

THE PASTOR'S POST

CABRINI

Dear Parish Family:

I feel like the spirit of Mother Cabrini might be haunting me! Let me explain.

When we planned the calendar for the 2024-25 pastoral year, I spoke with the Pastoral Team about celebrating the Feast of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, patron saint of immigrants. The idea jumped in my mind when I visited the Cabrini Shrine for the first time with the Italian community last April. I had the chance to visit the shrine and celebrate Mass. What a gift!

Everyone was supportive of the idea so we formed a "work-group" that met for the first time last Thursday. Honestly, I was a little concerned how it would go. It's a busy time of the year and November is a hectic time too. The reaction was great and I realized how important this saint was to the various immigrant communities who make up our parish. It lifted my spirit after a long day. Plans were made for a beautiful liturgy and a wonderful time of hospitality. More to come, but for now, save the date of Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7 p.m. Mass at Our Lady's Chapel and hospitality to follow after.

Last night (I am writing this on Monday), I visited a priest friend who is in a short term rehab after a bout with COVID and has some challenges moving around. We talked for a bit. It was later on a Sunday and he was pretty tired. As I was about to leave, he said, "Wait, John! I have to tell you about Mother Cabrini." I turned around, he sat up in his bed, his face lit up and he told me he was able to leave the nursing home last Friday to go on a trip to the Cabrini Shrine in the Bronx. He gave me a book of prayers and spent some time telling me all about her! "She helped everybody," he said,

"what an amazing woman. All my life - he is in his early 70s - I did not realize all she had done."

Then, this morning, I received an email from Mr. Clagnaz on this Columbus Day. A day instituted as a celebration for Italian immigrants, we have learned the story of Christopher Columbus is worthy of our consideration on a number of levels. Others have moved to change the name. Some celebrate Indigenous People's Day today. For others, it is Italian Heritage day. I do not wish to wade into or cause any controversy in this column.

Mr. Clagnaz shared a great reflection about how the state of Colorado made the first Monday of October - Cabrini Day! (A great connection as our middle school will be visiting the Cabrini Shrine this Friday). In a time where there seems to be such division between church and state, a Catholic saint known for her work with immigrants and the poor is honored. Wow! She

contributed so much in New York, in Colorado and throughout the United States. An immigrant herself, with other plans for her life, she responded to where the Church called her to go. We can't help but think of the line of Jesus today, "Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all."

As I write this, my heart breaks a little as I read and listen to some perspectives and opinions about migrants and refugees. Some of these are from people I love and I admire. I think God's heart breaks a bit too! Remember, the Church's teaching is clear about the need for just immigration policies and about the need for countries to have borders. The Church does not encourage open borders but calls every country, particularly those with means,



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to be even more aware of the poor in our midst and why they are immigrating. You can read more here - justiceforimmigrants.com.

In this Respect Life Month, we need to remember that we value the dignity of every human being. Immigrants are not a "them" or an "other". Migrants and refugees are our brothers and sisters who deserve our love, charity, outreach, and care. They, like everyone else, do not deserve to be victims of prejudice, crime, hate, lies, and vitriol. What would Mother Cabrini say? I imagine she would serve and care for everyone who came to her door and then seek to reform the systems of injustice as best she could. The same call is there for each one of us.

For Cabrini Day in Colorado all are encouraged to take a Cabrini Day pledge. (Visit cabriniday.org for more information and sources. Here is the pledge: This year, I _____ in the spirit of Frances Xavier Cabrini, pledge to be kinder and more compassionate, and will work to improve the community I live in. I will also take time to care for myself and reflect upon the impact of my actions."

At first glance, it seems pretty simple. Perhaps in light of the times we live in and the call of the Gospel, it is not as simple as we might think. Maybe it should haunt us a little bit, causing us to reflect on what we have done and what we have failed to do, as well as what we are doing and what we are failing to do.

Lord, let your mercy be on us (Psalm 33).
Please pray for me. I promise the same.

Father John

Querida familia parroquial:

Siento como si el espíritu de la Madre Cabrini me estuviera persiguiendo. Me explico.

Cuando planificamos el calendario para el año pastoral 2024-25, hablé con el Equipo Pastoral de celebrar la fiesta de Santa Francisca Javier Cabrini, patrona de los inmigrantes. La idea surgió en mi mente cuando visité el santuario de Cabrini por primera vez con la comunidad italiana el pasado mes de abril. Tuve la oportunidad de visitar el santuario y celebrar la misa. ¡Qué regalo!

Todos apoyaron la idea, así que formamos un "grupo de trabajo" que se reunió por primera vez el jueves pasado. Sinceramente, me preocupaba un poco cómo iba a ir. Es una época del año muy ajetreada y noviembre también lo es. La reacción fue estupenda y me di cuenta de lo importante que era este santo para las distintas comunidades de inmigrantes que componen nuestra parroquia. Me levantó el ánimo después de un largo día. Se hicieron planes para una hermosa liturgia y un maravilloso momento de hospitalidad. Más por venir, pero por ahora, reservar la fecha del miércoles, 13 de noviembre 2024 a las 7 pm Misa en la Capilla de Nuestra Señora y la hospitalidad a seguir después.

Anoche (estoy escribiendo esto el lunes), visité a un amigo sacerdote que está en rehabilitación a corto plazo después de un ataque de COVID y tiene algunas dificultades para moverse. Hablamos un rato. Era domingo y estaba bastante cansado. Cuando estaba a punto de irme, me dijo: "¡Espera, John! Tengo que contarte lo de la Madre Cabrini". Me di la vuelta, se sentó en su cama, se le iluminó la cara y me contó que pudo salir de la residencia de ancianos el viernes pasado para ir de excursión al Santuario Cabrini, en el Bronx. Me dio un libro de oraciones y estuvo un rato hablándome de ella. "Ayudaba a todo el mundo", me dijo, "qué mujer tan increíble. En toda mi vida -tiene unos 70 años-". Me contó de todo lo que había hecho' *Father John*