


A Message from our Pastoral Assistant

Each year in the days leading up to our Feast Day at Our Lady of the Assumption I take some time to reflect with gratitude upon what being a part of Our Lady of the Assumption means to me. I am grateful to belong to a prayerful community that lives out our mission statement: *to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our Eucharistic Celebration, our prayers, our works, and by reaching out to others with compassion and joy.* Over the years the people at Our Lady of the Assumption have served God by reaching out to each other and to the larger community through ministries like, but not limited to: Holy Communion to the Sick/Homebound, the Food Pantry, the Funeral Luncheon Committee, Religious Education for our Youth, Adult Faith Formation; as well as our many Liturgical Ministries such as the Ministry of Music, Sacristan, Lector, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion; the Ministry of Hospitality including Ushers and Greeters, Altar Servers; and of course the Ministry of the Assembly in which we all take part at each Mass by our active participation. We are blessed to also have caring parishioners who take an active role in ensuring our church is suitable for worship by making certain there are clean altar linens, flowers to provide beauty, and other appropriate seasonal decorations. There are also those who work to keep the physical plant of the church, the parish center, and grounds in good order, and those who organize and assist with special events like SummerFest and the Dinner Dance.

I have learned so very much over the years from each of our Priests. We are blessed to have the Carmelite Friars serving our church. We are truly a community that works in union with our wonderful Priests.

Over the years we have prayed together for many intentions and God answers those prayers according to His will. When I contracted Covid 19 in 2020 you prayed for me, and God again heard your prayers and acted upon them. Something was pulling me back during the 70 days I was in a coma on the ventilator, and I believe it was God acting on your prayers. Those prayers helped me over a series of months afterward to relearn to walk, to pass a swallow test after several tries so I could begin to eat, to be able to stop dialysis, and to lose diabetes. The medical community was stunned, so much so that they called in a local television news station to report on it and afterward the local Times Herald-Record newspaper reported on it. I knew and told them of God's work through your prayers and the prayers of many.

The nursing home I was recovering in was in total lockdown most of the time; even my wife, Beth, was only allowed in a couple of times in my 5 ½ months there. But at Beth's and my request, they made an exception to allow Fr. Paul to bring me the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion, and I felt at peace. I was not allowed solid food at that time, but I was allowed to receive the consecrated host.

Continued on other side 

That was my very first food. It was food for the body, but so much more for my soul. And in the days and weeks that followed, my muscle strength improved, I made good strides in physical therapy, and eventually learned to eat again.

I so missed being at Mass that when I got home on December 22nd after 269 days in various hospitals and rehab, I returned to church as soon as I could physically make it. Some of you know Beth was able to bring me to Mass on January 17th so I could participate in presenting Sam Osborne to be fully initiated into the Catholic faith. My next time was Divine Mercy Sunday, and thankfully at least weekly since.

God working through your continued prayers is allowing me to gradually get back to my core ministries. I'm visiting the homebound, plans are in motion for some Adult Faith Formation, and in upcoming months I look forward to working with the pantry again. For starters, **we'll be inviting all Lectors and Extra-Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to a special refresher on Saturday, September 11th from 9am to 1pm (part one) and Monday evening, September 27th from 6:30pm to 9pm (part two).** Additionally, if you are interested in serving in one of these ministries, please let us know so we can prepare materials for you as well. Also, on **Saturday, November 6th beginning at 10am, we will have a Morning of Prayer, Song, and Communal Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick with an inspirational talk by Sister Margaret Ellen Burke, S.C., followed by a light lunch.** Hoping you can all make it.

In this world of ours today, we are sometimes looking for heroes. As we arrive at the Feast Day of our church, I submit to you we need look no further than Mary, Mother of God, Our Lady of the Assumption. We know that she did not suffer from original sin and was conceived full of grace. Mary said Yes to God. In Luke 1:38 Mary said "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word". As such she became the first tabernacle of the Lord and His first disciple. She always points us to her Son, and this weekend we remember she was taken up to heaven body and soul. Let's look to Mary to emulate today.

With Gratitude,

Gary Texter

Pastoral Assistant