

After the Heart of Jesus ...

*"Ten were cleansed, were they not?  
Where are the other nine?  
Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?"*

These words of Jesus in today's Gospel have a tone of disappointment. Jesus cured ten lepers, yet the only one who returned to express his thanks to Jesus was a Samaritan, a foreigner. Do we say "Thank you" very often? How grateful are we? How do we express our gratitude?

God works in our lives each day. We are given grace upon grace. ***What return do we make for God's goodness to us?*** Fortuitously this is the theme of this month's focus on Stewardship at St. Walter Parish. Stewardship is a part of discipleship; it is a way of life that recognizes that all we are, have, and hope to be are gifts from God. The temptation can be so strong to take all these things for granted. Yet we can love only because God first loved us; we can be generous only because God was first generous to us. Stewards know and trust that all things work for good for those who love God.

Throughout this month we are invited to first reflect on God's goodness to us. What is God doing in our lives lately, especially through St. Walter Parish? To help us reflect on this question, we have invited parishioners and others to offer a brief witness at each Mass the next two weeks to share how some ministry or service at St. Walthers Church has impacted them. I am grateful for their willingness to speak at Mass. Giving a witness in front of a large congregation can be somewhat intimidating. More importantly, these stories of God's grace among us need to be told. They remind us of how the cause of Christ is being carried out in our parish and community.

The bulletins this month will also have special articles regarding stewardship. These, too, include personal stories from parishioners. Today's bulletin includes a *Counting Our Blessings* section that shares the good news in numbers form of how God is active in our lives here at St. Walter. In the face of such blessings, what response will we make? Will we be like the Samaritan and make a response of discipleship? Or will we be like the other nine lepers who were cured who, taking God for granted, walk away ungrateful.

Last week we started serving donuts as part of our hospitality on Sundays after the 7:30, 9:00, and 10:30 AM Masses. Some parishioners may need this reminder regarding the fast before receiving communion. People should not consume any food or liquid (except water) for one hour prior to the reception of Communion. Practically speaking, people should not have donuts and coffee or juice on their way into Church on Sunday mornings. Please wait until the hospitality after Mass. Those who because of medical necessity or health need to take in food are not obliged to keep the fast, but nonetheless they should refrain from eating that food in Church. Just for your information, priests are obliged to keep the fast for the first Mass that they celebrate each day. If he has multiple Masses on the same day, then he is free to eat after his first Mass even if it occurs within one hour of the next Mass he celebrates.



Thank you for your very generous response to women in crisis pregnancies through the Baby Bottle Collection. So far we have contributed over \$8500 for Women's Choice Centers and Birthright. It is not too late to bring in your baby bottles to help save the lives of those who are choosing life for their babies in sometimes very difficult situations.

A fun October collection at St. Walter Parish is *Goodies for the Seminarians* sponsored by the Vocations Committee. There are 32 seminarians preparing for priesthood in our diocese. We send All Saints Day care packages to remind them of our prayerful support and encouragement of their vocations. The packages include treats like Halloween candy, homemade cookies, small toiletries, and gift cards to fast food restaurants, chain restaurants (Fridays, Applebees, Olive Garden, etc...), gas stations, and drug stores. Please bring any of these items to the Parish House prior to Thursday, October 25. If you would like to help in packing the care packages on Thursday, October 25, at 9:00 AM, please call the Parish House.

We continue to pray 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.

After the Heart of Jesus!

Father John

