

February 4, 2018  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Bulletin

Dear Parishioners:

In any parish community, you need certain building blocks. People often use an analogy of a building to describe the church. A primary building block is liturgy which draws the majority of the parish to church at any given time. The celebration of the Eucharist and the sacraments are fundamental to our way of life and celebrate the presence of Christ among us.

Another building block is faith formation. Christ commissioned all of us to go forth in the world and bring the message of good news to everyone, not just to children, but adults as well. The parish is currently working to reorganize our faith formation program. Different staff members, including myself, are handling aspects of faith formation. I have spoken several times with second grade parents about the sacrament of reconciliation. It is very important that we, as adults, take the time to renew our own understanding of our faith. A knowledge and understanding of the faith did not stop when we left grade school

A third building block is an outreach program. I have included a memo that I drafted for members of the staff and for the Pastoral Council. I am seeking input on what I have written. A large part of the gospel stories deal with the healing of the sick. We are called upon through our baptismal heritage to express the compassion and understanding of Christ to those who are sick or grieving, or divorced.

The other concern that I have is for the inactive Catholics. Even if a person has gone through Catholic grade school and high school, the person will often become inactive in the church. On a given weekend, if you look around in church, you will not see many teenagers or young adults. Others have left the church over different issues. Some may be upset over issues like treatment of women or sexual abuse. We need a dialogue with inactive Catholics to see how best we can address their concerns. Keep in mind when the older generation passes away, and I consider myself as part of the baby boomers, we need to insure others will take our place.

The last concern I have is for the youth of our parish. They represent the largest part of our population. During the past year, the parish hired a full-time youth minister, who has success in attracting youth to the church with programs like Edge on Monday nights and the Life Teen mass on Sunday evenings. Hopefully, we will complete the Youth Center for them.

Hopefully, my remarks help you to understand some of the directions that I have initiated. I welcome your comments.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Kenneth Haydock, Pastor