

From the Pastor's Desk:

Another calendar year draws to a close - another number changes on the calendar - another milestone passes. However, our Church year has already be going on for a month now and we have welcomed Jesus again at Christmas, and on January 1st we honor Mary who participated in His coming by her openness to allow herself to be used by God. There are many things we can reflect back on as we look at the start of a new year, and hopefully we look forward to continuing on our personal journey to become the person God has created us to be. In love God created us, in mercy redeemed us by coming in the flesh, and with great care he points out to us the way to greater fulfillment.

As I look forward to this year I look back in gratitude to the things that God has allowed us to accomplish, and realize that through that power we can continue to move forward. The parish can become more and more a place to learn about and encounter Jesus. The winter faith formation activities will provide a few opportunities for you as will our other spiritual activities. The world does not realize the awesome and fulfilling presence of God - and our discovering it ourselves is the first step to it being seen by all. God stays a bit hidden, but as we grow in faith becomes more and more visible to the believer. We look forward to continuing our mission as a Catholic Christian parish to be a place for encounter with the living God and a light to our community of the presence of God in or midst.

I had the honor of celebrating two Masses with our fellow parishioners who are incarcerated at the North Central Correctional Institution here in Gardner. The first was a Mass where the Bishop presided and where we also welcomed three men who will be participating in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) in preparation for entering the Catholic Church. This Mass was attend by many men and their families. They were appreciative that the love of God was shown to them. I also celebrated Mass at the prison for Christmas, it is a blessing to be able to participate in the Lord's work of rehabilitation as those who are truly sorry look to reform their lives. Please pray for those who have not yet seen this need.

Please also pray for our fellow parishioners who are in nursing care or are homebound. We continue to build our ministry to them to help them feel the loving touch of God and know that they have not been forgotten. These ministry like this is right in line with continuing the work of Jesus who always reached out to those who were forgotten or discarded by others. Let us also keep pout eyes out in our daily life and our weekend worship. There are lonely individuals there too who you could reach out to with a smile or a kind word. This is also part of showing that love of God in Jesus Christ that we unite ourselves to each week in the Eucharist. As we extend ourselves out to others in these simple ways we participate in spreading God's love.

My best wishes for you as we continue our new Church year and look forward to the longer days that are upon us. Please share with others an invitation to join us at worship, it is sometimes the case that a person who just stops in for a weekend Mass is touched in a special way by the Lord.

God Bless you.

Fr. Steve