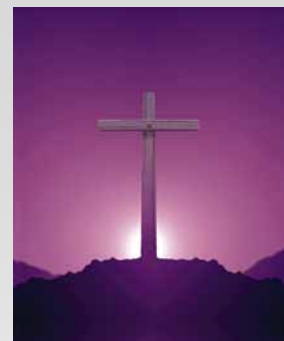


After the Heart of Jesus ...

*I have been crucified with Christ;
yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me;
insofar as I now live in the flesh,
I live by faith in the Son of God
who has loved me and given himself up for me.*

Galatians 2:19b-20



Beginning this weekend, we return to Ordinary Time Sundays. The themes from the given Scriptures are not determined by a specific season or celebration. The focus of the readings is determined by the reading of successive passages from one of the gospels. This year we look at Luke. We also listen to the rich theology of St. Paul through his letters.

Paul often takes up the theme of faith in his letters. What a difference faith makes! There is a tangible difference in the quality and depth of life in the believer and the unbeliever. Paul wrote, "I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me." To know that we are not only loved by Christ but that Christ gave his life for us should fill us with great confidence and hope. It is this faith by which believers live. It is this faith that helps us realize that each of us is united with Christ in his crucifixion and resurrection. If we connect our lives with Christ in his death and resurrection, then we will know and feel that Christ is alive in each of us.



Today we celebrate Father's Day, a time when we tell our dads, "Thank you! We love you, and we pray for you." The blessing for Father's Day asks God, our Heavenly Father, to strengthen Christian fathers so that they may be examples of faith and that their love may shine forth. We wish all of our dads a very Happy Fathers Day!

This coming week will mark the first year of my serving as pastor of St. Walter Parish. I am truly grateful for the superb support given to me by the parishioners and staff this past year. The best surprise has been that there has been no big surprise! I find St. Walter Parish to be a people who pray well together, who care for each other, especially in times of sorrow and tragedy, who are invested in the faith lives of their children, and who are open to new ways of discipleship in bringing Christ to the world today. Ours is a wonderful parish to serve as priest and pastor.

I am also grateful that we have been able to adopt a new style of organization that reflects the pastoral priorities and needs of the parishioners. It focuses on intentional ministry, meaning we have a sense of purpose and mission before we implement a strategy or program. In other words, what we do is directed by who we are and what our mission is. As the implementation of the pastoral plan progresses I believe that we will soon see some very positive results for our parish and community. Among other initiatives, I think we will see more emphasis placed on our community life in reaching out to one another and welcoming others, in our devotional life in helping us to grow in our relationship with Christ, and in our outreach to senior members of our parish.

Thank you to the eleven parishioners who offered their services as potential pastoral council members. The discernment committee will meet this week with the candidates to discern the four new members of the pastoral council. Please pray that the Spirit will guide us to select members that will best serve the parish.

Thank you to those who have contributed to the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal! We have reached over 97% of our goal, with an average family gift of \$203. We have just a short bit to go over the top. If you have not yet made a gift or pledge to support the work of the Diocesan Church, please do so soon. When we go over the top, our parish will benefit from a reduced diocesan assessment in the coming year.

Our first summer teen bible study went well. I'm grateful to have the chance to spend some time with our high school teens for discussions of faith as well as to have some fun afterwards. This past week we went miniature golfing. See the article later in the bulletin for upcoming dates.

I am also happy that we are able to host Theology on Tap for our young adults in the 20's and 30's. We will need people help in hosting these events that bring young Catholics, married and single, together for presentations and discussions of faith. See the bulletin for more details.

May we all have a faith that makes all the difference as we strive to live ...

After the Heart of Jesus!

Father John