

the **JOY** movement

We Are All Saints ... Holiness is Possible

January 25, 2022
The Conversion of St. Paul

Dear Friends in Christ,

We hope this letter finds you well. Please know of our continuing prayers for you and your loved ones during these challenging times. After the last two years, we are more grateful than ever for each of you! Despite the challenges we all have faced during the pandemic, All Saints is **JOY-fully** moving forward on our mission of Evangelization. This year, we are continuing to enter into the **JOY Movement**.

JOY is an acronym which stands for **Jesus, Others, Yourself**. When we put Jesus first, and others before ourselves, we experience joy!

50 years ago, Vatican II emphasized that **all Baptized Christians** are called to live a holy life. Prior to Vatican II, a culture existed in the Church (incorrectly) that holiness was only something reserved for the Clergy, Religious Orders, or other special souls. The Laity's role was to "pray, pay, and obey." Vatican II made it clear that while the Clergy still has a ministerial role in the Church, **all Baptized Christians, especially the Laity**, are called to be active members in the Body of Christ. The most important function of the Church is Evangelization.

Our motto at All Saints Parish is "*Holiness is Possible*," and the foundation of our Pastoral Plan is centered on the Universal Call to Holiness for all of us. Many positive things have happened at All Saints over the past few years, even with all the challenges and obstacles presented by the pandemic. However, our Parish needs continued growth and increased involvement from every parishioner if we are to remain a healthy and vibrant community both now and in the future.

The **JOY Movement** begins with gratitude for all the blessings God has given each of us. We are asked to reflect on God's blessings and are then called to examine ways we can work together to strengthen the Catholic Church in Haverhill and beyond by committing ourselves to the missionary work of Evangelization – the work of bringing the JOY of the Gospel of Christ to all people. We will be encouraged to discern and use the gifts that God has given us in ways that will strengthen and sustain our Parish for the critical work of Evangelization.

Beyond the challenges of the pandemic (which will hopefully experience some relief from soon), our biggest challenge is the secularization of society. In Massachusetts, the number of younger people under the age of 40 who identify with no religion (known as "nones")- is equal or greater than the number of those who identify as Catholics. The good news is that many young people, even though they are not going to Church, still believe in God. There is hope



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that through good Evangelization, we can help “nones” and lapsed Catholics find the true purpose and meaning of their lives in Jesus Christ, and equip them live out that life as active members of His Church.

For this to happen, we who are affiliated with the Church must all look within our hearts and ask ourselves “*What MORE can I do to advance the Kingdom of God?*”

This is the goal of the **JOY Movement**: to advance the work of Jesus Christ in our neighborhoods and our world as Grateful Disciples!

This Lent is the perfect time for us to consider how we have prioritized our time, talents, and treasure in **GRATITUDE** for all that God has given to us. It is our hope that you will reflect on your blessings and prayerfully consider making an even stronger commitment to our Parish. When we are intentional in offering back to God the “first fruits of our labors,” and committed to sharing the blessings God has bestowed upon us, our All Saints Family will truly advance in its mission to “make disciples of all nations.”

We have several key goals we hope to address through the commitments made in JOY this year:

- Increasing attendance and participation at Mass, the “Source and Summit” of Christian Life
- Introduce and build **over a dozen new ministries** over the next calendar year
- Growing the number of volunteers in new and existing ministries by 50%
- Establishing an annual, pledge-based offertory giving program that will allow the Parish to accurately forecast and budget for the coming year

We are building toward the weekend of MAY 1, 2022 which will be our Discipleship Commitment Weekend. Every week this Lent we will share more information with how you can spread the JOY.

On behalf of the entire Parish, we want to thank you for all you have done in the past for our parish family, and we are excited to journey together with you into the future.

Please know of our daily prayers for you and your families. **“WITH CHRIST, WE CAN!”**

With JOY in the Risen Lord,

Rev. Chris Wallace, Pastor.

Rev. Marcos Pena, Parochial Vicar