September 8, 2019 | Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Happy New Year!

A new school, a special outfit for the first day, color-coordinated notebooks and binders—after so many years in school myself and with my children, the things September brings remind me that this is the start of my real new year.

My children used to joke that every school year from 1st grade on, their math class began by returning to the very same review unit. It was an annual reminder that steps forward are made possible from what came before. Strengthen the roots, and new shoots can spring forth.

Or, if you prefer, disciples of Christ are like householders who bring out of their treasure things old and new (Matthew 13:52). Looking back in order to move forward is a pattern within our Church as well. I was reminded of this while distracting myself by reading Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation to Youth and the Whole People of God, *Christ is Alive!* in the aisles of Target while my daughter slowly filled a shopping cart enough with school supplies to last a semester and then some. (Here is the deal in my family: my daughter doesn’t make fun of my taste in summer reading and I don’t whine about how long she takes to shop).

Pope Francis writes:

> Even if [the Church] possesses the truth of the Gospel, this does not mean that she has completely understood it, rather, she is called to keep growing in her grasp of that inexhaustible treasure . . . she receives ever anew the strength born of God’s word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his Spirit in our lives (*Christ is Alive* 41, 35).

Over and over in *Christ is Alive*, Pope Francis speaks of returning to the Word of God in which we meet Jesus, the Eucharist in which we experience how Christ has saved us, and the Spirit that draws us out of ourselves to be “protagonists of transformation” (*Christ is Alive* 174) in our families, our communities and the wider world. The Word, the Eucharist, being sent forth; Pope Francis is calling us to worship.

Our liturgy, the Mass, is the school where we learn who loves us and how to live in that love. Pope —continued inside
Apostleship of Prayer
Each month, Pope Francis asks for our prayers for a specific intention. He has entrusted these intentions to the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (also known as the Apostleship of Prayer). Visit popesprayerusa.net for a reflection and an examen on this month’s intention and for further resources to deepen daily prayer. Pope Francis’ intention for September is for the protection of the oceans, and that politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world’s seas and oceans.

PREP Begins on September 9
PREP, the Parish Religious Education Program at Old St. Joseph’s, begins its 2019–2020 session on Monday, September 9 at 6:00 PM at St. Mary’s Interparochial School at the corner of 5th and Locusts Streets (please enter on Locust Street). Additional information—including the 2019–2020 calendar—is available at oldstjoseph.org/children/prep and from Christine Szczepanowski at prep@oldstjoseph.org.

Children’s Liturgy of the Word on Begins on September 15
At 9:30 AM Mass, beginning on Sunday, September 15, all children are welcome to take part in the Children’s Liturgy of the Word. When they are called forward and dismissed by the presider, the children (and their caretakers, if desired) may choose to make their way down to Barbelin Hall to hear the Scriptures and pray together in ways suited to their faith development.
Francis emphasizes that it is who, not what, that is of central importance to our faith by calling on a cloud of witnesses. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction (*Christ is Alive* 129).

And in the words of St. Oscar Romero:

Christianity is not a collection of truths to be believed, rules to be followed or prohibitions. Seen that way, it puts us off. Christianity is a person who loved me immensely, who demands and claims my love. Christianity is Christ (*Christ is Alive* 156).

When my children got to middle school, I realized that part of the thrill of a new school year is its opportunity for transformation. What kind of person shall I be this year? Who will I hang out with? Will I stick with orchestra or go out for hockey? Fill that open class period with an upper level history course or clay studio? With that sort of back-to-school spirit of transformation stirring within me, I find myself wondering what new year’s resolutions I might make. How can I deepen what the Second Vatican Council called my “full, conscious, and active participation” in our liturgy so that it is a time and place where I grow in my relationship with the One who loves us all so immensely and sends us out to change the world?

Can I silence not just ‘all my electronic devices’ before Mass, but also the distractions of mind and heart that keep me from being fully present, actively listening, wholeheartedly speaking and singing my part of our worship’s dialogue?

Shall I try on a new role in the parish, one that reflects what’s important to me day by day? If I’m reading in the aisles of Target or on a city bus, can I be a lector or make it to this fall’s three evenings on Matthew’s Gospel (October 29, November 12, November 18). If I set the table and serve dinner for friends and family, can I serve at the Lord’s table as an altar server or Eucharistic Minister?

What transformation can I spark in my work or my civic life? Will I advocate on behalf of poor and migrant people during the parish’s Offering of Letters (October 20)? Can I make some changes in how I spend my money or my leisure time?

Pope Francis closes *Christ is Alive* with a call to what he sometimes calls ‘the apostolate of the ear,’ to listening attentively to the people around us and to the movement of God’s grace. I suspect that Pope Francis spent a few years in the classroom, because this reminds me so much of what teachers often say, “listen carefully to the question.” As St. Oscar Romero and Benedict XVI suggest to us, Jesus does not ask us ‘what do you know?’ but ‘do you love me?’ As people of faith, we need only to answer the question that we’ve been asked—not only in words, but with our lives.

Happy new year!

—BJ Brown
Pastoral Associate

*Front image: photo from La Croix International, June 20, 2018.*
Announcements

James Martin SJ at SJU
Fr. James Martin SJ, author and editor-at-large for America Magazine, will speak on Building a Bridge: Reaching Out to the Excluded in Our Church on Tuesday, September 17 at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph University’s Foley Center. Fr. Martin will address how, through respect, compassion and sensitivity, we can create a welcoming, inclusive space for all in the Catholic Church. This event, which is sponsored by the Faith-Justice Institute’s Klein Fund and the Center for Inclusion and Diversity, is free and open to the public. Copies of several of Fr. Martin’s books will be available for purchase.

Learn ASL
The Archdiocesan Office for Persons with Disabilities and the Deaf Apostolate would like you to know about opportunities to learn American Sign Language. The DeafCAN! program at Christ the King Deaf Church at 730 South New Street, West Chester, offers classes taught by experienced Deaf instructors for all skill levels. More information is available at deafcanpa.org/programs/sign-language-classes-interpreting/.

Book Group Reads Beloved
On October 1 at 7:30 PM in the Loyola Room, OSJ’s Reading Group will discuss Beloved, by Toni Morrison, in tribute to one of America’s most gifted African American writers. New members are welcome; for more information, contact Carol at shlosscarol@gmail.com.

BeA Jesuit.org
Founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola along with his First Companions, the Society of Jesus seeks to "find God in all things." Jesuit priests and brothers are involved in educational, pastoral and spiritual ministries around the world, practicing a faith that promotes justice. Interested in learning more about serving at the heart of the church and the margins of society? Visit beajesuit.org.

A Report on the Ministry of Accompaniment
On August 26, I was one of nineteen people who accompanied someone to his immigration bail hearing at a detention center in York, PA. The group was made up of loved ones and friends of the man facing trial, members of the New Sanctuary Movement and parishioners who had been called together by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Ministry of Accompaniment. In addition to providing moral support for the man and his loved ones, our presence clearly impacted the judge's ruling and led to a positive outcome.

Four times, the judge noted for the court record the large number of us there and cited this as an influential factor in setting a low bail. This allowed the man to be freed that day and to prepare for his next hearing.

While we awaited this man’s hearing, we also witnessed about ten other hearings. The proceedings were hasty and disorienting, and participants had no visible legal or community support with them. This highlighted for us the vast need to shed light on what is happening in immigration courts, and it also left us all inspired to continue this ministry of accompaniment, to advocate for justice, and to harness the power of community and presence on behalf of our immigrant brothers and sisters.

—Christine Ferrari Strickland, CRNP

Christine took part in a July training on accompaniment along with a dozen other OSJ parishioners. Requests for accompaniment are just beginning to come in to the Archdiocesan offices. More information about responding to the needs of immigrants in our city will be in the bulletin in the coming months.
Announcements

OSJ YAC's 10 Year Anniversary
Old St. Joseph’s Young Adult Community is celebrating its ten-year anniversary this fall! All former and current community members are invited to join us on **Sunday, September 15** for an afternoon of celebrating at Independence Beer Garden at 100 S. Independence Mall West, starting at **3:00 PM**. (The rain location will be the Bourse). Young adults are also invited to the Pre-Mass Reflection at **5:30 PM** at OSJ prior to attending **6:30 PM Mass**. Questions? Email osjyac@gmail.com. Hope to see you there!

The Saint of 9/11
The Eldership Community invites everyone to a showing of *The Saint of 9/11* in Barbelin Hall on **Sunday September 15 at 1:30 PM**. Directed by Glenn Holsten and voiced in part by Ian McClellan, the 90-minute film chronicles the restless and remarkable spiritual journey of Father Mychal Judge, the chaplain of the New York Fire Department. Fr. Judge was among the first to rush to the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001, and the photo of his body being carried from the rubble remains one of the iconic images of that day.

One of Father Judge’s favorite prayers is said to be

*Lord, take me where you want me to go;*  
*Let me meet who you want me to meet;*  
*Tell me what you want me to say*  
*And keep me out of your way.*

*The Saint of 9/11* shows just how Father Judge lived that prayer.

Health Care Professionals
All health care professionals—students, active and retired practitioners and administrators—are especially invited to gather at **6:30 PM Mass on Sunday, September 29**. An informal reception will follow in Barbelin Hall. Come to be with others who share your faith and your work and its challenges!

Coffee Hours Are Back
Coffee Hours in Barbelin Hall after the **9:30 and 11:30 AM Masses** will begin again on Sunday, September 8. We invite you to join us outside (weather permitting) or in Barbelin Hall for coffee, tea, juice and baked goods. Would you like to help prepare and serve at coffee hour once a month? Contact Joe Casey at parishlife@oldstjoseph.org to volunteer!

Parish Cookout Dinner This Sunday
All are welcome to the monthly Cookout Dinner this **Sunday, September 8, after 6:30 PM Mass** in Barbelin Hall. Come for the company; stay for the (excellent) food! If you’re willing to help with hospitality at this or a future cookout dinner, contact osjyac@gmail.com.

Altar Servers, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Ushers
Please update your availability by **September 15** for the October 1 – December 1 ministry schedule.

If you’d like to be more involved at Old St. Joseph’s, please consider signing up for one of these liturgical ministries through the Ministry Scheduling Program at www.oldstjoseph.org. Scheduling is flexible and training will be provided!

**September 10 at 7:00 PM** is the first of three practice sessions for all OSJ lectors. The other two sessions are **October 7 and November 19, at 7:00 PM**. If you want to become a lector or haven’t yet signed up (and didn’t attend a Holy Week rehearsal in April), please email bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org.

On **September 17 at 7:00 PM and September 22 at 1:00 PM** there will be practice sessions for all Eucharistic ministers in the church. If you didn’t attend a session last spring, want to become a Eucharistic minister or haven’t yet signed up, please email bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org.
INFORMATION

Pastor
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Fran Gillespie SJ (fgillespie@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
Fr. Edward Dougherty SJ (dougherty@oldstjoseph.org)
Fr. Ed O’Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

Pastoral Associate
BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)

Business Manager
Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music
Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Offices
(office@oldstjoseph.org)

Religious Education (PREP) Coordinator
Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director
Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)

Rectory Office Hours
Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Mass Times
Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM
Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM
Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:00 PM

Medical Emergency
In a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

Hearing Enhancements
Old St. Joseph’s is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are available in the rear of the church.

Registration
Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at www.oldstjoseph.org. They can be returned to the parish office by mail or in person.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
A priest is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday from 11:30 AM–12:00 PM or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism
If you want to arrange a baptism, please call Fr. Dougherty at the parish office at least two months before the desired date to arrange catechesis and the baptism celebration.

Eucharist for the Homebound
To arrange to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish offices.

The Sacrament of Anointing
The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is offered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

Sacrament of Matrimony
If you want to be married at Old St. Joseph’s, please visit our website, oldstjoseph.org and read the material under the heading Weddings, then call the parish office at least nine months before your desired wedding date.

Rite of Christian Initiation
If you are an adult wishing to be baptized, or to receive First Eucharist and Confirmation, or are a baptized non-Catholic seeking full communion with Catholic Church, please call the parish office.

Mass of Christian Burial
To schedule a funeral or memorial Mass, ask your funeral director to call the parish office.

Parish Pastoral Council
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Finance Council
Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president

Adult Education
Rita O’Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo (adulted@oldstjoseph.org)

Eldership
Pat Nelson (eldership@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Life
Joe Casey (parishlife@oldstjoseph.org)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation
Len Mancini (osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship
Rana McNamara (wff@oldstjoseph.org)

Young Adult Community
(osjyac@gmail.com)

Altar Servers
Maria Ramirez (altarserver@oldstjoseph.org)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Bill Stewart (EM@oldstjoseph.org)

Hospital Ministry
Luanne Balestrucci (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Homebound Ministry
Neal Hébert (homeEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Lectors
Lou Anne Bulik (lectors@oldstjoseph.org)

Ushers
Nikola Szigorich (ushers@oldstjoseph.org)

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Peggy Connolly (clow@oldstjoseph.org)