

# PASTOR'S REMARKS

## SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

### DEDICATION, PARISH LIFE CENTER

I would be remiss if at this historical moment I did not offer some words of gratitude to mark the occasion. At the dedication of the church, just over six years ago, I began by exclaiming, "Well, it looks like we made it." And boy did we. Now, we move to the next step in our growth as a vibrant welcoming parish family, growing disciples and making church matter. I wish to quote a famous poem as I did back in 2011. The poem by Robert Frost, with which many of you may be familiar as a poem you had to memorize in elementary school as did I. "*Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening.*"

The poem recounts the thoughts of a tired, inquisitive traveler on a horse drawn sleigh who pauses to rest for just a moment on the darkest evening of the year and to take note of the beauty of the snow falling upon the ground in the lovely, dark and deep woods. The poem expresses very poignantly for us the ever present interplay and challenge between a world offering perfect quiet and solitude, which exists side by side with the realization that there is another world, a world of people and social obligations. From a religious perspective we may liken this challenge to our call to holiness or conversion, this is our pilgrimage in faith here on earth. The challenges we face with regard to holiness and the practical world we live in. Today, marks officially, our move onto one campus for all our parish activities.

While the traveler in the poem stopped on that cold December 21, the winter solstice, just shortly after the celebration of our Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12' and just shortly before the celebration of the birth of our Savior, so now we gather in another context and season of the year, on a warm day in September, near the Fall Equinox, another change of season around the corner, equal light and darkness.

As travelers on our journey in faith, we stop and pause on our path, for just a moment in our history, to once again gaze upon the beauty of now this campus and not just the church, so lovely adorned, so dark in the sense of great potential beauty yet to be uncovered and discovered. It is so deep in the richness of God's ever abundant grace to be poured out to each one of us as we come to worship, receive the Sacraments of the Church, conduct our business and have our meetings, learn, play and socialize here. Now we have a place to gather for socials, for meetings for many other types of gatherings, a place for our office structure, a place of our own. Remember though, it is but a moment in our history. And so I echo the final thoughts of the inquisitive traveler, "This church, chapel and parish life center along with the courtyard to come are lovely dark and deep, but we have miles to go before we sleep, and miles to go before we sleep."

#### ***Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening***

*by Robert Frost*

*Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.*

*My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.*

*He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.  
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,*

The psalmist asks in Psalm 116, "How can I repay the Lord for all the great good done for me? The immediate response, "I will raise the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord." One of the main reasons why we gather on this campus is to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to receive the sacred body and blood of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This Eucharist nourishes, sustains and encourages us to further service and evangelization. And so to almighty God the Father, through His Son our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be praise, glory and honor now and forever.

On behalf of Father Ianelli, Deacon Robert Brady, I thank all of you for your support and patience to make this day a reality. I am grateful for the support from our Archbishop, Charles Chaput. I also thank Father Joseph Quindlen, our Founding Pastor and Father McDermott, our first Parochial Vicar.

While the list of names is endless, I am so grateful to all the members of the parish who over the years have been a part of the living stones of this wonderful Catholic Faith community, your witness to the faith, generosity and patience with the building projects, but mostly with me, your pastor. Special thanks to:

■ Those who have made today's celebration possible, it was a huge, collaborative effort on the part of so many: Our Social Affairs Committee members under the leadership of Chip Puchino; our ever faithful and hardworking office staff, the ministries and services associated with the liturgy, the ushers, the combined choirs and musicians;

■ Our builders, Tony Canuso and John Eccleston, of Neshaminy Construction. Matt Piotrowski, the architect;

■ All public officials associated with Buckingham Township – Supervisors: Maggie Rash, Paul Calderaio and John Forest. Dan and Ernie Gray of Knight Engineering, and the many others associated with the Township. We appreciate your guidance, consult and encouragement along the way.

■ Other public officials on the state and federal levels of our Government, in particular Brian Fitzpatrick, our Congressman in the House of Representatives.

■ Clergy representatives of the other faith communities who are present.

■ Special credit goes to all those parishioners who have stayed so loyal and faithful to our parish community, never becoming too discouraged. Your gift of your time, talent and treasure is a testament to your deep and abiding faith in our Catholic Faith.

■ It is important to point out the ever faithful support of the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Building Committee, both Campaign Committees, all the Sub-committees associated with not only this celebration but also those who serve our parish;

■ I would be remiss if I did not mention names of those who were most instrumental in generosity, guidance and council and who helped steer this project to the present point: Richard and Angela Clark, Robert Weikel and Ed Zapisek. A shout out goes to Michele Savage Boesch and Tim Conniff.

■ And finally we remember in a special way, those souls of the faithful departed who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith, who lived in patient expectation of this day, and whom we now have the sure and certain hope of their intercession for us, from the best view on the campus!

Ah this campus is lovely, dark and deep, but we have miles to go before we sleep. May those miles be filled with God's graces and blessings along the path we travel. I think the Traditional Gaelic Blessing sums up my sentiments:

*May the road rise up to meet us;  
May the wind be always at our backs;  
May the sun shine warm upon our faces;  
The rains fall soft upon our fields and until we meet again,  
May God hold us in the palm of His hand.*

