

seek, share, rejoice - our faith community

Transformation: Living Christ's Mission Today

What is Communio?

During the weeks that the Transformation Team met, one of the topics that kept making its way into our discussions was that of "Welcoming;" moreover, whether Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a welcoming parish. Do strangers who walk through our doors see friendly, smiling faces—parishioners who embody the presence of God? Many people expressed concern that we fall short in this regard and that our parish would benefit from working on Communio.

Communio is a Latin word used by the Church to describe the union that we, as Catholics, share with and in Christ as members of His Mystical Body. We cannot, however, profess to be one body in Christ without acting as one body. Therefore, although Communio is a gift from God, we must work to perfect this unity, which requires our being conscious of each other as well as the strangers in our midst. Do we create an atmosphere that is inclusive? Do we value each individual? Do we smile and extend our arms in greeting? In his Encyclical, *Novo Millennio Inuente*, St. John Paul II writes of a "light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us." Does the stranger see this light in our faces? We often downplay its power, but nothing lights up a face better than a smile. St. Teresa of Calcutta expresses it beautifully when she contends, "We may never know all the good that a simple smile can do."



With the act of breaking bread in Communio, we hearken back to the first Christian communities described in the Acts of the Apostles. When we greet one another before Mass or offer one another the sign of Peace, we acknowledge this unique relationship—this Communio that wraps us as one in the arms of Jesus. It is comforting to realize that wherever we travel in the world, Communio makes it possible to share the Liturgy and the Eucharist without sharing the same language.

Pope Francis, in *On Care For Our Common Home*, contends that "Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love that God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth." How beautiful to contemplate the gift of Communio that brings us together in worship and service and love!



Transformation Initiative Goal:
Develop, nourish, and deepen our knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus Christ

Join Us in Prayer...

For our brothers and sisters in Christ who are leading and participating in the Hearts Afire Marian Consecration program, may their hearts be set on fire with love for our Lord Jesus Christ and may this love spread to others who desire to become closer to Jesus. Sixty-five OLPH parishioners have begun a 33-day preparation for consecration to Jesus through Mary, which will take place at 8:30 Mass on Saturday, March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. Thank you for keeping them in your prayers!

