

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

July 9, 2023

Dear Friends,

The end of the school year and the beginning of summer have brought some changes to our ministry team that I want to share with you. Four departures and one arrival!

First, the departures. After serving for 30 years as director of our parish's outreach to immigrants and refugees, **Chris Koehler** has accepted a position to do similar work for the Archdiocese of Seattle. During his many years with us, Chris has grown this important ministry exponentially, taking it beyond an English as a Second Language program, to a highly sophisticated outreach to immigrants and asylum seekers, including advocacy, education, citizenship preparation, senior accompaniment, and much more. Chris left us back in May and, while I found it hard to see him leave, I have taken comfort knowing that the ministry he led so faithfully and so effectively will continue to thrive here at the parish, while he is now able to share his gifts with the entire archdiocese.

Another staff member who is leaving us is **Theresa Van de Ven** who has served since 2006 in our Children's Faith Formation ministry--first, by providing invaluable administrative support and, more recently, by directing the program. Only our families with young children know the breadth and depth of Theresa's contribution over the years. In so many ways, she has been the heart and soul of this ministry - the 'go to person' whom everyone came to love, trust, and depend on. To say that we will miss Theresa is a very big understatement. She will continue to be part of our parish, however, and it's hard to think that she won't find ways to continue sharing her incredible gifts in the days to come.

Still another, **Jennifer Wong**, who has coordinated our wonderful Faith Friends Ministry for several years, is leaving us to take a full-time job at the Chancery. Faith Friends is an inclusion ministry for children and teens ages 7- 18 with physical, cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities. Jennifer has done an incredible job with this ministry. Thank you, Jennifer.

The last one to leave us is **Andrew Braley**, who came to us last fall to serve as Youth and Young Adult minister. It's been wonderful having Andrew and his family as part of the parish, and we're grateful to him for his outreach to young adults and his involvement with the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children. We wish him our very best.

And now, for the arrival – and a happy arrival it is! **Tami Kowal** and her husband Rob with their three kids arrived in the parish twelve years ago, but now we are delighted that she is joining our staff, taking over Theresa Van de Ven's role as director of Children's Faith Formation. I can only believe that this is an answer to prayer. Tami (Rob, too) has been involved in the ministry for a number of years, so she knows it both as a volunteer and a parent. And her years as a primary school teacher make her uniquely qualified for her new role. A warm welcome to you, Tami!

We sometimes think of summer as down time. Here at the Cathedral, it looks to be anything but! In addition to the ever-present weddings and funerals, our Summer Concert Series is underway, the Feast of James is coming up on July 23, and Choir Camp is not far off (August 7-11), not to mention the Hunthausen Golf Tournament on August 28. Keep your seatbelts fastened...!



Father Michael G. Ryan