

CATCHING PEOPLE

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching people.” (Luke 5: 10b.)

Very often the first thing that comes to mind when we hear that verse in the Gospel is that the disciples, and we, as present-day disciples, have the mission of bringing more people into the fold. We take it as a call to increase our membership, to make more Christians, more Catholics.

But, when we look at how Jesus lived out his mission in the Gospels, we realize that he never brought new members into the Jewish faith community – he didn’t go about looking for new converts to Judaism. It is true that the majority of Jesus’ ministry was to fellow Jews, offering the gift of God’s love to everyone, but especially to those who were least touched by the religious establishment of the day. He reached out to the sinners, prostitutes, adulterers, tax collectors, poor widows, the lame, blind and deaf, lepers and anyone who in any way had been pushed to the margins of society and

the faith community.

In addition, it is good to recall the Gospel stories of Jesus’ response to the Samaritan woman at the well, the Roman centurion, the Syro-Phoenician woman, the Garazene demoniac—all Gentiles, foreigners. He responded to their need and their faith.

As disciples of Jesus, we hear that same encouragement that he spoke to Peter so long ago. So, if Jesus’ words are not about filling the ranks on Sunday morning, what are we to make of them? Like Jesus, we are to go to the folks on the edges and “catch” them with the gift of love, no matter their religious affiliation or lack thereof...

We are called to “catch” the homeless, poor, abused, abandoned, unemployed and those whom bigotry, racism and discrimination relegate to the margins. It is not about proselytizing, but rather about reaching out with compassion and mercy, responding in love to the needs of those who are not loved. It is about building relationships and sharing the love, peace and joy that are God’s gifts to each person.



ST. EUGENE’S VISION

St. Eugene’s vision is a living reality today, in the Constitutions and Rules and in the lives of Oblates:

Action on behalf of justice, peace and the integrity of creation is an integral part of evangelization. Responding to the call of the Spirit, some Oblates identify themselves with the poor, sharing their life and commitment to justice; others are present where decisions affecting the future of the poor are being made.

CC&RR, Rule 9a

Oblate, Gilberto Pinon, Assistant General, said in an interview:

“Today, we reap the benefits of those that planted the seeds long ago. The example left to us by our ancestors moves us to go to new places to make heard the voice of the poor. Fr. Gregorio Iriarte gave us an example, dedicating his time to the study of poor countries’ foreign debt, and Bro. Gilberto Paulwels continues the work in Bolivia in national forums, encouraging governments to raise their consciousness, to approve legislation to protect the environment in contrast to the multinational corporations that follow harmful practices.

In the United Nations in New York, and in international forums, like the World Bank and the International Labour Organization, we also have an Oblate presence that makes the voice of the poor heard, demanding fair treatment from governments and multinationals. Frs. Seamus Finn and Daniel Le Blanc collaborate with other religious, making sure that “the powerful” of the world hear “the voice” of “those without a voice

A new heart I will give you, and a

NEW SPIRIT

I will put within you. Ez. 36:26a

CHALLENGING BIGOTRY

Following the events in Charlottesville, Virginia, the following statement gives us much to reflect on in our own community and country:

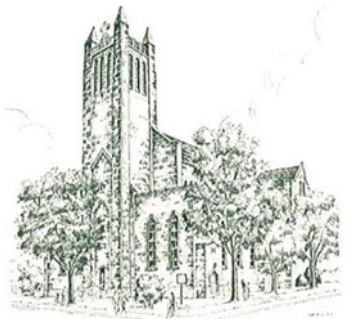
A JOINT STATEMENT FROM BOSTON AREA RELIGIOUS LEADERS On the horrific events in Charlottesville, Virginia

Would that the troubles visited upon Charlottesville were unique. Alas, they are not. White bigots, some proudly wearing Nazi regalia, shouting racist invectives and egging for a fight, engaged in brutish scuffles, fear-mongering, and even murder in broad day light... These, alas, are unoriginal sins. What is surprising and utterly disheartening is the failure of some of our national political and religious leaders, including President Trump, to call out this behavior instantly, unequivocally—to decry it with instinctive, full-throated condemnation. There should not be any hesitation in naming and denouncing these vicious acts of pure, unadulterated racism, bigotry, and anti-Semitism. As religious leaders, we are outraged by these unimaginative, but vicious transgressions. We are heartbroken at the tragic loss of life in Charlottesville. May the murder of Heather Heyer and the deaths of state troopers Jay Cullen and Berke M.M. Bates call us to recommit ourselves

to the hard work to which we are called as human beings, created by God, equal and beautifully diverse. We take some heart, however, that precisely because the sins in Charlottesville are unoriginal, we have resources to respond to them, if we heed the lessons of history and reflect deeply on the spiritual and ethical teaching of our respective traditions.

The leaders went on to pose some questions for reflection, which we might find helpful for our own community when people gather for prayer and reflection, or even for our private reflection:

- What is one concrete action you can take today to oppose these kinds despicable actions wherever they occur?
- How can you help address issues of racism and bigotry in your own community?
- Where might you engage in meaningful conversation and/or action with people from other religious and cultural communities?
- What sustains you in your peace and justice efforts? What resources do you need to carry this work forward?



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PASSAGES

“Death is a passage to new life. That sounds very beautiful, but few of us desire to make this passage. It might be helpful to realise that our final passage is preceded by many earlier passages. When we are born we make a passage from life in the womb to life in the family. When we go to school we make a passage from life in the family to life in the larger community. When we get married we make a passage from a life with many options to a life committed to one person. When we retire we make a passage from a life of clearly defined work to a life asking for new creativity and wisdom.

Each of these passages is a death leading to new life. When we live these passages well, we are becoming more prepared for our final passage.”

From Daily Meditation : Henri Nouwen Society

Qu'importe votre lieu d'origine, vous êtes nos chers voisins.

No matter where you are from, we're glad you're our neighbour.

لا يهم اين ولدتم، و لكننا سعداء انكم جيراننا.

www.stjosephs.ca
http://www.facebook.com/welcomeourneighbours

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

Among the most powerful of human experiences is to give or to receive forgiveness. I want to share with you a personal story of forgiveness that happened in my family near the time of my mother's death.

She was lingering on the threshold, and for several days she had been talking about "a mesh" she couldn't get through. I was sitting by her bed, telling her how much I would miss her. She said she wanted to hear that from my father, whom we always called "Daddy." Of course, Daddy had been telling her that for weeks.

So Daddy came over and effusively told her, "Oh, I'm going to miss ya." She replied, "I don't believe it."

I couldn't believe my ears! I said, "Mother, you're a few hours from death. You can't say that!" She persisted: "I don't believe it."

Daddy redoubled his efforts: "I ask your forgiveness for all the times I've hurt you in our fifty-four years of marriage, and I forgive you for all the times you've hurt me."

I said, "Mother, isn't that beautiful? Now say that back to Daddy." And suddenly she clammed up. She didn't want to say it.

I said, "Mother, you're soon going to be before God. You don't want to come before God without forgiving everybody." She said, "I forgive everybody." I said, "But do you forgive Daddy?" and she became silent again.

Then Daddy jumped in and said, "Honey, I never fooled around with any other women." We all knew that. She even said, "Well I know that, I know that."

My siblings and I still don't know how Daddy had hurt Mother. But any married person knows there are many little ways a couple can hurt one another over fifty-four years.

Then I said, "Mother, let's try this. Put one hand on your heart, and I'm going to pray that your heart gets real soft." I placed one of my hands on hers, over her heart, and held her other hand and started kissing it.

After about a minute she said, very faintly, "That melts me."

"What?" "When you kiss my hand like that, now I've got to do it." After a pause, she continued: "I'm a stubborn woman. All of my life I've been a stubborn woman." (Mother was an Eight on the Enneagram!)

"Well, Mother, we all knew that," I said. "Now look at Daddy and you tell him." So she looked over and she didn't call him "Daddy," as she usually did. She spoke to him by name: "Rich, I forgive you."

I prompted her again: "Mother, the other half—I ask for your forgiveness."

She started breathing heavily and rapidly. Then she summoned her energy and said, "Rich, I ask your forgiveness." A few more moments of labored breathing, and she said, "That's it, that's it. That's what I had to do."

I said to her, "Mother, do you think that was the mesh?" She replied, "It's gone! The mesh is gone! And, God, I pray that I mean this forgiveness from my heart."

Then she said, referring to my two sisters and my sister-in-law, "Tell the girls to do this early and not to wait 'til now. They'll understand a woman's heart and the way a man can hurt a woman."

Mother was so happy then, and fully ready for death.

That's the power and the grace of forgiveness. But let's do it *now* and not wait until later! Let's ask for the grace to let go of those grudges and hurts we hold on to. How else will we ever be free? In forgiveness, we live up to our true and deepest dignity. We then operate by a power and a logic not our own. We live out of the True Self and not just the tiny self that is always offended and complaining.

Without forgiveness nothing new happens, and we remain frozen in a small past.

Adapted from Richard Rohr with John Feister, Hope Against Darkness: The Transforming Vision of Saint Francis in an Age of Anxiety



MONEY, MONEY, MONEY! SO HOW ARE WE DOING?

As you hear every Sunday at Mass, St Joe's is a busy place. And it may be of interest to know just how busy we are from a financial perspective. The table below is a mid-year snap shot.

	Mid-Year 2016	Mid-Year 2017	% of 2017 Budget Achieved	Budget 2017
REVENUE				
COLLECTION REVENUES	180,656.48	192,890.94	51%	379,500.00
FACILITY REVENUES	119,478.30	149,810.84	50%	297,000.00
FUNDRAISING/Donations	132,239.48	109,108.68	45%	244,000.00
GRANTS/AGREEMENTS	170,576.00	232,003.50	66%	351,000.00
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	3,347.85	4,866.26	81%	6,000.00
REVENUE	606,298.11	688,680.22	54%	1,277,500.00
EXPENSE				
TOTAL SALARIES & BENEFITS	376,896.57	385,821.49	52%	746,220.00
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	198,154.09	221,163.47	41%	543,900.00
TOTAL EXPENSE	575,050.66	606,984.96	47%	1,290,120.00
NET INCOME	31,247.45	81,695.26		- 12,620.00

In a nutshell, we are on budget (we are slightly better in revenue than budgeted and slightly lower in expenses; we expect this to even out as the year progresses). This mirrors our Operational performance of the past three years – on Budget. Having stated that, you will note that for the first time in the past four years, we have budgeted for a small operational deficit (1%). The Parish's intent is to make up this deficit in either reduced expenses or increased revenue through the end of year. We are on track.

Regarding Revenue, a key note is that over 55% derives from Facility Revenues (Facility Rentals and Parking) and Grants/Agreements (City of Ottawa grant for the Women's Centre). Fundraising (mostly Women's Centre & Supper Table) is almost 20% of our Revenue, thanks to hard work by our Staff and Volunteers.

With respect to Expenses, as with most service organizations, Salaries & Benefits is the largest part at approximately 64%. We have 15 full-time employees and 5 part-time employees. We are committed to providing our Staff with "Living Wages" that are within the average range in the non-profit sector. This is why we have budgeted a small deficit this year that we intend to make up over the year. Keeping the lights and heat on and doing minor necessary maintenance amounts to just over 25% of our expenses. The remainder is used by our various ministries.

[So what has the Finance Committee been doing this past year?](#)

Once the Budget was approved in January, Finance Committee began a much needed exercise of updating the Parish's Finance Policies. This is the first detailed review since 2012 with the goal of improving how we report financial status, and manage funds. Often the policy changes were needed to reflect good and accepted practices that were put in place over the past 5 years. Two interesting changes being implemented are: enhanced financial reports with a longer reporting period; and a review of how we can invest

reserves to keep our earnings at least up to the rate of inflation.

[And for the coming Year Finance Committee is focused on?](#)

There are three key initiatives we plan to work on:

Investment Model: We need to plan to be effective stewards of our Parish. Our Parish has a significant history and is a legacy worth preserving. We have tried to honor bequests that are not specifically directed, by using them for the major capital needs that ensure the long term sustainability of St. Joseph's Church. We think we can find more ways to grow our investments at least at the rate of inflation.

Capital Plan: It has been several years since the Parish completed a detailed Capital Investment Plan. The Committee intends to begin that process to discover both our needed and desired Capital activities. In our type of organization, with our type of facility and fund raising capacity, this needs to be a 25+ year plan encompassing what will be needed and how we will pay for it. An interesting activity for our Parish that will outlive many of us!

Implement Accounting and Financial Reporting changes that will change the Financial Management activities from being Data Entry heavy. This will allow increased time for Management reporting and analysis on how to better serve our Parish.

The Finance Committee intends to provide on-going updates to the Parish on our financial status and committee activities through the New Spirit and the Bulletin. Please stay tuned.

Greg Forestell, Treasurer