

160th ANNIVERSARY

Saint Victoria parish family

FATHER BOB WHITE MAY 21, 2017

FAITH NEEDS TO BE
ACTED ON...
NOT SAT UPON



AT HOME
AND
BEYOND



WHO ARE WE
AS A PARISH?

WHO DO WE
WANT TO
BECOME?

VISION STATEMENT

Saint Victoria is a
parish family who
reaches out as the
- FACE AND HANDS -
of Jesus Christ
in all we do.

GOD LOVES US
MORE THAN WE
LOVE OURSELVES!



WELCOME
BACK!



ENGAGING IN BOLD ACTS OF CHARITY AND JUSTICE

BY BAPTISM WE ARE CALLED
TO THE KINGDOM WORK.
GOD IS DOING IN OUR WORLD
TODAY!

WE REACH OUT
AS THE
FACE AND HANDS
OF JESUS BY

PROCLAIMING A GOD OF SWEET LOVE

WE CELEBRATE THIS
GOD OF SWEET LOVE
EVERYTIME WE GATHER
FOR EUCHARIST

WASHED BY HIS
BLOOD AND BLOOD
WE ARE
SENT OUT
TO BE THE
FACE AND HANDS
OF JESUS CHRIST



OFFERING RADICAL HOSPITALITY

WE REACH OUT TO ALL PEOPLE
REGARDLESS OF THE ROAD
TRAVELLED
MAKING THEM FEEL
WELCOMED AND VALUED



THANK YOU FOR
WHAT YOU DO
TO MAKE THAT
SPIRIT FEEL

ALL ARE WELCOME!

As you may remember, last week I said that my homily was going to be visually recorded, and not by a camera. We welcome today former parishioner Mick Walsh who will be doing the visual recording.

As we heard from John's Gospel today, the night before he died Jesus assures his disciples, "I will send you the Spirit who will be with you always." Every once in a while we get a glimpse of what the Spirit at work is really doing. It was the summer of 1997. I was sitting in the old parish office with Gene Okocki who was our parish administrator at the time.

We we're talking about what a parish can be when Gene said something that struck me. "What if everyone in the parish could be the face and hands of Jesus to each other? That's what a parish is about." That image stayed with me.

Ten years ago, in 2007, as we celebrated our 150th Anniversary just after moving into our new church we engaged in a strategic planning process.

That's when this image of being the face and hand of Jesus really took root. Since then that vision has continued to develop. Ten years later, as we celebrate our 160th anniversary, in conversation with the Parish Council that vision is taking on even more energy. I share that vision with you today.

What are we called to be as a parish and who do we want to become? We are a parish family that reaches out as the face and hands of Jesus by proclaiming a God of sweet love, by offering radical hospitality, and by engaging in bold acts of charity and justice. That's our mission and vision. A word about each.

One, we are a parish family that proclaims a God of sweet love. What does that mean? For a parish to be a true spiritual home for people we need to hear about a God who loves us more than we love ourselves. We need to hear about a God who accepts us as we are and not just as we should be. As Catholics we celebrate this God of sweet love every time we gather for Eucharist. Nourished by his body and blood, we are then sent out to be the face and hands of Jesus.

Two, we are a parish family that reaches out as the face and hands of Jesus by offering radical hospitality. What does that mean? Why is it that some people are hesitant to come back to church? In some cases it's because they've been met with judgment, questioning or just a set of rules and nothing more. People need more than that. They need to be welcomed and accepted for who they are.

Three, we are a parish family that reaches out as the face and hands of Jesus by engaging in bold acts of charity and justice. What does that mean? Faith needs to be acted on, not sat on. So we reach out to the hurting, to those among us and to those beyond us. Wherever people are hurting, that's where the church needs to be. In that sense the church is more of an outpost than a self-contained fortress, or as Pope Francis likes to say, a "field hospital" more than a filling station.

Reaching out as the face and hands of Jesus, over the years there has been great energy in that for us. And the more we commit to that the more that energy is unleashed. I see it happening all over. Thank you for what you do to make that kind of spirit all the more real for people. The night before he died Jesus assured his disciples, "I will send you the Spirit who will be with you always." May that same Spirit continue to be the energy that breathes new life to us as a parish.

~Fr. Bob White

