**Week Behind/ Week Ahead**

To the Parishioners of Saint Joseph Parish

From V. Rev. Felipe Pulido

Date: November 20, 2021

**Week Behind**

**Annual Catholic Appeal 2022** – Again, I am most grateful to our loyal donors and new donors who have pledged to the Diocesan Annual Catholic Appeal.  If you were not present or prepared to make a pledge previously, I urge you to do so today. Your gift is essential to sustaining the many ministries of the Diocese of Yakima. So far, our Saint Joseph Parish has received close to 205 pledges. Envelopes are available in the foyer and, once completed, they may be placed in the collection basket. The size of the gift is not as important as simply participating in this important funding for ministries in the Diocese. If you would like to donate online, please visit [www.yakimadiocese.org](http://www.yakimadiocese.org).  Or you can use the ACA-- **QR Code** (taped to the backs of our church pews) by opening the camera app from your device’s home screen, control center, or lock screen. Then hold your device so that the **QR code** appears in the camera app’s viewfinder. Your device will recognize the **QR code** and show a notification. Then tap the notification to open the link associated with the **QR code**. Thank you so much for your generosity

**What is the ACA and what does it support?**  ACA stands for “Annual Catholic Appeal.”  This is a yearly opportunity to renew your commitment to the different ministries here in the Diocese of Yakima.  It is your recognition that there are priests, deacons, teachers, and catechists to train, parishes to visit, and youth to confirm and nurture in their faith.

**How much should I give?** It does not matter how little or how much you give!  What matters is that you give a sufficient amount so that you are challenged to change your spending habits.  Why?  Because ultimately the Annual Catholic Appeal is not about money, it’s about showing your gratitude for God's many gifts by sharing them.

**Men’s Retreat --** On Saturday, November 20, Bishop Joseph Tyson and Father Jesus Mariscal offered a beautiful retreat for the Year of Saint Joseph based on the Parable of the Prodigal Son.  At the end of the retreat, the men who participated consecrated themselves to Saint Joseph in a short ceremony led by Bishop Tyson. I extend my sincere thanks to Bishop Tyson and Father Mariscal for donating their time and talent to the men of our parish.  I am hoping that, as a follow up to this retreat, we will found a men’s group in our parish.

**Week Ahead**

**Dispensation to Sunday Masses** – The bishop’s dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation will end soon. The obligation will resume on the First Sunday of Advent (including the Saturday Vigil.) In a letter Bishop Tyson wrote to pastors about the end of the dispensation, he provided some guidance on exemptions from the Sunday obligation:

*While the last 20 months have been challenging, we continue to bring the light of Christ to others. I commend you and your staff and volunteers for your flexibility, strength and courage as we’ve entered new territory serving our communities during this global pandemic. I remain firm in my resolve to keep our people safe – including the most vulnerable among us – so that we can continue safely celebrating the Eucharist.*

*We continue to track the latest science to inform the guidance we are issuing. This data has led to temporary changes for how we do things. These changes are warranted to keep people safe while not compromising on the sanctity of the Mass. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have celebrated tens of thousands of Masses with only a handful of cases of coronavirus spread, which have sometimes been traced to people not following our safety guidance. In general, this indicates that our protocols are effectively protecting our people and providing a safe environment for worship. This is something for which we can be very grateful!*

*The general obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (including the Saturday Vigil Mass) is to be reinstated (CIC, can. 1247) on November 28, 2021,* ***the First Sunday of Advent****. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, will be a special opportunity to honor the Blessed Mother for her prayers and intercession. As in recent years, parishioners may meet that obligation by attending Mass on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (transferred this year from December 12 to Monday, December 13.)*

*As has always been the case, those who have serious reasons are exempt from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2181). This includes those who are ill, have significant health risk factors or care for someone who is immuno-compromised or ill, as well as those who have significant fear or anxiety about contracting the coronavirus in a large group of people. Travelers always may seek a dispensation from their pastors, and they are exempt if their travels make Mass attendance impossible or unduly burdensome.*

Let's focus on the privilege we have to attend Sunday Mass and to be fed spiritually by the Word of God and the Holy Eucharist, along with the bishop’s call to rebuild the relationships so vital for a healthy parish.

***WORD AMONG US* ADVENT MEDITATIONS** – Advent begins the weekend of November 27-28. This year our parish will be using *Word Among U*s daily meditations based on the Mass readings of the Catholic Church. *Word Among Us* magazine is a great tool to help you read and pray with Sacred Scripture and the liturgy. Listening and responding to God’s Word must be at the heart of our efforts to unleash the Gospel. *Word Among Us* magazines are available this weekend in the church foyer. Please take one. Thank you to all the ushers in our parish who help distribute bulletins, pamphlets, and magazines after Mass.

**Father Cesar Izquierdo** – Father Cesar will be away starting Monday, November 22, and returning Saturday, November 27. He will be visiting one of his friends at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. While there, he will visit the city of New York for the first time. Please keep Father Cesar in your prayers.