

5th Sunday Ordinary Time

February 6-7, 2016

Readings: Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 11; Luke 5:1-11

“I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart, for you have heard the words of my mouth.” The words contained in today’s Responsorial Psalm are most appropriate as we reflect briefly on the manifold gifts that God has given to us. Indeed, we are right in giving thanks to Him for our gifts. This is precisely why we desire to return those gifts to their Source, Christ our Lord.

Like Isaiah in our first reading, we may think that there is little we can do- “I am too young.” Or “We are too powerless to effect change.” This thinking, while understandable, must be resisted. Three busloads filled with young people traveled to Washington DC for the March for Life last month, only to get stranded on the way home. Twenty-three hours straight without moving an inch on the Turnpike!

I celebrated a special Mass for the group upon their return here to the Cathedral. Their demeanor, their zeal and perseverance inspired many local Catholics, and that trip is just one of many ways in which the Office of Marriage and Family serves this local Church, in addition to the excellent marriage preparation retreats they offer.

I am honored to have a front row seat to see the many reasons for hope that exist amongst the people of God. Despite the many challenges we face as a local Archdiocese, the work of the Church is continuing. It is continuing in Venezuela, where we have operated a mission since 1970. Like the Office of Marriage and Family, over half of the mission’s funding is from the CSA.

It takes place in hospitals where chaplains respond to emergency anointing calls each and every day. And if they are off for the day, we often get the calls here! It is vitally important work. It happens on college campuses where groups like Saint Paul Outreach do amazing work to engage young adults.

This year, 17 different ministries will be supported by CSA funds. This is direct funding to the particular offices or schools, and our support is critical. I believe that a new day is ready to dawn in our local Church.

I prayerfully ask you to consider a gift this year. Today, I am asking you to consider a pledge and will now take a few minutes to take you through the process, as we have done in previous years.