

SOME NOTES FROM FR. JOE:

1) I AM SCARED. That is probably the wrong thing to write as we look forward to a New Year, a new President. However, as I look at what is happening in our country, I admit that I am very fearful. Why? Because the economy is getting worse, not better. More people are out of work. Our State of Illinois is a mess! Because of everything happening with the Governor, and our state Representatives and Senators, our state is almost broke! Many State of Illinois agencies are not helping people anymore. Many good programs have had their funds cut!

More people will lose their homes, lose their health insurance, etc. This means more depression, more domestic violence, more people drinking too much or using drugs in an unhealthy way. At the same time, people who do counseling, who help people are getting more demands for help, but have less money for programs.

- a) Please! If you are having serious problems in our marriage, your family, your personal life, ask for help! Fr. Mike, me (Fr. Joe), our deacons: we will be available to listen and offer help.
- b) There are very good counselors who know sign-language and understand deaf people. We can provide information how to contact these people. They will only charge what a person can afford. They are very professional and confidential.
- c) In the Chicago area, we have CILs (Centers for Independent Living), ACCESS LIVING (Chicago), PROGRESS CENTER (Suburban Cook County; offices in Forest Park and Blue Island), DuPAGE CIL (Glen Ellyn), WILL-GRUNDY CIL (Joliet), LAKE COUNTY (Mundelein). These CILs have "Deaf Service" staff to help families.
- d) If you become sick and you have no insurance, go to a HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM! Even if you have no insurance, go immediately to an EMERGENCY ROOM to get help!

2) Starting the New Year in a "spiritual" way. There are many excellent ways for us to grow in our life of faith. Two "deaf" ways are:

- a) Fr. Mike Depcik's VLOG. Each week, a new message: www.frmd.org
- b) Each week, see the Sunday Mass readings done in ASL (American Sign-Language). Go to: www.transfiguration.com. Left side index, click: Sign-Language Liturgies, then click the date. You may need to use the "download liturgy" button.

3) Thanks, again, to MS. SUZETTE DeSALVO. Suzette donated the beautiful nativity (Crib) set we have in chapel each year.

4) So many of you sent beautiful cards, promised to pray for me (and my dad & family), gave me great hugs, and very kind gifts. I am most, most grateful to all of you, especially for all your support during these past difficult months.

5) We are still unpacking at the new office for the Catholic Office of the Deaf. Please be patient with us. Hopefully by January 5th, we will be operating at full force. COLLEEN CURRY, NANCY HUBER, MAGGIE SWATEK, and help from MARTY LEWIS, packed up our entire office. Wow!!!!!!

6) These are difficult times, so....let's celebrate!

- a) Next Sat., 1/3, come to the "Three Kings" celebration, 4-7pm. Great for families!
- b) Next Sun, 1/4, come to FREE hot soup and chili after our 10:30am Mass.

7) Fight the FLU! Please wash your hands, especially after using the restrooms. Parents: please teach your children to wash their hands EVERY TIME they use the washrooms!

8) There is an important "Town Hall" meeting at the Anixter Center on January 7th. This is a very important meeting for the deaf community because it involves Chicago Hearing Society (CHS). Please read the flyer about this meeting; plan to attend! FREE. Voice and sign. 5:30-7:30pm, 2032 N. Clybourn, Polk Meeting Room, Chgo, IL.

9) "What we give to the poor because of Jesus Christ is what we carry with us when we die." -Peter Maurin, Catholic layman.

10) ARD is ADDICTION RECOVERY OF THE DEAF. ARD helps deaf people AND their families when there are problems with alcohol and drugs. 773-227-8562vp/tty.

11) Catholic Office of the Deaf has been registered for over one year at GoodSearch and GoodShop. Our supporters have raised \$28 this year by using GoodSearch to search the internet and GoodShop to make online purchases! www.goodsearch.com to change your home-page.