

Pastor's Letter

July 20, 2025—16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family

In our readings for today, we have two stories about hospitality. In our first reading from Genesis we have the story of Abraham who welcomes three mysterious strangers (the Lord? Angels? It's unclear) to his home. He lavishly provides for their comfort and is rewarded with a revelation of God's plan for him and his family. His wife, Sarah will have a son. By extending hospitality to strangers, Abraham receives a visit from God.

In our Gospel reading Martha and Mary also welcome a divine visitor in their home. Jesus comes to their house. Martha prepares a meal while Mary sits at Jesus feet listening to him. While Jesus says that Mary has chosen the better part, both are doing what is necessary to extend hospitality.

These stories of welcoming others give us a clue as to what Paul means when he says in our second reading, "Brothers and sisters: Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church, of which I am a minister in accordance with God's stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God." What could possibly be missing from the work that Christ accomplished on the cross? Wasn't Jesus' sacrifice enough? Yes, it was, but, there still remains one thing to be done: that sacrifice needs to be lived out in the world today by the body of Christ, the church.

By our welcoming of strangers, by our giving of ourselves in service to others, we make the sacrifice of Christ on the cross present in our own time and place. When we reach out in love and service, we are the hands of Christ. When we go out to help those in need, we are the feet of Christ. When we speak words of comfort to the suffering, we are the voice of Christ. The love of God is not just an abstract idea. It is concrete. It is person to person. It is Jesus using us to wrap his arms around the people he loves who need him.

Brothers and sisters, we live in a society that seems to be forgetting how to show hospitality. We are turning our backs on the strangers who need our help. By doing so, we are turning our backs on Jesus. Mother Teresa once said that the poor are Jesus coming to us in a distressing disguise. Every time we help someone, whether we know them personally or not, we are helping Christ. Every time we turn away we miss an opportunity to serve our Lord. May Christ's sacrifice be fulfilled in us as we open our hearts and our hands to others.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott

Funeral Meal Changes—St. Brigid

Starting July 1, 2025— We will be requiring the families to order and pay for the meat only for the funeral meal. The church will continue to provide all sides, desserts, drinks, tableware and condiments. Our volunteers enjoy providing this service to our families during their time of bereavement.

