

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## WE HAVE OPENINGS!!!

Dear Parish Family:

I am writing this on Wednesday after leaving the first day of school for many of the students at our incredible Catholic school. It is an opening - a new beginning for each of them. For some, they are joining our amazing community for the first time. For others, it's a new grade or new part of the school. Either way, the presence of Christ dwells deep within and surrounds our young people.

Yesterday, we gathered with teachers throughout the Diocese of Rockville Centre for the Opening Day of Prayer and Reflection for Catholic school teachers throughout the diocese. Coming with a spirit of the Eucharistic Revival, there were opportunities for prayer and reflection about the gift of the Eucharist. For some, perhaps a new opening to encounter the Body of Christ in the gift of the Eucharist.

On Labor Day, I had the privilege to join with many members of our Spanish community for an annual diocesan celebration at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington. An opening to encounter Christ in the gift of the Eucharist at Mass and the vibrant faith of so many. Another opening to the many ways God is calling me to grow and to be challenged in my faith. (I also helped to make pupusas - not sure that was a good opening for the people who ate them :!)

Over the weekend, I invited someone I know who struggles greatly with meeting new people to a family dinner in a restaurant. The person came...and actually had a good time! Whenever they reached for their phone, my mom would tap on the table and say, "Hey...it's focus time with me not your phone!" They smiled...and put down the phone. (She even called from across the table to make the person smile!) An opening to see the many ways this person is loved and cared for in the midst of their own struggles (and ours, for sure!).

"Ephphatha!"— that is, "Be opened! - Jesus says in



the Gospel today. It is a time for openings.

We speak these words in the *Rite of Baptism* praying that the newly baptized will always hear and speak the words of Christ in their lives. It is as necessary now in my life and yours as it was when we were baptized. It is a call to Christ-like living and a renewed openness to all that Jesus is asking of us.

September is traditionally a time of new beginnings as we move from summer to the beginning of Fall. These new beginnings call for an openness to all that God has in store for us and may even require a closing to the things WE think God has in store for us!

So good news....we have OPENINGS for those who desire to be opened, who desire to respond to Jesus' command in the Gospel. Consider:

- time for a new ministry and mission here at St. Brigid's. For some, September is a time of new beginnings after retirement. You're not done! So much to give (and to receive) here at St. Brigid's.
- openings for prayer and reflection. I hope, as a parish, we can look together at our prayer learning, particularly Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and some new adult faith formation classes. On a personal level, perhaps a time to consider a new opening for prayer - a new rhythm, method, time, place, etc.
- The many diverse experiences of prayer and culture that our community offers. This might be the opening you need for a deeper spiritual life.
- Opening yourself up in friendship through ministries like Martha and Company, Wedding Rehearsal, Ministry, Family Faith Formation, our incredible choirs and more.

Together, let us commit to being open to all that God has in store for us!

Please pray for me - I promise the same!

*Father Jim*