“Our political lives must be seen as an essential element of our personal call to holiness,” said San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy on February 6 of this year. He was speaking on Conscience, Candidates and Discipleship in Voting at the University of San Diego.

Really? Politics?! An essential element of our personal call to holiness?

Ten days earlier, Cardinal Blaise Cupich of Chicago spoke to the annual gathering of Catholic Social Minsters in Washington DC. Cardinal Cupich addressed the connection between the work of promoting human dignity and justice and our baptismal call to holiness.

Again, politics and holiness? Justice, dignity and holiness? The current political climate, at home and abroad, seem to suggest these might be difficult to connect.

In fact, Bishop McElroy and Cardinal Cupich come at the challenge of politics and the call to holiness from slightly different angles, but they share a common concern. How can US Catholics faithfully navigate the churning waters of the politics of our day, the 2020 presidential election included? There is no substitute for reading these brief speeches in their entirety (try searching online or look for links on the home page of oldstjoseph.org). But let me suggest three pieces of advice that emerge from Bishop McElroy’s and Cardinal Cupich’s remarks:

- Talk to everyone
- Embrace the complexity
- Keep your eyes on Jesus Christ

I cannot forget one of my theology professors, a tall, thin scarecrow of a man, flapping his arms in front of the class and declaring “that’s what Catholic means. Here comes everybody.” Not only do we as Catholics open wide our doors and hearts to all, we know that we depend on each other for our very salvation. Cardinal Cupich returns to Vatican II’s reading of the signs of the times and subsequent emphasis on the Church as the People of God to make the same point. God is at work, Cupich points out with the Council, in our relationships with one another in the Church and throughout the world. This understanding of how God is at work stands in direct opposition to what Bishop McElroy describes as “the culture of exclusion.” The culture of exclusion poisons and divides our nation and world on racial, ethnic and religious lines, affecting in turn education, health, work, housing and even the quality of family life. Not so for people of faith; here comes everybody, and all are welcome.

If our lives in faith cannot be understood without our social commitments—if, in the wonderful phrase of Pope Francis, we are never completely ourselves unless we belong to a people (Gaudete et Exsultate 6), and in the words of the Vatican Council, God wills to save us not as individuals,

—continued inside
12:05 Daily Mass Intentions and Presider

Monday 3/9  
Eileen Claudette Eldridge (D)  
Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ

Tuesday 3/10  
Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society  
Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ

Wednesday 3/11  
Edward and Mary Britt and Family (D)  
Presider: Fr. O’Donnell SJ

Thursday 3/12  
E. Lorraine DiTulio (D)  
Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ

Friday 3/13  
Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society  
Presider: Fr. O’Donnell SJ

Saturday 3/14  
Benefactors of the Maryland Province  
Presider: Fr. O’Donnell SJ

Saturday–Sunday

3/14  
5:30 PM  
Presider: Fr. O’Donnell SJ

3/15  
7:30 AM  
Presider Fr. Hannafey SJ
9:30 AM  
Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ
11:30 AM  
Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ
6:30 PM  
Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ

Stay in Touch!

In addition to this bulletin, our website (oldstjoseph.org) and our Facebook page (OSJ19106), Old St. Joseph’s uses Constant Contact emails to communicate with parishioners. If you would like to receive our occasional ‘email all’ messages about parish events, parishioner death notices, and news affecting the parish, send a message to bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org. Please tell us if you would also like to receive the monthly Eldership Newsletter and occasional Eldership E-News Flashes. You can also sign up to receive occasional action alerts forwarded from Bread for the World, the Ignatian Solidarity Network, and other social justice partners.

OSJ’s Young Adult Community sends a weekly e-mail, YAC Matters. To subscribe, contact osjyac@gmail.com.

Finally, everyone enrolled in online giving is automatically signed up to receive periodic email reminders of special collections.
—continued from front page

but as a people (Lumen Gentium 9), then we have no choice but to talk to everyone, to work together, to seek ways to build bridges and heal what divides us.

Of course, this is no quick and easy task. Besides commitment and humility, it demands our willingness to embrace complexity. We need to abandon the false hope that any single issue defines our political responsibility. We need to accept that there is no one pre-eminent issue that clearly divides the sheep from the goats, us from them, or the politician or platform that we support or from the one we reject. Embracing complexity requires our willingness to do the hard work of forming our conscience and exercising prudential judgment. There is no substitute or end to our life’s work of letting ourselves be formed by scripture and sacrament, to seeking the example of the saints and the faithful, and to listening for the voice of God in prayer.

At the same time, we have to be willing to educate ourselves on the issues, to seek out facts and thoughtful analysis, to scrutinize them in the light of our faith, and finally to weigh “the specific ability of a particular candidate to actually advance the common good.” Moreover, Bishop McElroy goes on, “character represents a particularly compelling criterion for faithful voting in 2020.” Our political leaders imprint our political culture and society as a whole, and constant corrosive rhetoric is fostering division, eroding truth, and discarding principle when it doesn’t support partisan advantage.

Understanding that faithful political responsibility requires us to accept everyone and the complexity that comes with them can be a very difficult and discouraging undertaking. And that is why I have saved Cardinal Cupich’s starting point for last: because it is in keeping our eyes on Jesus Christ that we find our firmest foundation and our hope. Here is where Cardinal Cupich—and Pope Francis--begin:

Too often, we begin such discussions about how we are to live our baptismal call by citing things that we are doing or should do, especially for the least in our midst. What I find unique in the teaching of Pope Francis is that he inverts the discussion. Instead of starting with what are doing or should do, his attention is on what Christ is doing. He understands that the pursuit of a holy life is about encountering this Christ who is already active and present, and joining in his saving work of building the Kingdom of God.

For the faith that does justice, the attention and stress fall so often on the doing—and there is much to be done. But our baptism redirects our attention to what God has already done for us. In the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has vanquished sin and death, and this is exactly what God continues to do for us as our lives unfold in the mystery of God’s love. So, in this season of Lent, and in the political season that stretches beyond it, let us keep our eyes on Christ and on each other and on the richness that accompanies embracing both.

—BJ Brown
Pastoral Associate


For Further Reading

Consider these sources for exploring political issues in light of faith, along with more resources at oldstjoseph.org:

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops, usccb.org, especially under the heading Issues & Action. In addition, justiceforimmigrants.org is a project of the USCCB.

Catholic Relief Services, crs.org/getinvolved, brings field experience in humanitarian development and aid to bear on policy issues.

Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, networklobby.org, includes sections on both 2020 Policy Vision and the 2020 Elections.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network, ignatiansomidarity.net, and the Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology offer distinctly Ignatian takes on political advocacy.
Announcements

Giving Hope to All 2020
The Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s annual Catholic Charities Appeal, Giving Hope to All, supports the work of 180 beneficiary organizations in the city. The appeal funds education, including four schools for special education, over 100 social service organizations, sixteen mission parishes, and archdiocesan programs for evangelization and retired clergy. Last year, Old St. Joseph’s raised 114% of the appeal goal set for it by the archdiocese. For more information on making a contribution, visit catholiccharitiesappeal.org, email cca@catholicfoundationphila.org or call 215-587-5650.

Cultural Heritage Mass
Archbishop Nelson Perez will be the principal celebrant and homilist at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s annual Cultural Heritage Mass on Saturday, March 28. The celebration will begin with a procession at 2:00 PM at the Cathedral of Ss. Peter and Paul at 18th Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway; Mass will follow at 2:30 PM. All are welcome to this celebration of global solidarity.

Ignatian Resources for Lent and Beyond
The Office of Ignatian Spirituality offers two resources that may be of particular interest during Lent. One is their Calendar of Upcoming Events (jesuitseastois.org/events), which lists retreats, days of prayer, and other programs in the Ignatian tradition. Another is their catalog of spiritual directors, which can be found at jesuitseastois.org/spirituality.

Rice Bowl in Action
Thomas Awaiapo first encountered Catholic Relief Services as a child in Ghana. He was part of CRS’s Food for Education program, which provided children with daily meals in exchange for attending school. Mr. Awaiapo is now a staunch advocate of CRS and its Lenten Rice Bowl program of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. He will talk about his life with Catholic Relief Services on Monday, March 23 at 12:00 Noon in the auditorium of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, 222 N. 17th Street, Philadelphia. A simple soup lunch will be served. All are welcome; please RSVP to Anne Ayella at aayella@archphila.org.

And on Monday, March 23 at 10:00–11:30 AM and again at 6:30–8:00 PM, St. Thomas of Villanova Parish, 1229 E. Lancaster Avenue, Rosemont, PA will host Advocacy 101 for people of all ages. The workshop will be focused on letter writing in support of HR 4864, the Global Child Thrive Act. Light refreshments will be served; please RSVP by March 20 to nancy.mcnamara@crs.org. More information about Catholic Relief Services’ advocacy is at crs.org/get-involved/advocate-poor.

Second Collection, March 14-15
On March 14-15, there will be a second collection for the Church in Latin America. This collection is administered by the US Catholic Conference and supports pastoral programs throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Projects include evangelization, the formation of laity, religious and seminarians, and youth ministry and catechesis.
Announcements

Young Adult Happy Hour March 13
Come toast the early days of spring at the March 13 Young Adult Community happy hour at Frankford Hall, Fishtown’s popular open-air biergarten at 1210 Frankford Avenue. You’ll find twelve German beers on tap plus American drafts and a great selection of canned beers. Giant pretzels, sausages, and potato pancakes are a few of the favorite bites from the food menu. We’ll start at 5:30 PM (The happy hour discounted prices run from 4:00–6:00 PM). Contact Christopher Ross at 610-952-7317 or at g.chris.ross@gmail.com with any questions or to find us at the bar. Frankford Hall is located near the Girard Station on the Market Frankford Line, SEPTA Trolley route 15 and SEPTA bus routes 5 and 25.

Enjoy St. Patrick’s Day with OSJ Elders
Get your green on and enjoy St. Patrick’s Day with the OSJ Eldership Community at its next bi-monthly happy hour starting at Tuesday March 17 at 5:00 PM at Creperie Beau Monde, 624 South Sixth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147. Happy hour drinks and food, which are to be self-paid, are priced at $4–$6. RSVP to eldership@oldstjoseph.org if you can plan in advance to attend—or just show up if you find you can make it at the last minute. All adult parishioners, regardless of age, are welcome.

OSJ Knitting Circle
Old St. Joseph’s has a knitting circle! Its members work on projects to warm up guests at Faith Food & Friends, at the Aquinas Center and at Women of Change. Donations of yarn are welcome and may be dropped off when the parish office is open.

St. Joseph’s Feast Day Celebration!
Come celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph on Thursday, March 19 with Mass at 6:00 PM followed by dinner at 7:00 PM in Barbelin Hall. Tickets for the dinner are on sale now in the parish office; $10 for adults; children eat for free. Donations of wine and desserts are greatly appreciated.

We also need volunteers to cook on Wednesday, March 18 and for set up, serving and cleanup on Thursday, March 19. Please contact Joe Casey at parishlife@oldstjoseph.org or at 215-843-3573 for more information.

Meeting Christ in Prayer Begins
Meeting Christ in Prayer groups will begin meeting this week. There are groups meeting on Sunday at 1:15 PM, Tuesday at 10:00 AM and Wednesday at 7:00 PM, all in the parish offices. The groups will meet for eight weeks, through the week of May 3 with exception to the week following Easter Sunday, April 12. Each group will be facilitated by two parishioners who are also members of the Ignatian Spirituality Committee. For more information, contact osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org.

Centering Prayer
All are welcome to an evening of centering prayer on Wednesday, March 18 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in the Drexel Parlor of the parish offices. There will be a presentation with discussion on centering prayer, followed by evening prayer with a period of centering. For further information, contact Christine Szczepanowski at 267-250-3049 or prep@oldstjoseph.org.
INFORMATION

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

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Frank Hannafey SJ (f hannafey@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
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
(osoffice@oldstjoseph.org)

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

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

Director of Hospital Ministry
Tom Volkert (hospitalEM@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 contact Fr. Hannafey (f hannafey@oldstjoseph.org) at least two months before the desired date.

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. Please call the parish office at 215-923-1766 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 or email rcia@oldstjoseph.org.

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 (osjsspirituality@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)