

Dear Friends,

Years ago, most especially before the Second Vatican Council, many members of the Church felt that the responsibility for the parish and its work belonged solely to the parish priests and sisters. After all, the thought was, the priests and sisters were educated in the faith.

The Second Vatican Council in the early to mid 1960s changed many things. It gave us new images of the Church – the People of God and the Body of Christ, for example. These images helped many Catholics recognize that they are empowered through the reception of baptism and confirmation to play an active role in the Church. Though the Church is made up of many members, each with different gifts from the Holy Spirit, all members of the Church are called to work together, serve together to bring about the kingdom of God.

Next weekend our parish will begin hosting our second annual Ministry Fair. I say “begin,” because the Ministry Fair will take place over the course of three weekends this month, all in the church narthex. Each weekend we will highlight specific parish ministries. Next weekend, for example we will be highlighting ministries that focus on our community life, service and outreach.

To minister is to take care of one another in the name of Jesus. Each of us has this responsibility. As we did last year, the parish has published a **Ministry Booklet**. This year’s theme is **Serving the Lord with Gladness**. The booklet contains descriptions of every ministry in our parish and will be made available next week. As your pastor I feel blessed to work with many people who currently offer so much of their time and talent to build up our parish.

At the same time I want to strongly encourage everyone to recognize their particular God-given gifts and offer their gifts to our community. It is often said that twenty percent of the parishioners do all of the work. How great it would be if that statement was not true at Jesus the Divine Word. How great it would be if every member of our parish was actively involved in ministry.

In preparation for the Ministry Fair please take some time to pray about the gifts God has bestowed upon you, asking at the same time, which gift God wants you to place at the service of our parish. The impact would be phenomenal if each person responded to God’s invitation, together *Serving the Lord with Gladness*.

Peace and blessings,  
Father John