mercy and Arsonist of our Hearts." It was a sacred time of sharing and listening, dialogue and silence. Many have commented on feeling refreshed to go back to their ministry and to bring the mercy of God to those they serve.

A few days before the Feast of Pentecost, Pope Francis, in responding to questions at the International Union of Superiors General, "accepted a proposal that he establish a commission to study the role of New Testament deaconesses and the possibility of women serving as deacons today." (Catholic News Service) There is no doubt that many in the religious and mainstream news media over-

stated the Pope's words and intentions in the days that followed.

Nonetheless, for those of us serving in pastoral ministry, the Pope's consideration of such a commission and the role of women and the laity, is cause for reflection on our own ministry. For what purpose has God called us to serve in the Roman Catholic Church? Where is the Spirit leading us individually and as a community of ministering servants? How can we best serve our parishes today?

May the flame of the Spirit continue to burn in our hearts this day and every day.

Pastoral Associates'/Pastoral Ministers' Association Executive Committee



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More thoughts on this Issues' Question:

How do you reach out to/evangelize the next generation?

"How do I reach out to evangelize the next generation?" I've been coordinating the youth mass which takes place the last Sunday of the month. The youth sit in the front pew and serve as commentator, lectors, and altar servers. They bring up the gifts, distribute the bulletin etc. and sing the Psalm, I also provide training for the different ministries. One of them is singing in the choir with the adults. I sit with them because sometimes I have new ones and I want them to feel comfortable.

Priscila DeJesus, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish, Rochester

Our parish maintains contact with families after baptism for four years by sending out "Parent Letters from Your Parish", age-appropriate materials for the child and parents every six months. It might contain a DVD of religious songs, a placemat with grace before meals where the child's name can be written on the placemat, a babysitter's list, or nighttime prayers. There is also information for the parents in each packet. We order them through The Catholic Company.

Bernie Tomasso, Sacred Heart & St. Ann Churches, Auburn

Continue this conversation at the Summer Leadership Institute —two day workshops at St. Bernard's, June 29 and 30!

Share the Gospel With New Methods and Ardor

As ecclesial ministers in the New Evangelization, we are called to continually develop new ways to share the Gospel with others and deepen our own skills to be effective agents to help others encounter Christ. These workshops will help you to develop leadership skills for everyday use.

"Build Your Professional Ministerial Skills" Two days of workshops, prayer and practical learning. [Http://www.stbernards.edu](http://www.stbernards.edu) for details.

From Rocket Scientist to Pastoral Care

By Jim Gulley, Pastoral Associate, St. Joseph's Parish, Penfield



Jim Gulley

"What a long, strange trip it's been" (J. Garcia). I grew up a baby-boomer in Syracuse with a Catholic education: Sisters of St Joseph, Franciscan Friars, and Society of Jesus. At age 13, I enrolled in a minor seminary in Montour Falls NY. It was a great education, squarely focused on what I thought was my calling, to be ordained a priest and work in a mission somewhere. I graduated the same year Vatican 2 concluded, with about as much uncertainty about my vocation as there was in the Church in general that year. I declined going on to the major seminary, and instead opted for Lemoyne College where I met my wife of 44 years, Rose. Two wonderful kids grace us today. I drifted away from the Church around the same time.

Despite my political science study in college, I worked primarily in computing, bio-med engineering, telecom, and subsea fiber optic networking for 40 years. I actually *was* a "rocket scientist" at one point, making a small

but important software contribution to the Apollo/Soyuz mission during my stint at NASA.

Listening well, humor and humility are vital components in this work

2000 was an important year. That's when I decided one day to resume participating in weekly Mass. I haven't missed a weekend since. I became a Eucharistic Minister, then worked on the Stewardship Council, then the Parish Pastoral Council. Early one morning in May 2009, I got an email from Fr Jim Schwartz asking if I'd be interested in taking a course in Spiritual Direction that he would teach at SBSTM. I agreed, but thought it would be a one-time experience. A few weeks after that course ended, a stroke and heart surgery changed my thinking on many fronts. I launched myself into the MAPS curriculum, and gratefully received my degree 3 years later from Bishop Matthew. I was even more grateful when I was offered (and accepted) an offer to

join the St. Joseph's staff as a Pastoral Associate.

It's a large parish, and my work is diverse, encompassing pastoral care, stewardship, coordination of a weekend Mass, Bible study groups, website design & support, IT help to parish and school staff, handbell choir, event photography, funeral planning & coordination, audio/video operation, and every once in a while playing the saxophone for special occasions.

The staff and fellow students at St. Bernard's were, and remain, very important in my formation for this work, as were the staff and several parishioners at St. Joseph's, who continue to provide a highly collaborative work environment, personal encouragement, and more than a few laughs. Listening well, humor and humility are vital components in this work, especially now that I'm dealing with significant health issues.

Bishop Matthew said that lay involvement in the Church matters; we are important; we make a difference. I'm very grateful for this opportunity.

Question for next issue of Gleanings.

Please share your experience and thoughts (bmcdermott@dor.org).

How has Confirmation Prep affected your Youth Ministry programs?
Any suggestions of how to weave them all together (Jr. High, Confirmation, Sr. High)?

Sign up to automatically receive a diocesan **Diversity Newsletter!**

This bi-monthly communication gives up to date information about the cultural events taking place in the parishes and wider Rochester community as well as educational tidbits about different cultural traditions. Sign up to subscribe on the Diocesan webpage at: <http://www.dor.org/index.cfm/ministries/cultural-diversity1/>

Also sign up to see the new Asian and Pacific Ministries Plan at <http://bit.ly/DPPAPI>.

Know of a parishioner who would be a great

Interfaith Liaison

between your parish and the Diocese? Please contact Betsy McDermott at bmcdermott@dor.org with a name and to learn more information.

Message from the Finance Department

A financial fraud and financial abuse hotline has been established to report concerns related to financial fraud and abuse at the Pastoral Center, parishes, schools and/or agencies. Anonymous calls may be made to the Hotline at 585.328.3228, ext. 1266 (or toll-free to 800-388-7177, ext. 1266.)

2016 Dates of Interest

Saturday, June 4	Priest Ordination. 10:30 am. Sacred Heart Cathedral.
Saturday, June 18	Catholic-Muslim Relations: a Franciscan Perspective. 10:00 am. Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester. Fr. Michael Calabria, OFM. For details, contact kcaelphick@aol.com .
Wednesday & Thursday June 29 and 30	Summer Leadership Institute. St. Bernard's School of Theology & Ministry. 9:00 am-5:00 pm. "Build Your Professional Ministerial Skills" Two days of work shops, prayer and practical learning. Http://www.stbernards.edu for details.
Wednesday, June 29 Wednesday, July 20	Dazzle Them! Prepare, practice and present with passion. Workshops on presentation skills and curriculum development.. Details: marybeth@programsavvy.com .
Thursday, October 6	Fall Workshop. 9:00—3:30 pm. St. Joseph's Parish, Penfield. SAVE THE DATE!

Gleanings Newsletter

We are delighted to print articles, meditations, parish stories, prayer requests, book reviews etc. from pastoral associates/ministers of all parishes and ministries in the Rochester Diocese. We also are looking to highlight one pastoral associate/minister per issue so that we can all get to our colleagues in the vineyard. Please submit ideas and contributions often to bmcdermott@dor.org; 328-3228, ext. 1287.

Notes from the Harvest

BLOGS...

St. Mary & Matthew Faith Community is starting a 'Faith Community Blog'. It is meant for parishioners to share testimonies of God's work in their lives and encouragement as disciples through the blog on their parish website. "A few years ago we asked several parishioners to write reflections on the Lenten daily readings. We published them on our Facebook page, and they were very well received."

- Marty Hughes

St. Mark's, Greece, has three blogs through their webpage. Dcn. Frank says, "I really just look to those short writing exercises to enliven people's faith and hope to inspire them to a closer relationship with Christ. It is one communication tool and I wish I had more time for it."

-Dcn. Frank Petrone, St. Marks, Greece

I am proud to say that **St. Alphonsus Parish and St. Joseph School** will be chartering Girl Scout Brownie Troop 60435 beginning in the fall. Girls in grades 2 and 3 will earn badges and awards while they explore their community. Most importantly, the Troop

will be founded in the Catholic Tradition and availability of appropriate Catholic Religious Emblems will be a mainstay of the curriculum.

- Aaron Wilson

Holy Family Parish Life Committee's Family Fun Day (Auburn) held April 30 was great success-. With the Money raised Holy Family Parish Life was able to award 6 scholarships to graduating seniors of \$500/ student and to continue to support Parish and Community causes.

Helen for Carol Tomandl

PERFECT AGE FOR CONFIRMATION!

I had the privilege of catechizing and setting up a Confirmation for a 97 year old lady at the Oak Hill Manor Nursing Home. Her mind was sharp as a tack. She can't see or hear very well though. Here is more information about it:

"I look forward to your church bringing communion to Oak Hill every Sunday, especially seeing the family with the two children," says Geraldine Patterson, 97 years young. **Holy Cross Church in Dryden** sends Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist every

Sunday to bring communion to Oak Hill Manor Nursing Home in Ithaca, except the weeks that Fr. Malachy (Eloo) Nwosu celebrates monthly Mass. After one of the monthly Masses earlier this year, Gerry asked if she could still make her confirmation. As a Cradle Catholic, she was baptized on Feb. 3, 1919 at Immaculate Conception Church in Ithaca, NY.

She received 1st Holy Communion but had never celebrated Confirmation. Fr. Eloo readily said yes to her request and proceeded to ask permission from the bishop to celebrate Gerry's confirmation. Catechesis was done with Gerry by the Holy Cross Pastoral Associate. Gerry's daughter, Patricia Herbison, served as Gerry's sponsor. Gerry's son and daughter and their families came on Monday, May 9th and witnessed Gerry's joyous Confirmation along with the Nursing Home residents and Holy Cross pianist, Jeanne Pellerin and Holy Cross coordinator of Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist for Oak Hill Manor, Nan Lisk. The Holy Spirit inspired Gerry to become the 1st 97-year-old for whom Fr. Eloo had ever celebrated Confirmation!

- Mary Ann Kozak