

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

The First Sunday of Advent is the theological mark of a new liturgical year. When a liturgical season comes to an end, another one begins with a renewed sense of vigor and hope. During this past church year, God revealed to us many things so pertinent to our faith. The pope emeritus, Benedict VI, gave us the gift of "The Year of Faith" in which the Church and her members were called to invest expensively and generously on the gift of faith and the authenticity of life that our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ beckons on us. Little did we know that the omniscient God would corroborate the Year of Faith with the election of Pope Francis I who calls on the church through the living faith to become the hands and feet of the compassionate Savior Jesus Christ in the broken world. With the year of faith, the church door becomes forever wide open to the people of God, to welcome with loving embrace the returning prodigals and cheerfully support the faith abiding sons and daughters of God.

In this case, Faith becomes a living relationship with the Lord. It is not like a commodity or object that we can put on a shelf. Since neglected faith has a short "shelf life" an inactive faith easily becomes an extinct faith. For our church community, when we bring our faith to life, decisive discipleship will no longer remain a dream, something that lives only in our personal "fantasyland."

Discipleship is meant not only for poetry and hymns. If we have neglected our faith and our following of Christ, we can begin to bring it back to life by Christian conversation, a regime of prayer, Scripture study, regular Mass attendance, bringing reconciliation to some troubled areas of our life or by outreach to those in need. Faith is not an object to keep but a life to be lived generously and graciously.

Now that this liturgical year in its theological sense is behind us, we begin in reminiscence with thanksgiving and gratitude to God for His abiding presence and generosity to the church and to us His families on earth. We give thanks to God for his mercies that never come to an end, but are rather new every morning. While we are thankful for innumerable things, I take this privilege to thank you for your faith in the Lord Jesus and faith in His Church here at St. Luke Temple Texas. I am filled with gratitude to God for you all for keeping faith with us on a daily basis, irrespective of the many other preoccupations of your lives, including the generosity that you brought to the "Our Coming Together in Faith" capital campaign, the zeal and vigorous attendance to the needs and demands of our numerous ministries.

An attitude of thanksgiving enables us to recognize the blessings of God that are treaded throughout our life. It helps us to place our daily needs in a larger perspective of how God uses them to remind us of our ultimate need of Him. It helps us realize in the words of the "Desiderata" of years ago, that "with all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world" God has made. Therefore, let us celebrate with thanksgiving in renewed and vigorous Faith.

Fr. James