



September 21, 2022  
The Feast of St. Matthew

Dear Parishioners:

I hope that this note finds you well and enjoying these September days!

First, this month, I want to draw your attention to something that has been in the bulletin for a few weeks and offers a unique opportunity for us to work together with other Christians. Between our parish and a couple other of the Strongsville churches, we have some interest in exploring a program that would possibly result in pulling our resources to welcome a Ukrainian family to our community. Catholic Charities, within the Diocese of Cleveland, has been approached as one of approximately six United States dioceses who have a significant Ukrainian population to host families. Through the program called, *Uniting for Ukraine Welcome Circle*, we will host an informational meeting on Tuesday, October 11 at 7pm in the Holy Family Center 2-3. All are welcome to attend! We will explore what is needed to form a Welcome Circle in our community to sponsor a refugee family from Ukraine for temporary residence in the USA. Heath Rosenberger, Program Director of the Catholic Charities Office of Migration and Refugee Services, will be present and answer questions about this opportunity. There's no need to RSVP, so we invite anyone who may be interested in learning more about this unique opportunity.

In many ways, our parish provides outreach to those in need, and you may have noticed that our El Salvador Education Partnership 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Scholarship Drive is now underway for children in our sister parish in San Jose Villanueva. Over the years, our community has generously donated over \$180,000 that has been used for tuition, clothing, supplies, internet cards during COVID, and countless other educational needs. There was a flyer in the bulletin a few weekends ago or you can still stop in the Gathering Area to pick up one. In addition, since you're reading this in your email, you can find out more by visiting [www.sjohio.org/elsalvador](http://www.sjohio.org/elsalvador). The donation levels remain the same as last year and do not forget that you can also donate through *FaithDirect*. Our Scholarship Drive concludes on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Thanks for your consideration of support the children of our Sister Parish!

Additionally, this month, I draw your attention to the outreach opportunities we have through our upcoming Annual Parish Service Day. We will have this once again on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, beginning with prayer in the Church at 9am. Worksites have been found and now we are looking for parishioners of all ages and skills to give of their time to serve God through serving our neighbors. Sign-ups began online

this past weekend and will also be available in person this weekend before and after all Masses. You can sign up at [www.sjohio.org/service](http://www.sjohio.org/service). We look forward to joining with you!

While providing outreach, our community is also a community of prayer. For nearly 11 years, we have been praying Evening Prayer on Thursday evenings in the Chapel, along with Benediction. Beginning Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> around 8:30pm on select Tuesdays, the Men's Chant Schola will be singing Night Prayer in our Chapel. They invite anyone interested in joining with them, to come and pray with them. You can find out more about this, as well as the specific Tuesday evenings that they will be praying either by visiting the bulletin board just inside the Chapel or by visiting [www.sjohio.org/nightprayer](http://www.sjohio.org/nightprayer). If you choose to look online, you can find a flyer and a recording of Night Prayer that you might even consider praying on your own. As with Evening Prayer, the Church's Liturgy of the Hours provides a great way to sanctify the hours of the day and fulfill St. Paul's exhortation to "pray without ceasing".

And finally, with the return of our Health Faith on Sunday, October 2, I am excited to share that all our parish ministries that were suspended on account of COVID have returned. This has been no easy feat, and I am very grateful to our ministry members, leaders, and fellow parish staff members who have exercised great care, dedication, and creativity. For some ministries, it's been nearly two and a half years since they have been active, yet now they are back. So – to all – thank you! Because of crowd size, for the foreseeable future, Daily Mass on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday will be in the church, while Tuesday and Thursday will be in the Chapel. Maybe sometime in the future, distribution of the Precious Blood will return, but we await direction from the Diocese on this. While the return of ministries signifies an important step in our COVID recovery, I urge all to remain cautious as your own health circumstances dictate, including feeling comfortable to wear face masks as you wish, staying home when feeling ill, and being mindful of the guidance from health authorities. I know I certainly try to do so yet I am so grateful to see so many people returning to the many opportunities that our parish has to offer. Perhaps there's a new one waiting for you to try?

Have a blessed remainder of the week. See you in church!

St. Joseph, pray for us,  
~Fr. Joe