

Week Behind

Deacon Mike Palmieri—On Friday, December 16, Mike Palmieri was ordained a permanent deacon. Please read his thank you letter to the parish, the diocese and local community in the Tri Cities.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I take this moment to recognize you for your generous contributions and involvement during my Diaconate formation journey. No one can ever be formed or get to ordination day without significant support from others. Many of you are directly involved in the formation process. You led formation sessions or training, while others provided spiritual direction, guidance, and mentoring. You answered many questions, endless phone calls and emails, or kept all the administrative pieces in order.

Here at St. Joseph Parish, I was able to experience many of your wonderful ministries. Your ACA donations and support from the Parish and Diocese helped pay for retreats, training, and other needs. Many of you kept Marcie and me in your thoughts and prayers, requested a Mass for our intentions, gave warm hugs or handshakes, and offered words of encouragement. Very often, these came at times when they were needed the most. We have been richly blessed by all of these.

Our many Diocesan Deacons, Candidates, and your wives made us feel welcome and included. It is always a bit difficult joining a group that has been together for a while, so we naturally felt a bit nervous entering formation. When Marcie and I arrived at our first formation meeting in 2017, you warmly welcomed us, as you do every time we meet. Our Bishop and Priests of the Diocese of Yakima have also richly blessed us in many ways. You have been great sources of inspiration, knowledge, example, and wisdom. It has been a pleasure to get to know each of you.

In our local Tri-Cities community, we are fortunate to have many great people in our Fire Departments, Law Enforcement Agencies, and the Chaplain Services Network. Each of you holds a special place in my heart, and I feel honored to be able to work alongside you. I also treasure the special friendships that we have developed.

From the beginning of my formation, my wife Marcie has been close by my side. Without her love and steadfast support, I would not have been able to complete my formation. She gave up much of her time to attend meetings and training and walked every step with me. “Thank you” does not seem adequate – but I thank you so much, my love! My family also supported us and made sacrifices. When Marcie and I wanted to visit you or do something with you, we often had to go to a training or some other formation activity instead. I am so grateful for your patience and understanding, and I look forward to spending more time with you soon.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for your love, support, involvement, contributions, and prayers! I look forward to serving with our Bishop, Priests, Deacons, community agencies, and all of you in the future. Together, we will be Christ’s humble servants to others.

*In Christ,
Michael Palmieri*

Knights of Columbus—A special thank you to the members of the Knights of Columbus who spent time in the cold chill and the wind over the last three weeks selling Christmas trees. They also sold

“Keep Christ in Christmas” cards. These are both good activities to promote the real meaning of Christmas in our community. We are grateful for their hard work to support Catholic Christian values in our society.

SJS Students’ Christmas Programs—Last week the preschool children from our Saint Joseph School performed their Nativity plays in the Big Church. These are a special tradition in our parish that helps the children experience memorizing lines, dealing with stage fright, and cooperating with others. On Thursday, December 15, the SJS students in grades K-8 presented their Christmas program. All the performances reminded us of the real meaning of Christmas—the Incarnation of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Annual Catholic Appeal—I thank all the people who have pledged or given to the Annual Catholic Appeal. If you have not participated yet, please prayerfully consider giving this year. Our parish goal is \$146,903. So far, 190 families have pledged (\$60,456.00.) Please help us reach our goal! There is still time to have a share in the ministry of the “Larger Church” and our Bishop through the ACA. Extra pledge envelopes are in the vestibule. To all who have responded and all those who will, thank you for your contributions.

The Giving Tree—We continue our efforts to relieve the needs of local people by collecting and distributing through our Giving Tree ministry. So far, we have collected \$2500. I thank all who have donated to this ministry.

Advent Penance Service—On Wednesday, December 14, we had our first Advent communal penance service since the pandemic. I thank Bishop Tyson and Fathers Francisco, Michael and John for helping us hear confessions. It was a beautiful celebration where we experienced God’s mercy and love.

Week Ahead

Saint Teresa Meal Ministry—On Tuesday, December 20, we will be starting a new ministry to help the local homeless population. On the Third Tuesday of every month from 9 to 10:30 am in Dillon Hall, volunteers will be making and delivering 200 lunches for the Union Gospel Mission to distribute. I thank in advance those who will make monetary and food donations and those who will be shopping for ingredients, assembling lunches, and delivering them.

Catholic Charities—Your offerings on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will support the work of Catholic Charities in central Washington. Catholic Charities serves those most in need throughout the lifecycle—from expectant mothers and families with young children to grandparents raising their grandchildren and the elderly struggling to live independently. To learn more about Catholic Charities’ network of services, visit www.catholiccharitiescw.org