

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – OCTOBER 11, 2020

Dear Parishioners and Families,

Last Sunday was the Feast Day for St. Francis of Assisi. However, the Sunday celebration takes precedence over ordinary feast days. But something happened on the Vigil of St. Francis of Assisi last Saturday. Pope Francis issued his second Encyclical entitled **On Fraternity and Social Friendship**. (*Fratelli Tutti*).

In the bulletin today I have placed an outline of this Encyclical as well as the eight introductory paragraphs. This is a long Encyclical and most people probably will not take the time to read it entirely. Accordingly, as we have done in the past, I will excerpt it so that you may catch its flavor. Hopefully this will begin next week and go forward for seven weeks to take items from each chapter.

The Roman Pontiff has an access to the thinking around the world that no other political leader has. In each region of the world there are Bishops native to that region and intellectual people who can present to the Holy Father unfiltered understandings of the region. What a burden it must be on the Holy Father and at the same time a blessing.

This Encyclical is a compilation of all that information but placed in the context of seeking a better world here and the future life hereafter. The life and themes of St. Francis of Assisi lie as a backdrop to this Encyclical.

St. Francis of Assisi lived over eight hundred years ago but his vision was of a world united. “Francis felt himself a brother to the sun, the sea and the wind, yet he knew that he was even closer to those of his own flesh.” This is such an ideal for us as we see the world fractured and segmented and broken into pieces. We see this in our own country.

Please read the introductory paragraphs by Pope Francis and his Encyclical. More will follow. The titles of the chapters give you some sense of Pope Francis’s understanding, hopes, and dreams.

Confirmation for Our Youth

Sandy Blazewick has compiled a list of the youth of our parish who have reached the age proper for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation date has now been set for March 13, 2021 at the Cathedral in Youngstown. Shortly we will begin the preparatory sessions for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

If one of your sons or daughters has been missed on the list and would like to receive Confirmation, please call the parish office and speak with Sandy Blazewick.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the special bonding of the Holy Spirit with the person being confirmed. How badly in today’s world do we need the quiet promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

This is also an excellent time for parents and others to think of the Holy Spirit in your lives. The Holy Spirit comes generally to us in quiet moments. The Spirit leads us not so much in telling us what is good or bad but what is better. The Holy Spirit guides our discernment. The Holy Spirit in a dispirited world presents us Hope.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.

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