

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## REASONS FOR HOPE...WITH GENTLENESS

Dear Parish Family:

Last week after one of the Masses I celebrated there was a man waiting for me at the foot of the sanctuary. I could tell he was not happy and he wasn't, particularly with the homily I preached at some of the Masses last weekend. I referred to an unjust war and its impacts, questioning what each one of us, including me, was doing about it. He had some clear opinions. I cannot say I agreed with him. I am sure he did not agree with me. He ended by saying, "You know your preaching about war is a turn off." I responded, "The Gospel is a turn off for a lot of people." He walked away. I walked away.

I was not very prepared for the conversation with this person. (NOTE: Waiting for the priest at the foot of the altar is not the best place to have a conversation!) I got my points in and did not really take time to listen to him. I do not agree with what he had to say about Pope Leo or Pope Francis or me, but I did not handle it well. I reacted. He left aggravated. I left frustrated.

Saint Peter shares an incredible line in the second reading today. "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope..." (3:15). I quote this line often and I hope and pray most days I give good reasons for hope. But he puts a condition on this, a condition I missed last weekend. He continues, "do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear..." (3:16).

As Catholics, as disciples, we are facing many attacks on our values and priorities. We see, constantly, a disrespect for human life - from separated families in detention centers to neglect and destruction of the unborn to individuals being destroyed often because of their skin color or immigration status. We see the Holy Father mocked by other political leaders. We see a rush to war, at times, and a resistance to do the necessary work for peace and justice without violence. We often find the Spirit of truth disregarded for the lies of ego and power. It can easily become hopeless.

And I can imagine we see the same struggles on some of the more intimate levels of our lives. We struggle with spouses and partners, sometimes reacting instead of responding. We see it in our struggle with our kids and our parents, often lashing out in anger instead of trying harder to look at each situation with some of the mercy and compassion we profess we have. We struggle with the decisions of those we love - even those we know are wrong or destructive - and sometimes write off or give up on them. It can easily become hopeless.

Now, enter the words of Saint Peter and throw in the Gospel, too! If we believe in what Easter is really all about...if we believe in what Jesus has been saving to us over the past few weeks in the Gospels - the way, the truth, the life, the gate, the Good Shepherd, the one who is promising the Advocate - then we have to try to move away from reacting to responding with great love and great compassion. Some will say that's a sign of weakness. They said the same thing about Jesus too. He saved the world.

I hold on to a word that Pope Francis used often - accompaniment. We are called to accompany one another, to walk with one another. It does not mean we always agree, and truthfully, sometimes those we love go on the wrong path. But we walk together, we accompany one another. That's the reason for our hope.

So, today, can you think of someone - personally or even globally - with whom you are failing to accompany? Even someone you have lashed out to or ranted about? Can you try in these through prayer and/or action to give them a reason from your hope...but with gentleness and reverence for where they find themselves? I have some work to do in this area. Maybe you do too?

It's a great starting point for an incredible journey ahead. Please pray for me. I promise the same.

*Father Jim*

# EL POST DEL PARROCO

## RAZONES PARA ESPERANZA...

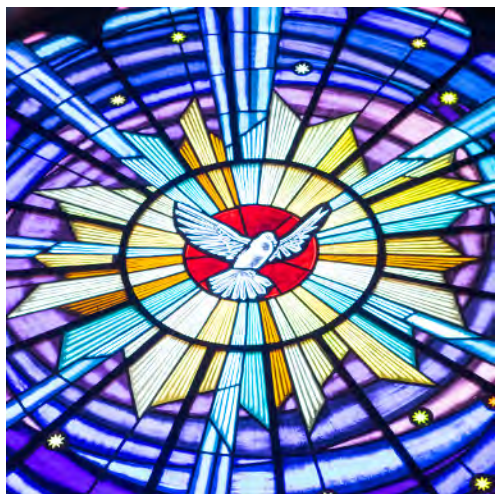
Me quedo con una palabra que el papa Francisco usaba a menudo: «acompañamiento». Estamos llamados a acompañarnos unos a otros, a caminar juntos. Eso no significa que siempre estemos de acuerdo y, a decir verdad, a veces quienes amamos toman el camino equivocado. Pero caminamos juntos, nos acompañamos mutuamente. Esa es la razón de nuestra esperanza.

Entonces, ¿se te ocurre hoy alguien —ya sea a nivel personal o incluso a nivel global— a quien no estés acompañando como deberías? ¿Quizás alguien a quien hayas criticado duramente o de quien te hayas quejado? ¿Podrías intentar, a través de la oración o de la acción, ofrecerle una razón basada en tu esperanza... pero con delicadeza y respeto por la situación en la que se encuentra? Tengo mucho que mejorar en este aspecto. ¿Quizás tú también?

Es un excelente punto de partida para el increíble viaje que nos espera.

Por favor, reza por mí. Yo haré lo mismo.

*Father Jim*



## QUICK UPDATES

I just wanted to reach out about a few things related to the "practicals" of our parish life:

**Sunday Collection.** Can I ask that everyone pay attention to the Sunday collection? We are holding our own financially but took a little bit of a drop in the April collections. On both a practical level and discipleship level, the Sunday collection is our primary source of our parish's revenue and what we use to carry out the works of the parish. Please stay committed to that!

**Soon to be Father Nick.** We are so excited for the Ordination and the First Mass of Fr. Nick Waldron. We cannot wait! But we need everyone's help! Please see the sign up sheet in the bulletin or reply to the QR code.

Thank you for all of the ways your support and bring life to our parish!

*Father Jim*

Solo quería hablarles de algunas cosas relacionadas con los «aspectos prácticos» de nuestra vida parroquial:

Solo quería hablarles de algunas cosas relacionadas con los «aspectos prácticos» de nuestra vida parroquial:

Colecta dominical. ¿Podrían todos prestar atención a la colecta dominical? Nos mantenemos bien económicamente, pero en abril las colectas bajaron un poco. Tanto desde el punto de vista práctico como del discipulado, la colecta dominical es la principal fuente de ingresos de nuestra parroquia y lo que usamos para llevar a cabo las obras de la parroquia. ¡Por favor, mantengan su compromiso con esto!

El futuro padre Nick. Estamos muy emocionados por la ordenación y la primera misa del padre Nick Waldron. ¡No podemos esperar! ¡Pero necesitamos la ayuda de todos! Por favor, consulten la hoja de inscripción en el boletín o respondan al código QR.

¡Gracias por todas las formas en que apoyan y dan vida a nuestra parroquia!

*Father Jim*