



St. Augustine's – Parkland Anglican Church
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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Over Lent we have heard about Jesus' hospitality in the forms of teaching, food and fellowship (Lk 15:1-32). At the center of this hospitality is Jesus' message about humanity needing to strip away any excess that does not benefit our soul and our church. Jesus invites us to give abundantly by building relationships with our brothers and sisters in the world and to invite them to our dinner tables, and our church (Luke 15:32).

However, we are now about to get a taste of how passionate God's hospitality is as we continue to journey with Jesus toward his unjust death and the glory of his resurrection. In our Lord's passion, we recall the hostility of a world not ready to receive the hospitality of God through Jesus' mission (Jn 12:1-8).

We are also reminded that we too, like Jesus' disciples, can waver in our faith. We can even go to the extent of wanting to bear arms, both literally and figuratively speaking, to protect what we think we have, rather, than pray and build relationships during dire and pressing times of injustice and division (Lk 22:50). Yet, Jesus utters the words "No more of this!" Jesus, then, healed his enemy as example that love, and forgiveness is the path to God (Lk 22:51).

Jesus Christ lays down his life in a great exchange with and for us so that we can continue his mission of love and sacrifice for a world that struggles with hostility and sin (Lk 23:46). The cross of Christ is a sign of our faith, and that sign reminds us that no longer does death hold us hostage over the temporal issues of the world for we have gained entrance into God's kingdom (Lk 23:43).

We have been given a life to be truly free to help our brothers and sisters with a true self-sacrificing and healing love. Therefore, we are called at all times to include all at our Eucharistic table, to respect diversity, to be peacekeepers in the times of tragedy, and to protect God's creation without counting the costs—this is the true hospitality of God and of the Church.

Over Holy Week, I invite everyone to keep vigil and to keep prayer with our Lord. I also encourage everyone to invite old and new friends and even strangers to join us at our humble church in order to celebrate our Easter faith. May God bless all of you abundantly this Easter, amen!

Pax et Bonum!

Rev. Billy Isenor, OSF, Rector