

HOLDING THE CUP

We all must hold the cups of our lives. As we grow older and become more fully aware of the many sorrows of life - personal failures, family conflicts, disappointments in work and social life, and the many pains surrounding us on the national and international scene - everything within and around us conspires to make us ignore, avoid, suppress, or simply deny these sorrows. "Look at the sunny side of life and make the best of it," we say to ourselves and hear others say to us. But when we want to drink the cups of our lives, we need first to hold them, to fully acknowledge what we are living, trusting that by not avoiding but befriending our sorrows we will discover the true joy we are looking for right in the midst of our sorrows.

LIFTING THE CUP

When we hold firm our cups of life, fully acknowledging their sorrows and joys, we will also be able to lift our cups in human solidarity. Lifting our cups means that we are not ashamed of what we are living, and this gesture encourages others to befriend their truths as we are trying to befriend ours. By lifting up our cups and saying to each other, "To life" or "To your health," we proclaim that we are willing to look truthfully at our lives together. Thus, we can become a community of people encouraging one another to fully drink the cups that have been given to us in the conviction that they will lead us to true fulfillment.

DRINKING THE CUP

After firmly holding the cups of our lives and lifting them up as signs of hope for others, we have to drink them. Drinking our cups means fully appropriating and interiorizing what each of us has acknowledged as *our life*, with all its unique sorrows and joys.

How do we drink our cups? We drink them as we listen in silence to the truth of our lives, as we speak in trust with friends about ways we want to grow, and as we act in deeds of service. Drinking our cups is following freely and courageously God's call and staying faithfully on the path that is ours. Thus our life cups become the cups of salvation. When we have emptied them to the bottom, God will fill them with "water" for eternal life.

-Henri Nouwen

Searching for and rediscovering the True Self is the *fundamentum*, the essential task that will gradually open us to receiving and giving love to God, others, and ourselves, and thus to live truly just lives. Grace builds on nature; it does not avoid or destroy nature. You are created in the image of God from the very beginning (Genesis 1:26-27). This is the basis for God's justice: Since everyone is made in the image of God, then we need to recognize, honor, and respect the image of God in everyone. No exceptions.

You (and every other creation of God) begin with your unique divine DNA, an inner destiny as it were, an absolute core that knows the truth about you, a true believer tucked away in the cellar of your being, an *imago Dei* that begs to be allowed, to be fulfilled, and to show itself. "You were chosen in Christ before the world was made—to stand before God in love—marked out beforehand as fully adopted sons and daughters". This is your True Self or soul.

Jesus revealed and accepted a paradox: human and divine are not separate, but one! Why do we resist this destiny? For most of us, this seems just too good and too dangerous to be true. There is so much contrary evidence! Are we afraid to bear the burden of divinity? It is precisely the divine part of you that is great enough, deep enough, gracious enough to fully accept the human part of you. If you are merely human, you will tend to reject your embarrassingly limited humanity.

Maybe we realize subconsciously that if we really recognized our True Self—which is the Divine Indwelling, the Holy Spirit within us—if we really believed that we are temples of God, then we would have to live up to this incredible dignity, freedom, and love.

Paradoxically, immense humility, not arrogance, characterizes the True Self. You simultaneously know you are a son or daughter of God, but you also know that you didn't earn it and you are not worthy of it. You know it's entirely a gift (see Ephesians 2:8-9 and throughout Paul's writings). All you can do is thank Somebody Else, occasionally weep with joy, and kneel without any hesitation.

The single and true purpose of mature religion is to lead you to ever new experiences of your True Self.

-Richard Rohr, ofm

A new heart I will give you, and a

NEW SPIRIT

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

I WILL GIVE YOU AS A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

This weekend we celebrate the Birth of John the Baptist. John was a prophet, sent to proclaim God's word to Israel, to remind them of their vocation as God's People and to announce the coming of the Messiah.

Like John the Baptist and all the prophets who came before and after him, we too are called to a prophetic ministry in our time and place. The prophet's role is to be a sign of God's presence in our world and to be the voice for God speaking words of healing, peace, reconciliation and the call to conversion.

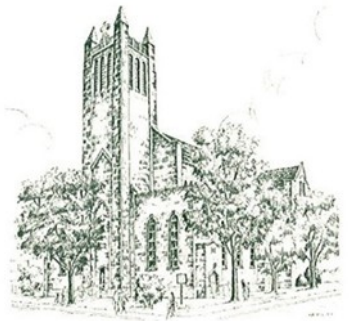
As we listen to the news, read the papers, watch the broadcasts, we begin to recognize that, as disciples of Jesus, called to a prophetic witness, we cannot be silent or inactive. We must begin to give voice to the need to end injustice, discrimination, racism, bigotry and all the other forms of hate that are so prevalent in our world today. As we watch reports about children (even nursing infants) being separated from their parents, can we, in good conscience, remain silent? We can easily calm our consciences by reminding ourselves that those unfortunate directives are being carried out in another country. But, do we take the time to question whether similar things are happening in our own nation? Do we speak out to our own government, asking that they use diplomatic means to give voice to the injustice being done? Do we challenge our own immigration laws and practices that are often unjust and inflict undue burdens?

When we hear of the killings of gay men, do we speak out against homophobia and hatred, or simply tell ourselves that "I wouldn't do that" and "let the justice system handle those cases"? Do we take the time to deeply examine our own attitudes and actions and ask whether in some way we contribute to the ongoing discrimination against various groups of people in our society?

What about the incidents of racism involving police or security services? What about the poverty and homelessness that we see all around us? What about the continued trafficking in women and children. What about the child soldiers and those children forced to work long hours in factories so we can by obscenely inexpensive good? There are so many ills in our world and our society. How are we called as individuals and as a parish community to be a prophetic voice today, calling for change and transformation in our world?

Where does transformation in our world start? In our own hearts and with a lot of prayer and openness to guidance by the Holy Spirit.

-Richard Beaudette, OMI



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PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL NEWS

ROSLYN BROWN
CHAIR



Roslyn was elected chair of the Parish Pastoral Council at the May meeting. Her two year term began with the end of the Annual General Meeting on June 3. Roslyn came on Council in June 2017 as a Member at Large and served as Council Secretary for the past year. She comes with extensive background in pastoral work and administration. Roslyn served as Pastoral Assistant at Canadian Martyrs and St. Mark's Parishes, Pastoral Care Director at St. Patrick's Home as well as in various management and administrative positions there before retiring.

TIM PHELAN
MEMBER AT LARGE



I am a law student at the University of Ottawa. I come from a small town in Northern Ontario (Elliot Lake) where I was very active in my parish. I was a founding member of the parish youth group, and served as a lector during Mass, something I continue to do at St. Joseph's today. I was also fortunate enough to serve as the youth representative on the parish council of my home church in Elliot Lake when I was in high school. One area I am passionate about is creating ways for young people to interact with the parish. I am committed to finding pragmatic and creative solutions to problems, and look for opportunities to incorporate many diverse viewpoints.

One position on Parish Pastoral Council is still vacant—the Cluster Representative for the Pastoral Care and Social Justice Cluster has not yet been named by that Cluster.

ARIANE LAROUCHE
COMMUNITY BUILDING CLUSTER REP

Born and raised in Trois-Rivières, QC, Ariane moved to Ottawa in September 2015 to complete her master's degree in Political Science at the University of Ottawa. She has been attending the University and different Sunday masses since then. Ariane has been involved in different liturgical tasks with the University Mass and the Money Counting ministry, and has truly found in St-Joseph's parish her home away from home! She is now currently working at the Senate of Canada, and enjoys volunteering in the community for different events, running, curling, and travelling. Ariane is delighted to be joining the Parish Pastoral Council and hopes to be the voice of young adults of our community.



BRIAN LEE
UNIVERSITY MASS REP

I am Brian and just graduated from Carleton with a Masters in International Affairs. I currently work for Employment and Social Development Canada as a Junior Policy Analyst. During my spare time, I enjoy biking and latin dancing. For this position in the Parish Pastoral Council, I am very much looking forward to it and the exciting opportunities it will bring.



Jesus, the Blessed Son of God, hungers and thirsts for uprightness. He abhors injustice. He resists those who try to gather wealth and influence by oppression and exploitation. His whole being yearns for people to treat one another as brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of the same God. (see Matthew 25:31-46).

PASTORAL PLANNING PROCESS—INTERIM REPORT

The importance of hearing from you, the parishioners of St. Joseph's Church, about what matters to you concerning the activities of the parish, cannot be overstated. To be doing something badly, or to miss an opportunity for a new ministry, is very unfortunate and a waste of resources. To that end, the Parish Pastoral Council decided in the late Fall 2017 to survey parishioners on a variety of pastoral activities, the end result to be a Parish Pastoral Plan. Every weekend in April 2018, a new survey was provided to parishioners to complete, each survey representing one of the four pillars of our pastoral life at St. Joe's – Prayer, Community, Formation and Service. 285 questionnaires were returned, giving an average of 70 per Pillar. This amount of returned surveys is considered average for the type of survey that was undertaken. For each Pillar, the front side of the survey contained quantifiable questions – questions that can be analysed numerically. The reverse side contained questions seeking narrative answers. Responses on the reverse side ranged from 44% (Community Pillar) to 52% (Prayer Pillar). Some responses were brief, and others were extensive, filling the whole page.

At this point, only broad brush strokes can be made of the information received. Regarding the written or typed comments, there was a universal belief that no ministry should be eliminated as long there were people benefitting from it. At the same time, many expressed concerns about overextending the leaders of these ministries. While there were few outright complaints, several suggestions for improvement were offered. Many people stated their gratitude for the work undertaken within the parish. There was in many questionnaires an underlying sense that the respondent did not know as much as they would like about the various ministries available and in some surveys, an outright request for more information. Over the summer, the responses will be analysed in detail by Roslyn Brown (Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council [PPC]), Paul Roche (PPC representative for the Faith Formation & Initiation Cluster) and Donna Rietschlin (PPC representative for the Liturgy Cluster). A draft report will be sent to the whole PPC and a finalized report is expected to come from this work by late August. Out of that report will come some tasks that should lead to improvements or enhancements in certain ministries. This is expected to be a three year plan, so that the work is spread out over time.

Roslyn Brown

FAREWELL AND THANKS

The Annual General Meeting marked a time of change for the Parish Pastoral Council and the Finance Committee. Our thanks to **Joanne Lee**, who first served on Parish Pastoral council as a member, and then as chair for the past three years. Her term as chair came to an end with the Annual General Meeting. We deeply appreciate all the hard work and dedication which Joanne brought to her presence on the PPC. We also bid farewell to several members of the Parish Pastoral Council, who either completed their terms, or moved out of Ottawa. We express our gratitude for the contributions of **Angela McCanny**, Pastoral Care and Social Justice Cluster Rep, **Terry Byrne**, Member at Large, **Andrea MacWilliam**, Community Building Cluster Rep and **Edwin Okoduwa**, University Mass Rep. To all departing members of the PPC, we extend our prayers for many blessings in all their coming endeavours. The Parish Finance Committee has also had changes over the past several months. **John Cuddihy** resigned from the committee early in the New Year, after serving for many years at various times. **Patricia Malikail** completed her term as chair of the Finance Committee and has chosen to focus on other endeavours in the parish. To John and Patricia, we extend a heartfelt thanks for their contributions over the years to the financial stability of our parish community and wish them many blessings. As we share our gifts and talents with one another, we join hands in the circle of family that is Christ's Body, the Church, incarnated at St. Joseph's.

