

Dear Friends,

Once again, here is our Mission Statement.

As Christian disciples we are entrusted with the mission of a renewal of faith through evangelization, catechesis, stewardship and outreach to our diverse community.

At the end of Matthew's Gospel Jesus tells the eleven apostles, *"Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you. And know that I am with you always until the end of the world."*¹ This activity Jesus commands is known as EVANGELIZATION. To evangelize means to live and proclaim the Gospel. The word Gospel means "good news."

The act of evangelization is a commandment given by Christ. It is our mission as baptized Christians to spread the good news of God's love to the world. This mission begins as parents teach their children about their faith. When mothers and fathers teach their little children how to say their prayers and how to live good lives, they are acting as evangelists. When we take the risk to invite those who have left the Church to give it another try we are spreading the gospel. It is important for us to remember that this mission is not an option. Therefore, we have to know the gospel, the good news of God's love.

We live in a world in which people would much rather ignore the Gospel, plead ignorance, and then hope for the best. So many parents would rather entrust the mission of evangelization solely to the Church. We have to remember however, that parents are the primary teachers of their children in the ways of faith. The Church can only augment the lessons parents pass on to their children. That's why good preaching is so

¹ Matthew 28: 1-19

important. It is my job to help form the faith lives of parents, grandparents, Godparents and all adults so that we can continue to pass on the riches of our faith to our children.

Good evangelization helps to guide us to salvation. We should not be indifferent to this reality. Our salvation began when Jesus suffered, died and rose again. The purpose of his coming into the world was, and is, *"For us and for our salvation,"* as we say in the Nicene Creed. Be aware of the love Christ has shown in coming into the world, in proclaiming the gospel, in suffering, dying and rising from the dead. Through our baptism we have already entered into the mystery of salvation. Through evangelization we continue to reveal that mystery to the world. That means we are to walk the walk as we talk the talk.

Our Mission Statement looks so simple, does it not? In reality, it is simple. But it is not always easy. We have to work together to carry on the mission of spreading the good news of God's love. I believe we're doing a pretty good job of that here at St. Catherine of Genoa Parish. I work hard at it, and I see a lot of other people doing their best, too.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel