

From the Pastor's Desk:

For the past couple weeks we have heard of Our Lord's great ability to forgive - and our duty to do the same. We also learned that this duty opens the way to us receiving forgiveness ourselves. Today Jesus tells us of God's openness to give his great gift to all those who take up the invitation, let us all be one of those who hears him call and follows him to the vineyard. There is work and cost involved - but at the end of the day a reward that is worth it.

This past week we had School Board meeting and reported that the school came through the pandemic disruptions financially stable and currently with the same enrollment that we ended last year. The Principal Search Committee also met and continued the work of locating Mrs. Tavaska's replacement - we hope to have this completed by November. The architect is re-doing the drawings for the handicap access, and I have spoken to the company about the external ramp. We are still trying to get a contractor for the bathroom in Holy Rosary - it had become very hard to get someone to commit to the work. We plod forward and maintain our resolve to get to the finish line.

The Fall Faith Formation announcement went out last week. It is available at the back of the churches (blue sheet of paper), and also on the website. Please take a moment to look at it. Maura, the formation team, and other volunteers have worked to provide these wonderful options to grow in faith. There is so much that we all can still learn about God and about our Faith - what might there be for you?

An exhaust fan has been installed in Holy Rosary, and similar ones for Holy Spirit are in the works. These fans will pump air out of the buildings during Masses in order to bring in fresh air and reduce the chances of infection. This air exchange is one of the more effective ways to remove potential air-borne contagions such as COVID-19, and added to our regular sanitization procedures, will help to make a safe environment for Masses as we move into the winter months.

We announced last week at Masses that the decision had to be made to close The Caring Place. I had mentioned in past columns the fact that the financial stresses brought on by the COVID situation, and the availability of other options for child care had placed the program in a difficult position. There were several times the Finance Council studied this matter, and I consulted others knowledgeable in this field. The Pastoral Council was also kept apprised of the situation and gave their advice. In the end, the latest financial reports, and unsure prospects for the future, made this regrettable decision inevitable. Please join me in congratulating Jane Pineo, Martha Mallet, Abigail, Kelsey, and the whole staff at the Caring Place for what they built over 29 years of dedicated service. Generations of children have been enriched by their association with The Caring Place, and the number of former students who sent their own children there is a testament to the trust and love that pervaded this program. As was mentioned, the program will remain open till the end of October in order to allow children and staff to transition appropriately.

This time has been strange for us, and things have changed a bit. Although some things change, some do not. God's love and mercy continues to flow, and we must continue to labor in the vineyard. As we continue on, despite changes, it is comforting to know that God's invitation and great gift remains there for those who would accept the invitation.

God Bless, *Fr. Steve*