

## After the Heart of Jesus ...

*But you, pursue righteousness,  
devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.  
Compete well for the faith.*

*1 Timothy 6:11b-12a*

Words of encouragement. We all need them from time to time, and we should all give them as well. So often, though, the words of encouragement we receive and perhaps share are not so Godly directed and Spirit lead. Sometimes the advice we receive encourages us on the path away from God. Messages that promote the pursuit of worldly pleasure and possessions, words that imply that being Number 1 is so important that we should lie and cheat and step on people to get there, advertisements that would have us think that perfection is found only in the young and beautiful – these bombard us and our children throughout the day, nearly every day.

One of the key components of Christ's disciples and of a Christian community is the encouragement they provide to live God's ways. In today's second reading we hear some of Paul's encouragement to Timothy to live his life in Christ with devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. You deserve to hear that message and others like it when you come to St. Walter Church. They will counteract many of the other messages you hear throughout the week, but that's a good thing. And as you are encouraged to live a more faith-filled life, you should encourage others to do the same.

All of the priests of the Diocese of Joliet will meet in convocation with Bishop Sartain this coming week from Monday afternoon to Thursday. These days away are for spiritual renewal, ongoing education, and fraternal support with our brother priests. As a result of Father Mario and my being away, there will be no daily Mass or funeral Masses on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Communion services will be held those days at the usual Mass times. Please pray for all of our priests this coming week.

One of the pastoral priorities identified in the Parish Plan process was the need for better efforts at true stewardship. As with the other priorities identified by the Parish Pastoral Council, a Core Team has been addressing this critical need to ensure the success of our mission with Christ at St. Walter Church. During October, we will participate in a stewardship renewal campaign that has been designed by the Stewardship Core Team and approved by the Parish Pastoral Council.

From the outset, we need to be reminded that *stewardship is not a money making program, but stewardship is a way of life revealed to us by Jesus through his words and actions*. The campaign will involve education, witnessing, and responding. We will learn that the foundation of stewardship is gratitude, and to have a grateful heart we need to have our eyes focused on blessing.

If you are registered in the parish, you should receive the 2007 Annual Report in the mail this coming week. This year's report, entitled *All the Good God has Done for Us*, will share some of our story of St. Walter Parish this past year, provide an informative report of Counting our Blessings, and give the financial report for last year and the budget for this current year. Please take some time to reflect on the graces and gifts we have received from the Lord.

Next weekend, October 6/7 is *Respect Life Sunday*, a time to reflect on the wonderful and beautiful gift that our very lives are. The St. Walter Catholics for Life campaign to support the crisis pregnancy programs of Birthright and Women's Choice Centers concludes next week with the collection of the Baby Bottles for Life. Remember to save some change to save a life, and bring the bottles to Mass with you next weekend. Please note that this is not a solicitation campaign, parishioners should not be going door-to-door to raise funds.

October is the month of the rosary, and we are inviting families to pray the rosary together often this month. There will be a daily recitation of the rosary by the Marian statue every day of October at 6:30 PM. Please join us for this prayer, whether there will be only a couple of people present or dozens. There is so much to pray for that we can entrust to Our Lady of the Rosary. The center of this bulletin includes a simple tear out flyer on the basics of praying the rosary. Please keep it or share it with someone who would like to learn how to pray with the rosary.



October 4 is the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Since we will be away on convocation that day, we will celebrate the blessing of animals in his honor on Monday morning, October 1, at 9:00 AM, and on Saturday, October 6, at 10:00 AM. Parishioners are invited to bring pets and other domesticated animals to the grassy area by the parish center for the individual blessings. All animals should be on leashes or in cages.

May we all compete well for the faith, and encourage one another in Godly ways, as we live ....

After the Heart of Jesus!

Father John

