

After the Heart of Jesus ...



*Great crowds were traveling with Jesus, and he turned and addressed them,
"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother,
wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life,
he cannot be my disciple.*

*Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me
cannot be my disciple"*
Luke 14:25-27

Jesus wanted his followers to be prepared for what could be a difficult life ahead. He taught his disciples not merely how to survive -- how to be "OK", but he taught them how to really live. For Jesus, the cross was a necessary part of living. Now, not everyone was to be crucified on their cross as Jesus was, but they had to be willing to carry them.

His example is really a challenge to those of us who set up safe environments so that we can stay OK, to those of us who are afraid to touch one another's lives with our own, to those of us more concerned with personal survival than with really living. To really live is to know what it's like to care for those whom the world does not care for. To really live is to reach out to those whom no one else wants to reach out to. To really live is to know that our cross and eventually our death is another way to life.

The new school year has definitely kicked in, and it is so good to see our campus alive with young people learning and growing. We have over 1540 children enrolled in either our Catholic grade school or school of religion. This week we celebrated the opening prayer services for the School of Religion and celebrated the initiation of the sixth graders as they received Bibles. Please pray for all those who have the responsibility of helping form our young people, especially in the faith.



If you are looking for something good and difference-making to do on Sunday afternoon, September 9, attend the annual Family Fest to support Misericordia's Homes. The Fest, which promises to be a fabulous day of live entertainment, food, drinks, auctions, raffles, games and more, is held at Misericordia Home, 6300 North Ridge (1800W), in Chicago. If you are able to attend, please make sure you say "hello" to our parishioner Victor Montefalco, who is a resident there, and his parents Rose and Frank, who will be volunteering there throughout the day.

The Alpha Course will soon begin again at St. Walter Church. The Alpha process invites participants to ask the basic questions of human existence and the fundamentals of belief in God and Jesus Christ. It's a great outreach to those who are either un-churched or non-practicing as well as for those who just want to get back on track with their spiritual lives. We need your help in sharing the message with your neighbors, co-workers, and friends who would benefit from Alpha. A brochure about the Alpha Course is available in the center of this weekend's bulletin that can be carefully removed, folded, and shared with someone to invite them to participate. You can even invite them to join you for the first evening on Monday, September 24. Please speak with someone you know who would benefit. You could change a life forever.

We are very happy to report that we have reached \$128,610 in pledges to the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal. This represents 110% of the goal set for us by the Diocese. How wonderful it is to say "**We gave 110%!**" Thank you to the 706 donors who made their gift to the diocese. It is not too late to give this year. Final letters will be sent from Bishop Sartain to those who have not yet given. Our gifts to the diocese make a difference to the more than 85,000 people whose lives are changed for the better through diocesan ministries.



This Tuesday will be the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9-11, 2001. So much in the world has changed or been affected by the events of that day. It's not just a matter of how we pack our suitcases or that we now take off our shoes at the airport, it's in how we view people who do not look like us or who speak differently than us, especially those who are Muslim. People seem much quicker to anger. Tragically, we also have become accustomed to daily scenes of war, terror, killing and violence on television.



I recall those days immediately after 9-11, when sports events were cancelled, planes were grounded, families in New York were still searching for relatives, American flags were flying everywhere, and churches were packed. There was such a sense of unity. Fathers held their children close. We wondered how we would respond individually and as a nation. We prayed in new ways, perhaps like we've never prayed before.

Much has happened in these six years. May we not give up hope in the cause of peace or turn away from praying for those who each day face terror, the senseless taking of lives, and the destruction of property. May our hearts not be hardened from understanding those who may look or sound differently than us but who, like us, seek to live in peace with all.

Know that in our sense of community we witness our desire to live

After the Heart of Jesus!
Father John