Dear Parishioner,

“As the darkness grows, the light grows stronger.”

If you’re on social media, you may have seen or heard that phrase lately. I love it because it really captures the moment we’re living in right now – a world in turmoil, but with the clear, bright light of Jesus Christ shining through the chaos.

I know that these past two years have been difficult. Many of us are missing loved ones, taken too soon by the pandemic or other circumstances. Economic turmoil has touched us. Politically, Americans seem more divided than ever. It’s been hard on everyone. I know it’s been hard on you.

But while I mourn our country’s divisions and I sympathize with those who are suffering, I also feel a sense of incredible joy – maybe even a sense of *relief* – at the *goodness* that I’m seeing. Is it wrong for me to feel joy right now? I hesitate to even write those words because I worry that people will take them the wrong way.

“Father,” they’ll say, “you can’t be joyful when the world seems to be spiraling downwards.” But you know what? I *am* joyful.

Here’s the cause of my joy: these last two years have revealed what kind of people we are and what kind of community we have built here at Saint Joseph Parish. And I see that we have something special here. For the past two years I have witnessed the kind of love and sacrifice and care for others that proves, beyond a doubt, that our parishioners are followers of Jesus Christ.

These are busy days. And while our schedules make it impossible, I wish that you could spend an entire day with me and see what I see and hear what I hear. Every day brings a dozen new examples of God’s love for us and examples of His hand at work here in our community.

*Men and women are checking in on their neighbors and helping run errands and buy groceries.*

*Families are praying together like never before.*

*Volunteers are finding new ways to help the parish – by calling elderly parishioners, putting together care packages, or just keeping things going in our parish.*

I bet you’re nodding as you read those words. I think you’ve seen it too. You’ve seen families spending more time together since the initial shutdown of March 2020. You’ve seen people coming together – praying together and caring for one another— just as Jesus Christ called us to do.

You’re not alone in feeling that something special is going on, something important is taking place right here in Saint Joseph Parish. I sense the Holy Spirit moving within our community and I see the Catholic Church deployed in good works for all the world to see. I feel joy that I’m here to see it, and I’m glad that you’re here with me.

You’re a part of Saint Joseph Parish and you belong right here in our community. We are lucky to have you as part of our family. You have a family of believers who will pray for you, cheer for you, and lift you up when you are down. Whatever comes your way, you’re not alone. Our parish families are all in this together, and we have Jesus Christ lighting the way and the Holy Spirit to guide us.

I see our parishioners showing the world what it means to be Catholic in a time of crisis. And it makes me really proud. God bless you for all that you are doing.

You and your family are in my prayers, and I hope that I am in yours.

Gratefully in Christ,



Very. Rev. Felipe Pulido,
Pastor

