

URI CATHOLIC CENTER NEWS

Dear Parishioners,

“The people were filled with expectation...” Even after an Advent season of watching and waiting, as we conclude the Christmas season this weekend with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we are *still* filled with expectation! The gifts of God are never exhausted and the Christ who has been born in our midst will now challenge us to live out the grace of our own baptism. According to the Eastern Christian tradition, the baptism of Jesus is significant not because Jesus himself needed it or was cleansed of any sin by it, but because when Jesus descended into the Jordan River, he made all water holy so that it could be used for the communication of divine life in the Church’s celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism. Today’s feast reminds us not only of the Christmas mystery, that our God made our world his own home, but that he also draws up created things known by us and intelligible to us—material realities, even water—into his divine plan.



As you read this, our missionaries are wrapping up their trip in Nicaragua and will return home on Monday evening. On behalf of our mission trip adult leaders—Marybeth Nunnery, Ken Pelletier, Jen Marran—and our missionaries, I cannot thank you enough for your generosity in helping us far exceed our goal of \$53,000. To date, we have raised **\$55,414.44!** That total reflects generous donations from our parish family, donations from family and friends of our missionaries that were received as a result of their letter-writing campaign, proceeds from the pancake breakfast and jewelry sale, and donations or matched gifts from corporations and other organizations. When all costs are evaluated and all our bills are paid, we hope to donate whatever remains directly to Mustard Seed in support of their ongoing work. While we are no longer accepting donations for the 2016 Mission Trip, please continue to keep our missionaries and all those they have served in your prayers. I hope to update you on the specifics of the trip in the very near future.

The New Year, I pray, will see an expansion of the missionary efforts of the Catholic Center. The life-changing opportunity to participate in a mission trip and the impact it can have on a young person’s relationship with God and others, is something we want to facilitate for the greatest number of people through the greatest number of opportunities. If you wish to contribute to a growing mission program with more opportunities for more students to serve in different contexts and different parts of the world in 2016-2017, please make checks payable to “Campus Ministry – URI” and write “Mission Trip Support” in the memo line. And thank you, as always, for your generosity.

I had written a few weeks back about the upcoming fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Center. Now that the New Year is underway, I hope to put together a committee of alumni, parishioners and others who are interested or able to help us plan a major event to commemorate the anniversary in the Spring. If you or someone you know might be interested, please call us at 874-2324. We’re also getting a great response to our alumni database project. I’ve enjoyed reading through the many memories shared and the updates on where our alumni are now living and working. We’re hoping to have our first alumni newsletter published this winter. If you are an “alum” of the URI Catholic Center, please email us (rhodycatholic@gmail.com) your updated contact info (including maiden name, if applicable), your year of graduation and major, what you’ve been up to, and any memories you have from your involvement with the Catholic community. And please help us spread the word!

Remember that aside from the noon liturgy on weekdays, the Catholic Center will remain closed through January. Regular office hours will resume on Monday, January 25, 2016. And again, a word of thanks to all those who sent Christmas greetings, cards, gifts, or treats. Reggie and I are grateful!

Fr. Joe