

Saint Mary's Church

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Dear St. Mary's staff and ministry leaders,

I want to invite you to join me as we move forward in listening to the call of Archbishop Lucas, Pope Francis, and ultimately of Jesus Christ—the call to live as missionary disciples.

Archbishop Lucas has communicated his vision and desires for the direction of our Archdiocese in the form of three Pastoral Priorities:

- #1 – Create a Culture of Encountering Jesus & Equipping Disciples
- #2 – Create a Culture that Enables God's Mercy to be Received & Lived
- #3 – Create a Culture of Unity

We are continually being commissioned through our baptism to help realize and affirm these initiatives through the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through us. I am excited but honestly a little nervous about how to embrace and approach these goals. It is a “very big elephant” so we'll just have to start with one bite at a time.

To address one of those first “bites”, we have begun to host events called Encounter Nights with the aim of inviting people deeper into their own walk with Christ. Encounter Nights begin with a time to come together for Mass & dinner. Parishioners are then invited to experience Jesus through a keynote talk or testimony followed by Eucharistic Adoration and praise & worship music - all in a setting that helps open up hearts and minds to the calling of the Holy Spirit. We also hope to have priests available for confession during Adoration to allow for a deeper spiritual encounter through the grace and mercy of the sacrament of Reconciliation. All in all, these events are an opportunity to provide a life-changing personal encounter with Jesus Christ that can be lived out and shared with others.

The next Encounter Night is **Sunday, Oct. 15th**. The theme will center on our patron - the Blessed Virgin Mary - focusing on God's pursuit and invitation to Mary, her “yes” to that invitation and how God continually pursues us and invites us into deeper relationship with Him. The evening will start with mass at **5pm**, dinner at **6pm** in the parish center and the Encounter event at **7pm** in the church. Also mark your calendars for our Advent Encounter Night on *Sunday, Dec. 3rd*.

I tell all of you this, again, to invite you to join me in sharing and supporting these opportunities. We have a small core team working on the prep & planning for these events. ***I would ask you to give them your full support and cooperation.*** Furthermore, I humbly ask you to make attending these events a priority, not only for your own spiritual enrichment but also to show our solidarity and unity in rallying around these missional priorities.

The core team is hard at work on getting promotions out ASAP. ***Please make time to pass this invitation along to those you work with and minister to.*** A personal invitation is always the best approach – (says the guy writing an email!)

If you have any specific questions, contact Will Targy at will.targy@stmarysbellevue.com. If you plan to come for dinner, RSVP with Anne Nabors at the rectory (402.291.1350) or email anne.nabors@stmarysbellevue.com.

Thank you all for the amazing work and all the sacrifices you make for this parish. Please continue to lift me and one another up in prayer as we strive to make Jesus' mission more and more a part of our daily lives.

Blessings,

Fr. Lydell J. Lape

www.stmarysbellevue.com

Fr. Del Lape