

## **Pastor's Letter ... *On Reaching Out with Joy***

Sept. 13, 2015

Dear Friends,

Why has Pope Francis captivated people of all faiths? In addition to his example of simplicity and commitment to the poor, I think his sheer joy is irresistible. Smiling and wading into crowds with arms outstretched, the Holy Father reminds us that we are to follow not just Jesus's example of healing and tenderness, but his example of joyful love. Jesus was "full of joy," Francis says, and has willed that "the Church should also be joyful."

Our monthly Mass of Welcoming and Inclusion is newly blessed by an American Sign Language interpreter, allowing deaf worshippers to share in our Eucharist and the Word of God. All year, our parish has been blessed by an influx of new parishioners. I am grateful when I hear that these parishioners were drawn by the warm welcome they received here.

This busy month also offers many opportunities for us to reach out to one another.

Saturday (Sept. 12) brought out families who worked to beautify our parish home. Sunday, Sept. 13, brings the Feast of St. John Chrysostom and our Parish Picnic from 12:30 to 3 p.m. PREP and RCIA also return on Sunday. And, of course, our city will soon host the Holy Father himself! St. John's will telecast the Papal Mass at 4 p.m. on Sept. 27 followed by a celebration in the gym. (Invitations are in the mail to all registered families)

As you enjoy all of these events, I urge you to take a few minutes to introduce yourselves to someone new each time. As Jesus reminds us in Matthew's Gospel (25:35), when we welcome a stranger, we welcome Him. Let us do so with joy!

In peace,

Fr. Ed Hallinan