

Gratitude & Thanks for 2020 Hope for 2021

As a year unlike any other in our personal, societal, or liturgical lives comes to a close, the friars of Holy Cross – Saint John the Baptist parish extend our gratitude to:

- *Witness: Bread of Life, Crossroads, Harvesters.* A word of thanks for the directors and all of the volunteers who, week after week, in a time of grave biological threat faithfully helped to feed our neighbors at significant personal risk. The number of those in need of food supply assistance grew dramatically here in midtown over the past year as the pandemic and its economic strain withered the resources of so many – our volunteers noted a 17 percent increase in the number of folks in need of food.
- *Welcome: Our Parish of Holy Cross – St. John the Baptist,* with its two physical plants, is blessed to have a staff filled with dedicated and talented folks who keep the place running smoothly: front office personnel, maintenance staff, Padre Pio staff, sacristans, kitchen personnel. With cheerful energy, they have labored faithfully under the strain of the pandemic to keep our doors open, our people safe.
- *Worship:* With deep gratitude for those among us who volunteer to serve in the ministries of lector, acolyte and greeter – your dedication and skill bring our common prayer to life. Kudos to our director of Worship and Liturgy who has assembled a wide array of talent for our music ministry which allows our common prayer to soar and inspire. To all of you in our liturgical ministries – thank you.
- *LAMP ministries* – for all of those who on a weekly basis offer *witness* to the gospel to the many passers-by here at the *Crossroads of the World*, as well as their presence to our parishioners who are unable to leave their homes – Deep gratitude.
- We are blessed with many and varied efforts to deepen faith and offer *witness* to the gospel: *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation* commission; our three *Secular Franciscan* fraternities; *Charismatic* prayer group, *Edith Stein* Guild; *Father Solanus* Guild; *Fatima Society*; *God the Father* Cenacle; *Padre Pio* Prayer Group; *Singles for Christ*; *Most Precious Blood*; *2,000 Hail Marys*; *Spirit in Action*; *Scripture* study groups; *RCIA* formation ministry; religious education; On-going education. Thank you.
- The parish is also blessed with many talented folks who help advise its ministerial and financial life: our Parish Trustees; Financial Council; Mission Effectiveness Council. We are grateful for your insight, wisdom and fidelity.
- A special thank-you to *GROW* – its owner and staff – whose seasonal adornment of the exterior of each church building bespeaks both beauty and welcome.
- Most especially, a deep word of thanks for each and every parishioner and benefactor. You are the heartbeat of our parish. Your faithful witness and generous support are treasures. In hope, we pray for a new year set free from last year's burdens. In gratitude, we offer thanks for all those who provided financial support during this past year – a year of serious financial strain for our parish – just as it was for all of those who reached into their resources to provide support for our parish.

Thanks be to G-D.

As 2021 emerges, our hopes abound: an end to the pandemic, healing and unity for our nation, economic recovery, attention to the climate crisis . . .