

Joy

6th Sunday of Easter

May 9, 2021

Fr. Tony Davis

The word 'joy' emerges in 3 separate contexts this weekend: in the Gospel, in our new parish mission statement, and in the theme of the 2021 Bishop's Annual Appeal.

First, in the Gospel. After telling his disciples to keep his commandments, mostly importantly the ones to love God and your neighbor, he says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete." Second, in our new parish mission statement. Through the discernment process, the parish council included joy in the second half of our statement, which, speaking in regards to all of our parishioners says, "and unites them in the joy of Christ." Third, in the Bishop's Annual Appeal's theme, which is 'Living the Joy of the Gospel.'

Joy is the Christian version of happiness. Like happiness, it uplifts our spirits, gives us a sense of delight, and fills us with gladness. Unlike happiness, however, joy is much more enduring. It does not come and go based on our mood. As Pope Francis says, it is like a flame that can't be blown out. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, he writes, "joy adapts and changes, but it always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved." (6) This is the joy that Jesus Christ offers us. Today, it is the third context that I want to call attention to: the Bishop's Annual Appeal, by reading to you Bishop Brennan's letter regarding the appeal. He writes,

Without question this past year has brought its challenges and uncertainties, but I have also witnessed great blessings and fellowship throughout this time of extreme charity. As Christian stewards, we move forward taking the skills we have learned and the wisdom we have gained with our vision fixed into a future of possibilities and hope.

Standing in this rich legacy of faith, this is our time to pick up the baton and take on the challenges and opportunities of our time. Yes, this is our time. Our time to remember the real and everlasting presence of Jesus Christ in our midst. It is our time to remember the importance of Catholic presence and the truth and strength this brings not only to our own lives but to those around us. The ambitious initiative of Real Presence, Real Future is rooted in this unshakeable foundation as we plan our future together as one Church in the Diocese of Columbus.

Thank you for your loyal support to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. As you can imagine, needs are growing, and we need your participation now more than ever. I ask that you pray with me for the Diocese of Columbus as we move forward together. Engage the fullness of your faith, embrace the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and together *live the joy of the Gospel*.

Sincerely yours in Christ, Most Reverend Robert J. Brennan
Bishop of Columbus

The Parish goal for St. Matthias is roughly \$66,000 and about \$6,000 has already been pledged. Please take a BAA envelope home with you and consider making a gift. By participating in this collection, may we find joy in our ourselves, our parish, and our diocese.