

Dear Parish Family,

The events of the past eighteen months have been challenging for all of us. There is no doubt that we have undergone a great amount of change. We were forced to make changes we were not used to. While we rejoice that life is finally returning to normal, we also must recognize that many parishioners and people experienced pain, hardship, loss, and grief during the pandemic. In all these circumstances, we have journeyed together and brought one another the peace of Jesus Christ. But it is time for us to come back and be renewed and renew our parish.

We are rejoicing that we are now able to gather under one roof once more to worship the Lord together! Some of you have returned to church. For the many who are yet to do so, it is now time to safely rejoin your fellow parishioners at weekend Mass as I have said before. We've missed you! And we're eager to reconnect with you and welcome you back to active participation in our parish. Even for those who have already returned to weekly Mass, this is a time of renewal!

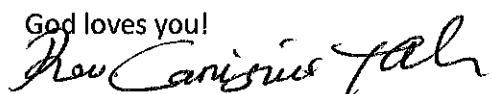
**I invite all of us to Return, Renew, and Rediscover the precious gift of our Catholic faith!** Welcome to St. Charles Borromeo Church! This is your parish, your faith community, and your spiritual home! We've all gone through a difficult time that has challenged our faith in many ways. Let the challenges and experiences of Covid lead all of us more deeply into discipleship so that we can rediscover the power we are given by the Holy Spirit to share the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

**There is work to be done and the mission of our parish needs to continue. I thank the members of the Parish Pastoral Council who have served the parish graciously, well beyond their terms of office.** With the change and transition that took place here last summer, it is vital that we, as a church community come together, talk about who we are as church, and how we work together as we move into the future. And so, we'll be talking about the Parish Pastoral Council in the next couple of weeks. Together we'll discern new members to support and promote the mission of our parish. More than ever, we need to stand tall and be counted.

In today's Gospel passage, Peter could not accept the fate Jesus foretold for himself. In fact, Peter *rebuked* Jesus when he predicted he would suffer and die. Luckily for Peter, and for all of us, perfection is not a qualification for discipleship. What are the necessary qualifications? To have faith and to follow Jesus' commands. This entails denying one's self, taking up one's cross, and losing one's life for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel. These are the works without which faith is dead.

Like Peter, we are not perfect disciples, and God knows this. Though we have faith, sometimes we think first of what we want; what feels good and safe, rather than thinking of what God wants. But if we go our own way rather than God's, we risk becoming a mouthpiece for the things of the world and its earthly values; and the self-serving life we tried to save we will lose. Even if we are unsure of exactly what God is asking of us, or if it seems risky and uncertain, God invites us to trust. If we just get behind Jesus, he will guide us. Jesus will teach us what to do and how to follow him. This is our call to action! What is the Lord asking us to embrace here at St. Charles? How do we put our faith into action?

God is near, upholding us. He is our help, present to us in his Word and in the Eucharist. Nourished by these, we can set our faces like flint and not turn back, even as we confront opposition. The Lord will save us as we follow him in faith.

God loves you!  
  
Fr. Canisius