

From the Pastor
Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 21, 2022

THE OUR LADY OF FATIMA-ROSARY CHAPEL

Here at St. Paul's, there are many reasons for the Pastor of the Church to be edified by the parishioners. Seeing so many praying in the Church during the day, seeing the devotion of the children, seeing the families of infants to be baptized are always uplifting occasions. One of the things that has so impressed me is seeing the many people who through the course of the day, from dawn to the evening come to the Church to pray before the statue of Our Lady of Grace on the front lawn of the Church. This shrine was a gift to our Church by the Maturo Family. Many simply pull up in their car and park there for a while. Other sit on the stone benches and pray. Others bring flowers to place there. All know that great truth that St. Bernard wrote in the prayer, the *Memorare*: That never has it been known that anyone who sought her intercession was left unaided.

Inside the Church one may visit the Our Lady of Fatima Rosary Chapel. This chapel was donated by a parishioner in memory of his own beloved mother. Some parishioners may recall that this chapel was originally the baptistery of the Church. Later the baptismal font was moved, and it became a Children's Room. As a Children's Room it was not very effective. Families seemed to be excluded from the Church and there was very little air or comfort. It became a place where infectious disease could be spread. It is now the Chapel of Our Lady.

The first thing one notices in this chapel is the beautiful statue of Our Lady. The features are very refined and tender. Our Lady seems to invite us into her maternal embrace. The statue itself was made in Peru and then shipped to the United States and to St. Paul's. It is a replica of the statue of Our Lady in Fatima, Portugal. It was there that the Blessed Mother appeared six times to the little shepherd children, Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta. This occurred in 1917. There Our Lady asked us to pray the Rosary.

For that very reason, the twenty mysteries of the Rosary are depicted on the wall of the Chapel. By meditating on the mysteries, we encounter God and Our Lady. In the Chapel one may also see a fleur-de-lis (a lily) which is a symbol of Our Lady. The altar upon which Our Lady stands is one solid piece of light blue marble. It was difficult to obtain, because the color is so unique. So many of our parishioners love to pray in that chapel.

In the chapel the crucifix which used to be suspended above the sanctuary is found. After the removal of the lighting fixture above the altar (it was wooden and some say resembled a space ship) was removed to make way for more beautiful, effective, and cost-saving lighting, it was obvious that the crucifix which had been there would not be large enough to fill the sight line of the whole apse. For that reason, a new and larger crucifix was donated to fill the apse. The artist who made this wood cut crucifix (the only one in the world) called it: *Mission Accomplished*,

because of the serenity and peace on Our Lord's face. He is at rest and at peace because the great work for which He came into the world had just been accomplished by his death on the Cross.

Please go to the Fatima Chapel and there pray for all your needs, for the needs of the parish, and especially for all many sick parishioners.

Next week I will write about the Guadalupe Chapel.

SAVE THE DATE

Our Annual Parish Picnic will be on Sunday September 18th beginning at 12 noon. It will be a fun filled afternoon of good food, games for the children, music, and meeting up with fellow parishioners. All are most welcome. The picnic is given as a small token of Thanksgiving to all our parishioners.

In Jesus and Mary,

Monsignor Pereda