

## FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

We are coming to the end of the summer! School is starting back up and we're getting back into the swing of things. I want to mention something that I see as a very special occasion. While many may be away next weekend, Sunday is very special, for it is the **canonization of Mother Teresa of Calcutta**.

A reminder that **canonization** means that the Church is declaring her a saint. The Church is very careful about who they declare to be saints. There is an extensive fact finding process that looks at everything the people wrote, interviews people that knew them, and in many ways examines their lives. The Church is looking not just to see if the person was a faithful Catholic (though that is essential), but is looking for signs of *heroic virtue*. While there are many more saints in heaven than we have canonized on earth (that's what the Feast of All Saints is about on November 1), we look to the saints not just as people we think are in heaven, but as *examples* for us to imitate and *intercessors* to whom we can fly. The Church looks at their virtue, and whether they truly lived virtue in a heroic way! After they have established their heroic virtue in life, the Church then looks to their intercession. For non-martyrs (such as Mother Teresa), the Church currently requires two miracles to be verified before they can be named as Saints. These two miracles have to be such that they are verifiable and that there is no known natural reason for the miracle to have occurred. This would be a sign of the Saint's intercession from heaven.

So Mother Teresa, whose virtue is certainly renowned, is being named a saint! This is not just a passing fancy. This is an important moment for the Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, especially in this Year of Mercy. Mother Teresa was known for her exceptional works of mercy with the poor, the dying, the outcast. Her canonization is a call for *all of us* to be more focused on the Works of Mercy. I have written in detail about the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy in other articles (check out our website at: [stpatricks-pelham.com](http://stpatricks-pelham.com) and look under "From the Pastor's Desk" by "Quick Links" and you can read from Dec 13, 2015-March 13, 2016), and next week, we will have a short pamphlet available on the Works of Mercy. This is a time, though, for us to step up the call to **ACT IN MERCY!**

As a Parish, we would like to do **1,000,000 Acts of Mercy**. In the bulletin as well as at the main entrance of the Church, we have a card which each person or family can fill out. This card allows you to indicate which acts of mercy you have done and how many of each. If you drop them in the collection each week, or get them to the Parish Office, we will keep a tally. For every **1,000 Acts of Mercy**, we will display a **piece of a puzzle** in the Church. Let's see how long it takes us to finish the 1,000,000 Acts of Mercy, and what the puzzle looks like.

We hope that this project will inspire us to do more Works of Mercy, and to make mercy a habit in our lives – that like Saint Teresa of Calcutta we will be people of heroic virtue!