

In Your Midst

A JOURNAL FOR ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL PARISH

HOPE
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In Your Midst

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"I am in your midst as one who serves." From the great oculus high above the altar of St. James Cathedral, these words of Jesus communicate His abiding presence among us. This inscription gave us the name for our Journal and continues to be our guiding inspiration.

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On the cover and at right: Portico, St. James Cathedral. Photo (c) Kevin Scott. All rights reserved.

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Anticipation, Gratitude, Hope

Father Gary Lazzeroni reflects on the liturgical year

Dear Friends,
As I continue to live in to these first six months as your pastor, I am filled with gratitude, anticipation and hope. My gratitude and hope are nourished by the rhythm of parish life rooted in the liturgical calendar.

This calendar is different from the two calendars that often govern the ebb and flow of the year—the yearly calendar that begins in January and the school calendar that begins in September.

This third calendar, the calendar of the liturgical year, gives us an opportunity to integrate our faith into the rhythm of those other calendars. In fact, our liturgical calendar can offer us a way to put those other two calendars into perspective. For while the beginning of the calendar year in January offers us a new beginning and a chance to reset things like eating or exercise habits, and the beginning of the school year offers us a chance to re-establish a new routine of daily life after the relaxation of the summer, the beginning of the liturgical year allows us to look forward with hope and to look back at the source of that hope.

Advent plunges us into a reflective time of prayer and preparation for Christmas. Our scriptures look forward to the end-times when God will bring to fulfillment all that has been promised; then, in the second half of Advent we begin looking back, preparing to celebrate the most unique and consequential event in all of creation with the coming of God in the flesh in the first third of the first century in a small town in a corner of the Roman Empire.

As our Advent waiting changes to Christmas rejoicing, we linger and relish these days much longer than our culture does. Long after the Christmas music has left the malls and radios and streaming services, we in the Church are just getting started! We sing them until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord closes the Christmas season (this year on Sunday, January 11). This year our Christmas Season celebrations will also include the closing of the Jubilee Year of 2025—the Jubilee of Hope (Sunday, December 28).

Following the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we will move into a short period of Ordinary Time, which gets its name from the way we mark the weeks of the year—not by a particular preparatory or celebratory season like Advent and Christmas—but by counting the weeks.

On Ash Wednesday, February 18, we begin our

Lenten journey. This journey prepares us for the great celebration of the Sacred Triduum (this year, Thursday, April 2 through Sunday, April 5) and the center of all our hope, in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Just as is the case in the Christmas Season, the Easter Season extends far beyond the celebration of Easter Sunday. We let this central truth of our faith that makes us who we are, wash over us for fifty days, culminating in the Solemnity of Pentecost (May 24).

Then, we enter the long extended period of Ordinary Time that will take us through the rest of the liturgical year until we reach the First Sunday of Advent next year on November 29.

It is this rhythm of parish life and the liturgical year that can help us to put our other rhythms and calendars in the context of our journey of faith. This is one of the many elements of parish life that I find so nourishing and am so grateful to be able to make this journey with all of you.

As you know, we are also on another journey together with the parishes of Christ Our Hope and Immaculate Conception. Our Partners in the Gospel process aims at coming together as a single parish so that we can be a sign of hope for all people in the Seattle area and beyond. We began this journey in July of 2024. During this last year we have spent time listening to one another and getting to hear about our gifts and challenges as three distinct and united parishes. With the transition of Father Ryan to the role of Pastor Emeritus and me as Pastor, and the coming of Father Francis Thumbi and Father Sylvester Chanda, our two new parochial vicars, and a transition in leadership at Immaculate Conception with Barbara Connor retiring, this year has already involved much change.

In this coming year, we will continue on the path of becoming one canonical parish, as we get to know one another better and continue dreaming together of how we can use our diverse gifts to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ even more effectively in downtown Seattle, in the Central District and on First Hill.

For me, like the rhythm of parish life, shaped by the liturgical calendar of remembering and celebrating, this journey of Partners in the Gospel fills me with great anticipation, gratitude and hope!

Father Gary Lazzeroni

Pilgrims of Hope

*As the Jubilee Year winds to a close, parishioners reflect
on where they find hope*

It has been quite a year. At first glance, it would be easy and probably right to have trouble finding hope in these seemingly ever more fractious times. This year, however, has offered many opportunities to find hope, nonetheless. Our physical pilgrimage through Normandy and Italy was filled with time enjoying the wonders of human achievement carved in stone and wood as well as etched in lives through devotion to God and sacrifices for freedom. I often meditated at what they would have hoped for in their times and for the future we now inhabit. Likewise, I am sure we all have hopes for both our times and those yet to come. As a parent of three young girls, the hopes for their futures and wellbeing are strong in my mind. Every day, they inspire me with hope for what the future might hold and remind me that it takes work to achieve our hopes.

In a world where sometimes it is hard to find hope (and where one can't visit European Cathedrals daily), I have also found wonder and hope in what might otherwise be considered mundane: the visitors to our hummingbird feeder flashing with the iridescence of God's creation, the majesty of the mighty cedars and spruce trees in the Olympic rainforest, the variety and abundance of life in the tidal zones of the coast and Salish Sea, the fabulous display of a partly-cloudy sunset. We live in a place unique in its natural beauty. Everywhere you look there are reminders that you are a part of this unique creation of time, physics, geology, evolution, chemistry, biology, and more - unique in your own formulation; and, part of God.

The choice to hope is a challenging one. Despair, anger, and frustration are all symptoms of a variety of causes and are often rightfully-engaged emotions. But, in the last year I have found a stronger ability to replace them with things to be hopeful for. When my kids do well at school, hope. When they achieve breakthroughs in the arts or athletics, hope. When we laugh and play, hope. When my wife and I share a smile, hope. When I have success at work, when I see God in my fellow person, when I see the superb work put forth by the community at St. James, hope, hope, hope. It is such an honor to serve alongside all of you on this pilgrimage. Thank you for inspiring hope in me and so many others!

David Hoffman

After losing my husband, time seemed to stop. Existing was exhausting. Darkness and regret consumed me, making even ordinary routines feel impossible. Though surrounded by family and love, I drifted through days, clinging to just enough strength to keep going.

Healing came slowly, through time and persistent prayer. In my despair, I believed God heard me. And He did. He grieved with me, led me to forgiveness, and helped me leave regrets behind. He gave me light, nurtured my faith, and healed my wounds. I longed to hear Him, and through prayer, I built a relationship. His voice emerged in homilies, songs, and scripture commentaries that resonated deeply. I discovered the meaning of hope I had sought for years.

This year, my pilgrimage with the St. James community and Father Ryan opened new doors: hope for purpose, hope to let Christ shape me spiritually, hope to walk in His way. Then came the unexpected and our parish welcomed a new pastor. Tears flowed, but again, God's voice spoke through Father Ryan's homily. Facing his own transition, he called it a "hopeful moment" and reminded us we could do this together. His faithful response to Christ, "Follow me," echoed in my heart. With prayer and trust, I've found a caring, gentle, and humble pastor in Father Lazzeroni. Hope built on faith for a new tomorrow. Gratitude for God's enduring love.

Relationships also inspire hope. I find it in the presence and love of my children, their spouses, and my grandchildren. Serving in the Sandwich Making Ministry with my grandchildren gives me hope they are learning compassion for the poor and homeless, just as their papa once knew hunger. On Sundays, I look forward to connecting with friends in our St. James community, meeting new acquaintances, and witnessing the hope they bring to our neighbors.

I continue my journey as a pilgrim of hope because the road is ongoing. In the quiet of morning, I find refuge in the pews of St. James Cathedral, a time of prayer to open myself to God, align my heart with His will, and move faithfully with love, hope, and peace.

Ada Rassilyer

Hope is something that makes you feel like you can do more. You believe something that is hard to happen, can happen.

We had a glimmer of hope when the Seattle Mariners and Toronto Blue Jays went to Game 7.

We only hope for what is good, and what feels right.

We need to hope that immigrants will stop getting deported.

We need to hope that our president will make the right choices.

We need to hope that all the wars that are happening will stop.

For me, I need to have hope that one day we will all understand and know that Jesus is our one true God.

My faith, my friends and my family push me to have more hope.

At school it helps me to know there is a community that believes Jesus is our one true Lord.

The saints give me hope by knowing that people have been connected to God in such a strong way and hoping that I can be one of them. St. Kateri ran away from her uncle who was taking care of her in order to get baptized. She had to devote her life to God and make hard decisions.

Hope is something all of us have, but not all of us can get to it. You need to not be afraid. You need to access it within yourself. Through Jesus you can access it more and more. He helps hope be amplified.

Josiah Riggio, age 8

It might be unusual to begin a reflection on pilgrimage and hope with a comment made by composer and musician, Wynton Marsalis. When performing in Port Townsend, WA in May 2025 he was asked how to navigate these challenging times, he replied that we must hold the line through what we do, and for his part he would continue to create wide paths to young talent he encounters. His comment has resonated with me ever since. There are countless ways of holding the line in times of difficulty. Yet seeing how much there is to be done, it is easy to become overwhelmed.

Hope to me is the joy and generosity we are invited to share and embrace. When Pope Francis proclaimed the 2025 Jubilee we were invited to partake in faith to “be joyful and our charity enthusiastic; and that each of us may be able to offer a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed, in the knowledge that, in the Spirit of Jesus, these can become, for those who receive them, rich seeds of hope.”



I find freedom in the little ways. Rather than feeling crushed by the magnitude of problems, I revel in the image of a “heart that gives itself to you in every instant, without reserve” (St. Therese of Lisieux).

We can each hold the line in terms of our talent, vocation and calling. St. Paul wrote “the body does not consist of one member but of many” (1 Cor 12:14). We can each save a smile for one another.

Cardinal Czerny was recently asked how one can comprehend the troubles threatening our Earth. “No one can,” he said, “by staying at the level of the global, at the level of seeing the sea of troubles. But one certainly can, by simply asking a friend to come along and explore a shoreline that needs cleaning. Sometimes, all we can do is listen. Lend a copy of *Laudato Si* to read.”

Walking the little ways. Seeing where a path might be widened to others with gratitude and in companionship. It is these little ways that anchor me deeply in Christ. And when there is nothing else that I can do, I can always lend a copy of *Laudato Si* to a friend to read.

Judit Olah



Reflecting on this Jubilee Year, I am very grateful I was able to go on the Cathedral Pilgrimage in March 2025. Being with so many Pilgrims of Hope was inspiring and a renewal of faith for many of us. Celebrating Mass with Father Ryan and hearing the resonant tenor voice of David Hoffman will remain a highlight of this journey. I have made personal pilgrimages to Lourdes and Fatima, but being with our Cathedral group was a sense of belonging. There was a sense of shared hope.

I can feel most hopeful when I am singing or hearing a performance of beautiful music. The voices and laughter of my grandchildren are also a collective inspiration. As a music educator for many years, I have always extended encouragement and confidence to my voice students while giving them a lifelong vocal technique. In return, I feel joy and hope for them and their abilities to achieve their dreams in singing.

Hiking through our beautiful northwest forests and viewing Mt Rainier and the Olympic Mountains are visual affirmations of hope that God's creation of nature is always here for all people. Everyone.

My greatest inspiration of hope came from the faith of my family when I was growing up. I knew that my father had been a B17 pilot in World War II and was a

POW for eighteen months. He did not talk about this time in detail, but he always said he never lost hope. He had the strongest faith of anyone I have ever known. After discovering an old footlocker and finding the letters he sent to my mother, it was all true. Almost every letter stated his unwavering belief in the promise of hope and that he and his friends would safely return home. I believe that he also shared and reassured other POW's with hope. Our family has his legacy to continue.

Pope Francis wrote: "We need the Spirit: He brings order to our frenzy. The Spirit is peace in the midst of restlessness, confidence in the midst of discouragement, joy in sadness, youth in aging, courage in the hour of trial. Amid the stormy currents of life, he lowers the anchor of hope."

I will always be grateful that my father knew and believed the anchor of hope was always with him. This anchor and the gift of hope is the best Christmas gift, one we can keep on giving all year.

Linda Ellingson

When I was in High School, I learned of Teilhard de Chardin SJ and his ideas about all creation moving toward the Omega Point, toward God. This has been a source of hope for me throughout my life. I love to look up at the stars, or to see pictures taken from telescopes, that show something of the vastness of creation. I hope to spend eternity drawing ever closer to the presence of God.

I'm lucky to know many generations. The second graders at St. Therese give me hope when they keep working to master a new skill, or when they extend friendship to each other during tough times. I love to see the little ones at Mass, eager to come forward for a blessing and to be part of the family of God. What a hopeful future they represent!

Young adults who are generous with the gifts of their lives give me great hope. This includes those in the Catholic Schools Teacher Corp, assistants at L'Arche, members of the Jesuit Volunteer Corp and the Jesuit novices that I know. At the other end of life's spectrum, when I worship with the retired sisters at St. Joseph Residence, they sing, "For all that has been we say thank you, to all that will be we say YES." I am honored to be present to the generosity of their lives and their amazing hope.

Efforts of many to preserve a healthy environment, to reach out to the incarcerated, to support immigrants, and to assist the hungry and the unhoused give me hope that we can live together as family.

I find hope in my small daily Mass community that shares prayers of gratitude and petition, in those who

gather for Sunday Vespers, and in those who make the Spiritual Exercises Retreat in Everyday Life. Being with others who seek God's presence is a great consolation.

"In our coming to be and in our passing away, Christ reigns," and "Hope does not disappoint!"

Mimi Krsak

Going to the Holy Land with St. James parishioners in 2023 was living the fifth gospel for me, visiting the places of Jesus' life on earth. It was a visceral experience that was so enriching. Each pilgrim on the journey had a place that was most profound for them. For me, it was the Church of the Transfiguration on top of Mount Tabor.

We took the bus only so far up the mountain, then transferred to individual taxis for the last, steep climb. Think of Jesus and his three disciples, Peter, James and John, walking over the countryside and then climbing to the top of Mount Tabor. When they reached the top, a light came over Jesus, and Moses and Elijah appeared. Then a voice spoke, and revealed Jesus to be God's Son. In the church is a large mosaic picturing the Transfiguration.

I realized in a visceral way the message of the Transfiguration. Jesus' words and actions give me hope.

On our second Cathedral pilgrimage, my husband and I journeyed to France and Rome with other Cathedral pilgrims. We traveled to Normandy and saw to the beaches where those brave men landed on D-Day in June 1944. What courageous men. It was sacred ground. They gave hope that Hitler would be overcome. We owe them so much.

Then we traveled to Paris. Notre Dame took my breath away. I had visited the Cathedral several times before the fire. It was beautiful but very dark from years of incense and use. Now it was clean and shining. The church was totally 'transfigured,' and filled with spectacular light. The stained glass windows shone. I was speechless.

The other experience that gives me hope has been singing in the Cathedral Choir under the direction of Joseph Adam. He is an excellent musician and produces transcendent music for all of us. He is also very kind. Joseph treats each of us with dignity and respect. He runs a "tight ship," and it has been a privilege to sing in the past under his guidance.

This feeling of trust and confidence is true for Maria and Corinna Laughlin. What marvelous women! They run their respective endeavors with expertise and excellence. They are also kind. This way of treating people gives me hope.

Ann Goett

I find hope in the small everyday acts of people who make a difference in the world. There are some images from the past year that have left me awestruck.

In March, I visited the Basilica of Our Lady in Lourdes. Watching pilgrims approaching the Grotto on their knees was a moving experience.

Recently, I attended mass in one of the oldest churches in Chile. There was a noisy protest going on outside the church. Inside, a nun sang and played guitar eloquently. Her music drowned the noise. It was incredible.

The images of women and children in Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine are heartbreaking. Surviving against all odds and moving forward takes courage and resilience. These unfortunate people give me hope for a better world.

The image of some of the guests at the Cathedral Kitchen. They express gratitude for the meal that is served daily. It is uplifting to witness and acknowledge their sincerity. Their positive attitude and smiles bring me hope. Volunteering at the Cathedral Kitchen gives me perspective on the hardships our guests face.

Hope embodies gratitude, courage, and resilience. Currently there is a lot of darkness in our world. We all have a choice to shine a light through the darkness by acts of kindness, love, compassion, and forgiveness towards one another.

My husband passed away, suddenly, a couple years back. During that time, I leaned on this verse from Isaiah 40:31: "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

During that dark time, trusting that God had a plan, sustained me. I felt the presence of God walking with me during that difficult stretch. I felt the love of God lifting me when times were tough. Trusting in God's love for me gave me courage to move forward. I am thankful for all the blessings bestowed on me and my family. I continue to follow him, with hope, as he leads the way.

Theresa Fernandes

Hope is familiar to us. We hope, for example, that athletic teams we follow are victorious, that children have fulfilling lives, that our travels are safe, etc. The common denominator of hope is that something is precious, but yet to be attained. The person without hope is either thoroughly satisfied, nothing left to hope for, or is so desperate that hope is pointless.

How, then, does hope fit into our spiritual lives?



First, something precious is offered to the believer. After all, the gospels are presented as “the good news.” And indeed, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus point to eternal happiness for us in the kingdom of heaven. Second, this precious good is attainable, not through our own efforts, but through the mercy of God and the grace of the Holy Spirit, the enduring presence of God in our lives. In God’s plan and offer to us, we find a precious destiny and the possibility of attaining it, the basis for and, in fact, the call to hope.

The possibility of this precious destiny is presented in the gospel narratives of Christ’s birth. The birth of the Messiah is revealed to two groups of people, the shepherds and the Magi. The shepherds, minding their flocks, are suddenly accosted by angels who announce good news: a savior has been born for them, hence the possibility of precious salvation. The Magi, in turn, must discover this message. Searching for the birth of a king, they find a Messiah. The birth of this king points to a precious destiny, and their homage puts them on a path to it.

These two sets of visitors are complementary. The shepherds receive a message yearned for by the Jewish people and the Magi find something that alters the world in which they live. In short, Jesus is the Messiah for everyone and through this child salvation is possible for everyone. The joy of Christmas is really the joy of a new hope.

Bob Roemer

When I started to reflect on hope as we come to the end of this Ordinary

Jubilee for Hope, I thought is there still hope? Why should I have hope? Then I read the Papal Bull which answered that question in the very first sentence which is taken from Romans 5:5: “Spes non confundit” (hope does not disappoint). Even in these dark and uncertain times, I am more hopeful than ever before.

At the start of 2025, I will admit that I was hopeless. Hopeless for our future, hopeless for what has come about, and hopeless for what we must endure. Yet, as the Jubilee Year continued, I found hope. Increasingly each day. I find this hope—in part—due to the people

that God has placed in my life. I think about Father Ryan, our Pastor Emeritus, and the hope that he still brings—reminding us that God’s plan has a sure, righteous, and good ending for us all. I think about the hope that Father Lazzeroni, our new Pastor, brings with our continued mission to live out the Gospel by helping all of those in need and the dignity of all of God’s creatures. Yet, I think I have derived more hope from each of you. I think back to 2012 when I first moved to Seattle not knowing a soul. At first, I found a spiritual home at St. James. Simply participating in the beautiful liturgies and leaving right after—not truly belonging to the community. Now most of my closest friends and family in Seattle have come from St. James. The work they do in and out of St. James brings me hope that all will be right.

Most of all, I find hope in God. At the start of the year, I was not only hopeless but feared that God had abandoned us. Due to everything that I have done during the Jubilee, I have found even more hope in God. Isn’t that what a Jubilee should all be about? These Jubilee years are intended to bring us ever closer to God and one another, characterized by forgiveness and grace. Even though this year started with hopelessness, a sense of abandonment filled with attacks on my core beliefs and principles, and systemic change, I feel more hopeful than ever because of work we all do to truly live out the Gospels and be the models for the rest of the world.

Dan Hsieh

I am fortunate to be surrounded by hope at work as a teacher and school administrator. My St. Bernadette students, aged 2 ½ to 8th grade, give me hope every single day. Their laughter and joy, their courage and kindness, bring me joy and give me great hope daily. As a Sacred Heart alumna, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat's call to courage and confidence is always in my mind, especially when working with my students, their families, and my colleagues. It is hopeful, and reminds us that it takes courage and confidence to live with hope. With courage and confidence, one has hope and can accomplish great things.

Last spring, along with my friend and travel buddy, Mary Clare, I joined the pilgrims of hope from St. James and embarked on a Pilgrimage of Hope to celebrate the Jubilee Year. Traveling, praying, and getting to know fellow parishioners and pilgrims, while taking time out of a busy life to consider my faith more deeply was a privilege, to be sure. While on our pilgrimage I prayed especially for my St. Bernadette School community, that they be imbued with hope. In hopes of deepening their faith and making faith more personal and active for students, our 4th graders "travelled" with me to the holy places and churches we visited via WhatsApp. (Technology + faith = a great combination!) They learned about pilgrimages, saints, cathedrals, and new places.

Hope may be found in many places. We are fortunate to have vibrant Catholic Schools where hope is nourished daily in young people who will lead our world in the future.

Jeanne Flohr Keckemet

Where do I find hope? I find hope in the simplest things in my life. Planting daffodil bulbs on a cloudy fall day, I do so with the trust that my garden will be full of cheerful flowers in a few months. On an overcast winter day, I can depend on the sun peeking out below the clouds in the late afternoon to shine in so I might sit in the sun to do a crossword puzzle. In a larger perspective, I see the rhythm of the seasons as a promise of life continuing. Every year the plants die back. Winter becomes a time to snuggle up with my books and a fire in the hearth, with the comfort of knowing that spring will come with fresh green leaves and warmer days. The dependability of our natural world gives me great hope and another source of hope is people.

The common sentiment these days is that there is constant divisiveness and negativity between groups of people, but I continue to see people as our greatest hope. I find it easy to see the good in people. Even in

difficult times, people continue to gather in communities. We gather to make music, to share meals, and solve problems. We gather to discuss books and art. As communities, we celebrate marriages and the births of children. Is there any stronger symbol of hope than the birth of a child? A child represents the continuation of life, a fresh start, and a chance of doing better. As we enter the Advent season, together we await the Christ child and the hope he represents. I feel as though there is nothing that can not be done as people stand together.

During difficult times I sometimes wonder how I continue to have hope, but always, there is this beautiful world in which we live, a friend shows up for tea, and there is a quiet chapel in which to sit and pray. How can I not have hope?

C. Jocelyn Brubeck

The year 2025 carried with it special significance not only in the life of the Church but the whole of humanity. It was the 2,025th anniversary since the son of God took flesh and dwelt among us. The incarnation was and is God's way of communicating to humanity his deep love, care and concern. In the incarnation, God thought to be distant from our human condition and experience becomes one like us, human and dwells among us. He does not distance himself from experiencing our imperfect and broken world wounded by sin. But rather walks with us on the journey of life bringing healing, wholeness, and gently showing us the way to God our Father. This journey with the Lord made possible in the incarnation and through the power of the Holy Spirit opens new possibilities drawing us into something deeper and beautiful, a renewed life in and with God. With God, we know all things are possible and so we can dream big and begin not only to envision a future full of hope but to live in the present filled with hope.

The year 2025 was indeed time of renewal as a people of God and the spirit of God was at work within us bringing to life what seemed dead a renewed sense of hope. As a young priest seeing how much parishioners are dedicated themselves by bringing together their gifts, talents and resources to create vibrant parishes was exciting and filled me with hope that our archdiocese was responding to the mission of Christ. Also, I saw a growing number of young people in our parishes curious to learn more about the faith and seeking ways to actively participate in the life of the Church. This year our parishes saw several baptisms during our Sunday liturgies, a sign of new life in the Church. Six infant baptisms during a Sunday Mass of course prolonged the liturgy with some few

extra minutes but for me I saw six parishioners who with the grace of God will grow in faith, discover their vocation and dedicate their lives to the service of God's people turning those few extra minutes to many more years as dedicated members of our parish family. Life with Christ makes all these things possible and what a great way to end the year 2025 dedicated to a renewed life in Christ as Pilgrims of Hope preparing our hearts once again to receive God's greatest gift to humanity at Christmas, Jesus Christ our life and our hope. May we tap into the power of the incarnation so that together as pilgrims we can continue creating a future full of Hope.

Father Sylvester Chanda

There is an artist in West Seattle who

decorates a large glacier boulder in Lincoln Park. When this artist comes to the park, she carries a



collection of natural items to spell the word LOVE on the top of this boulder. The boulder has become known as the Love Rock. The decorations can range from fancy colorful flowers or simple things like pine cones, leaves or shells. The Love Rock is simple yet extraordinary. Sometimes her art memorializes a loved one or event. For example, on November 11 she designed a special floral arrangement honoring veterans. Passing by this site on my usual walk along the beach, I pause like many others to admire the Love Rock. If the letters get disarranged, someone like myself passing by will take time to fix it so that the Love Rock always has LOVE written on top of it. I often take a picture to send to a circle of friends across the country. When my friends react with admiration and gratitude by seeing the Love Rock, it confirms how special a message of love can be. The message of LOVE gives me hope for it is a message to and for all people. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, gave a message for us to love our neighbors as ourselves. The Love Rock is a literal sign to remind me of this.

Jo Ann Wiesner

In this very challenging time that we live in where compassion and understanding is not very easily found it is a challenge to find hope. I must say that the one place that has never forsaken me when I'm looking for hope is my faith! I have gone through so many deaths and resurrections in my lifetime. Times when I did not see any hope whatsoever for me.

One of my biggest conversions occurred in Israel

when we were at the Garden of Gethsemane. I was on a pilgrimage with Father Ryan and we were celebrating mass in the church on the grounds.

I had just come back from communion, and I was sobbing uncontrollably, because of the guilt I felt knowing that God had sweat blood of fear in that garden before he was taken to be crucified. I know he died for our sins, but I looked at it as my sins!

As I was sobbing, about two minutes in, a voice spoke to me. It said, "why are you crying? You don't need to cry, I have risen! I just need you to be my hands, feet, eyes, and heart here on earth. Please pledge to me that you will never say no to me."

From that day on, I have never said no to him. I have faith that if he feels I can do something, I must do it. He knows me better than myself!

Many doors have been open to me to serve the marginalized because of this approach.

Because of those doors being open the pathway to hope was opened for me on a daily basis. Whenever I'm feeling down about myself, I just remember those that are in a much worse condition than I am, I focus on helping them and hope comes into my life.

I believe if you keep a close relationship with our Lord and you trust in him unconditionally, hope is just a natural byproduct of that relationship. Jesus said Faith, Hope and Love are the most important things. If we focus on Faith and Love, Hope will follow!

I have found that there is always hope in my soul. I just focus on the Lord and then let that hope rise to the surface.

Jesus doesn't steer me wrong and as Psalm 23 says: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He leadeth me beside still waters." Amen!

Joe Stevens

Last February I was in Montevideo after a grueling hike and discovered the Museo Andes, a museum full of artifacts donated from the Uruguayan soccer team that crashed in the Andes in 1972. It is a museum created and endorsed by those survivors to capture their stories of hope and survival. I have been obsessed by this story since I first read the Piers Paul Read book "Alive" in high school. What has always captivated me about this horrific event is how the survivors never gave up hope that they would be rescued. Despite the initial crash, the subsequent avalanche that led to even more deaths, they never gave up hope or lost their faith in God. In the midst of almost unimaginable suffering, and no matter the outcome, they always believed God had not abandoned them. Sixteen survived and are still alive today.

Their story continued to resonate with me as I

departed with fellow parishioners last March on the Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage. How could those young survivors never lose their faith in God when we are so easily discouraged watching or reading the news? Is our faith that fickle that we don't trust in God's great mercy and are so ready to throw in the towel when faced with our own challenges?

I've decided the antidote to discouragement is action. It's easy to get overwhelmed by current events when watching our political leaders make decisions that deliberately harm people, but we can work against this in our communities by finding opportunities to take care of each other. Whatever you are interested in, there is a volunteer opportunity whether at church or out in the community to satisfy that interest. Every hour of our lives and every dollar we spend is a daily vote for the kind of world we want to live in. When we give of ourselves, what we get back is immeasurable: Friendships, gratitude, a sense of being pleasing to God, increased self-worth at making a difference, a contribution however small to the greater good. It can be as simple as eye contact and a smile. Our Lady says her Immaculate Heart triumphs in the end, so excessive anxiety and worry demonstrate a lack of trust in Her promise. Taking action, however small, grows hope. Show up.

When I look around this vast, beautiful holy place on Sunday, I see friends rather than strangers. Friends who have shown up to glorify God in prayer and song. Seeing the amount of folks at OCIA who are seeking a closer relationship with God gives me hope.

I am eager for Advent, our hope-filled liturgical season as we await the birth of the child that changed everything. It seems the perfect bookend to the Jubilee Year of Hope to end with the anticipation of this birth. We who read Jesus' words and pay attention to how he told us to live can never despair for we are His pilgrim people, carrying that flame of love out into our daily lives. As Nelson Mandela said, "May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears."

Stacy Leland

Every Sunday when we pray "Thy kingdom come" I think of how people in churches around the world are doing the same and have been doing so for a long, long time. I wonder, "What's the use?" The world today looks every bit as broken as when Jesus lived. Even Jesus did not fix it. So, what was he doing?

What Jesus did was show me how I am to live in the mess and gift me with the greatest assistant, the virtue of hope. Prepared with hope and a vision of how



to live planted in my soul, God calls me to do my part in bringing that vision to life.

When I express my hope for a peaceful world that recognizes the one-ness of all, I often hear that my hope is naïve, that I deny reality, that I am a dreamer. I understand that, for Christian hope is not logical or situational. It is a state of mind based on trust in God's love. I do not deny the reality of this broken world, but I have learned to take a longer view and more expansive perspective. I do not know what is happening or why or where it is all headed. I cannot and do not need to know. I cannot and do not need to fix it. I do need to ask the question: what is mine to do? How do I live in this already-but-not-yet world where God's kingdom is already here and visible all about me: the beauty of the natural world, the simple kindnesses of strangers, the self-sacrificing love of parents, my husband's constant care and thoughtfulness towards me, and at the same time the not-yet-here of the daily reports of violence and divisiveness that can easily tip me toward despair and cynicism. But this would be an abandonment of my baptismal and Christian responsibility. I must be steadfast in the hope God entrusted to me to share with others. It is this hope that enables me to see evil and brokenness and still look to the future with confidence. It is this hope that gives me freedom and peace and joy the world cannot give.

"You and I stand at a windswept moment in history. All around is gathering darkness. But we are not afraid because we have seeds of life and hope in our pockets. Our task is to cast them as far and wide as we can. The breath of the Spirit will do the rest" (Steven Charleston).

Mary Jennings



Walking with St. Kateri

The Cathedral's new icon of St. Kateri Tekakwitha is the fruit of friendship and dialogue

On October 19, a new icon of St. Kateri Tekakwitha was blessed at St. James Cathedral in Seattle. The icon was the fruit of dialogue and collaboration between members of the Native American Catholic community in the Pacific Northwest, the Cathedral Racial Solidarity Team, and New York artist Patricia Brintle.

Having a permanent image of St. Kateri at the Cathedral was a long-held dream for Joan Wilbur, elder in the Swinomish community. Given that the miracle that led to St. Kateri's canonization took place in the Archdiocese of Seattle, and the presence of many Native Catholics in the region, Joan was disappointed that St. Kateri was not represented in the Cathedral. Joan died in 2020, but thanks to other members of the Swinomish community, the dream did not die.

"Joan lit the fire in me to work to bring St. Kateri to the Cathedral," said Kiara Raven, a parishioner at St. Paul in Swinomish.

In 2021, shaken by the revelations about abuse and neglect at Native American boarding schools—many of them run by the Catholic Church—the Archdiocesan Native American Advisory Circle and the Cathedral Racial Solidarity Team began meeting together, first by Zoom, and then in person. Little by little, relationships grew and deepened. From those dialogues emerged the resolve to bring St. Kateri to the Cathedral at last.

In 2024, New York artist Patricia Brintle, a native of Haiti, was brought on board to make the dream a reality. Brintle entered fully into the collaborative process, during which she listened to Native American voices, members of the Racial Solidarity Team, and Cathedral staff. She incorporated what she heard into sketch after sketch, and gradually, the Cathedral's image of St. Kateri began to take shape. In May of 2025, Brintle visited St. Paul Church on the Swinomish Reservation.



Swinomish elders participated in the Mass, along with the Cathedral's Racial Solidarity Team. A relic of St. Kateri was carried in procession with the new icon.

"My trip was filled with emotion," she wrote. "Walking on this ground felt sacred and being in the presence of a people whose ancestors lived on this land for thousands of years was an emotion difficult to put into words. I was prayed over by the committee members and the elders."

On returning home to her studio, Brintle said, "I understood that it was important to create an icon that reflected both the Mohawk and the Coast Salish nations. I prayed over my brushes and paints and asked St. Kateri to guide my thoughts and my color choices, and to steady my hand."

The resulting icon is full of imagery that reflects St. Kateri's Mohawk roots and the Coast Salish people who were the recipients of her miraculous intercession. Wearing the cedar hat of the Coast Salish, she stands against a landscape that evokes the Pacific Northwest with its mountains and cedar trees. St. Kateri also wears the tunic and leggings characteristic of the Mohawk people. At her feet is a turtle—symbolizing Mother Earth and also a reminder that St. Kateri was a member of the Turtle Clan.

Thanks to elder Geri Kanesta-Rychner, a relic of St.

Corinna Laughlin is the Pastoral Assistant for Liturgy at St. James Cathedral. Photos by Stephen Brashear; used with permission.



Artist Patricia Brintle is celebrated at the conclusion of the Mass.

Kateri was present at the special Mass on October 19. Following Mass, many came forward to study the icon more closely and to venerate the relic.

At the reception following the blessing Mass on October 19, Anna Cook, granddaughter of Joan Wilbur, spoke in Cathedral Hall. “St. Kateri Tekakwitha is everyone’s saint, truly. But to our native people, she is a representation of what it means to be Native Catholic. She should be a household name to everyone in this land.”

After Christmas, the new icon will make a pilgrimage north to receive the blessing of the Native communities in Swinomish and Lummi. St. Kateri is walking with the people of the Pacific Northwest! ♦

Artist’s Statement

The icon is done in acrylic paint on birch wood. St. Kateri faces the viewer against a deep blue sky with a bright halo around her head. She extends her arms with open hands and loosely holds a light wood rosary in her right hand. Her long black hair flows and she wears the traditional Salish cedar bark hat. The rest of her clothing represents her Mohawk roots with dress, skirt, leggings, and moccasins. Her necklace is a simple rope with a wooden cross, to recall the many wooden crosses she tied to tree branches as she walked and prayed in the forest.

St. Kateri is called the Lily of the Mohawks because of her purity, and she stands amid a garden of lilies. At her foot, a turtle reminds us that she belongs to the “Turtle Clan” of the Mohawk people. St. Kateri is also the patron saint of nature, ecology, and the environment, and nature is alive all around her. A river flows with a canoe peeking behind her. The pine trees in the distance are native to the Coast Salish area, and



O Saint Kateri, Lily of the Mohawks, Your love for Jesus, so strong, so steadfast, pray that we may become like you. St. Kateri, pray for us. St. Kateri, walk with us.

tall mountains rise in the distance.

The entire image is topped by a Salish-style representation of two eagles facing each other. The side panels show eagle feathers and her name at bottom is flanked by two salmon.

As the shipper picked her up for her trip to Seattle, I said goodbye, realizing that she was no longer mine, she now belongs to all those whose prayers she will grant.

Patricia Brintle

You are welcome here

St. James Immigrant Assistance celebrates its 50th anniversary

What do you feel when you hear the word “welcome” spoken? What do you imagine when you picture someone welcoming you? Perhaps you feel seen, perhaps you feel included? Maybe you notice that someone has chosen to take the care and time needed, so that you can be invited in?

St. James Cathedral is a diverse community of faith that seeks to welcome, accept, and celebrate the unique contributions each one of us brings. In 1975, St. James Cathedral demonstrated its commitment to welcoming the stranger by inviting in a group of new immigrants to the Cathedral community. It was the year Washington State began welcoming Vietnamese refugees.

According to the archives of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Sister Terence Maureen Reilly, a member of the Literacy Council of Seattle, was approached by Reverend John Renggli, then on the staff of the Archdiocese of Seattle, about the possibility of a tutoring program for refugees. After training approximately forty-five tutors, Sister Terence Maureen and other members of the Literacy Council welcomed twenty-five adult Vietnamese students to a new English tutoring program at Immaculate High School (Cathedral Place) on July 16, 1975. With this program, Sister Terence Maureen welcomed inside those “on the edges” of the community—where they couldn’t fully access all aspects of life in their new country, due to communication barriers. She said, “It’s a wonderful thing to give any person—for them to be able to communicate.”

That tutoring program launched the Cathedral ministry known today as St. James Immigrant Assistance. Fifty years later, we are still working to create a place of belonging. With a small team of staff and many remarkable volunteers, St. James Immigrant Assistance today delivers not only English tutoring, but also citizenship preparation, immigration legal services and accompaniment of newcomers as they settle in our community. Our program is open to all immigrants, regardless of their country of origin, religion, race or immigration status.

Erica de Klerk is the Director of St. James Immigrant Assistance Program.



St. James Immigrant Assistance staff. From left, Patrick Suhrbier, Laura Murton, Erica de Klerk and Sayuko Setvik.

In the fall of this year, we gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of St. James Immigrant Assistance in Cathedral Hall—the same building where the first group of students tutored with Sister Terence Maureen. Volunteers, clients, staff and other supporters shared dinner and enjoyed a special performance by the St. Vincent de Paul Pacific Islander Choir. A video about our services was debuted, made by director and animator, Neely Goniodysky, who is also the granddaughter of a former citizenship client (go to <https://www.stjames-cathedral.org/immigrant> to view the video, located under the “Stories” heading on the homepage).



Above: Sister Terence Maureen Reilly, courtesy of the Archives of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. Below: Anniversary Dinner table décor (thanks to our wonderful volunteers), and the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Pacific Islander Choir.

At the celebration, we acknowledged with gratitude the many stories St. James Immigrant Assistance intersected with during 50 years of service. The year of this milestone anniversary was also marked by deep grief and concern around federal changes to immigration policy. We remember and pray with our immigrant community members who are navigating fear, loss, disrespect, detention, deportation and separation from their loved ones and livelihoods. As a program that witnessed prior periods of turmoil and injustice, St. James Immigrant Assistance will remain steadfast in our hope, faith, justice and love as we stand in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors.

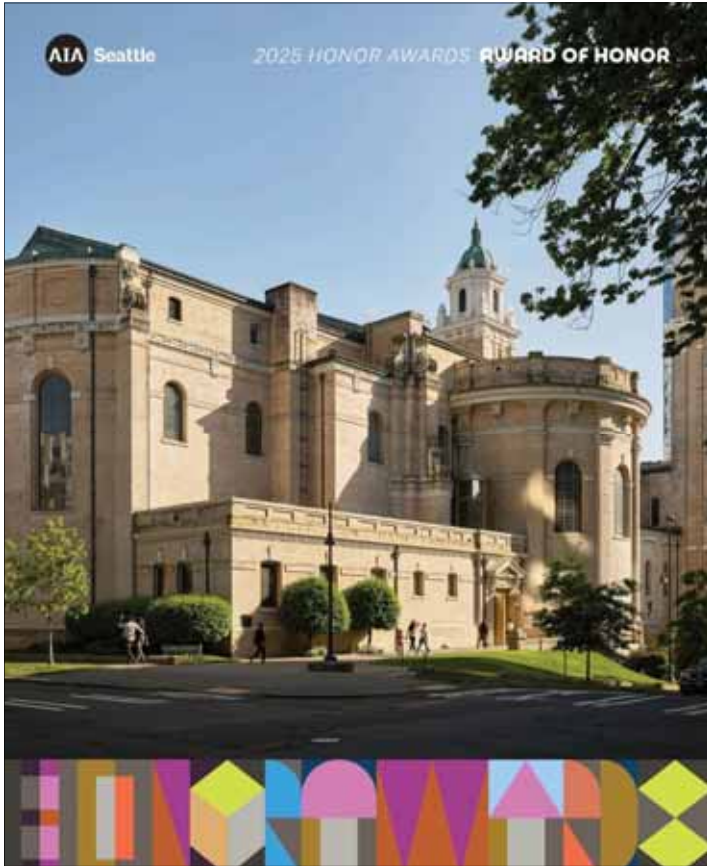
It was a language access need that founded our program, and today St. James Immigrant Assistance continues to look for ways to be responsive to the unfolding needs of our community members. Through an online search, referral from a friend or family member, connection through a partner agency, or an association with the church as a place of support,

immigrant neighbors continue to find our program each week. By answering a phone call, opening the door, completing an intake, or sharing resources, we have the honor and opportunity to encounter individuals along their journey. And, as is often the case, in saying “welcome” we are the recipients of greater hospitality.

On this 50th Anniversary of St. James Immigrant Assistance, we would like to offer our deep thanks to the Cathedral community, the City of Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and other supporters for ensuring St. James Immigrant Assistance services continue. Additional gratitude to our dedicated volunteers for their professionalism and compassion. And to our past and current clients, your presence is a gift to our community and we are so glad you came. ♦

“Small but powerful”

AIA Seattle gives its highest honor to our new Portico



Photos (c) Kevin Scott. All rights reserved.

On November 3, 2025, AIA Seattle bestowed its highest recognition on the Cathedral’s new Portico and on architects Christopher and Misun Gerrick.

AIA Seattle’s *Honor Awards for Washington Architecture* is a nationally-recognized program that explores and honors projects designed by architects throughout the state of Washington. This annual program provides an opportunity for the design community to share and celebrate its achievements both among practitioners and with the community at-large.

In bestowing the award, AIA Seattle noted: “The jury appreciated how this project thoughtfully resolves a complex urban condition of multiple entries in steep urban typography and creating a main accessible and dignified space to enter. The jury celebrated the small but powerful moves, tactile materials and beautiful

Maria Laughlin is Director of Stewardship and Development at St. James Cathedral. Read more at <https://aiaseattle.org/2025-honor-award-winners/>

effect of light that creates a space that is a spiritual intervention.”

At the awards event, the judges shared their impressions of visiting the space.

“I believe it’s a really powerful example of how space is spiritual,” one commented. “Through a small intervention, you can change dynamics, you can rethink the hierarchy of one entrance to the other. It’s a really strong message that the scale doesn’t matter: what really matters is the message, the thoughtful design.”

Another judge noted, “It’s a lesson for us about how material and deft handling can produce spirituality. We all felt we needed to include this as an example of a long tradition of ecclesiastical architecture being modernized, updated, and made more accessible.”

Portico was made possible by the generous gifts of Cathedral parishioners and the visionary leadership of Father Ryan. Congratulations to Gerrick Office! ♦

Hope Sees What Will Be

A pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee of Synodal Teams

In October, 2025, I had the immense privilege of traveling to Rome for a special Jubilee Year gathering for Synodal teams. Some 150 pilgrims from the United States were among 2,000 bishops, priests, religious, and lay people from around the world who gathered for three days of prayer and conversation about bringing the Synodal Church to life in our local contexts.

Cardinal Mario Grech of Malta opened the conference by quoting the poet Charles Péguy: “Faith sees what is. Hope sees what will be. Love loves what is.” This proved to be an apt description of this extraordinary and graced experience. We both learned about and experienced synodality on an incredible, universal scale. We witnessed a Church journeying together, and we caught a glimpse of what might be in years to come.

Pope Leo XIV’s presence at the conference was the highlight for most participants. For more than an hour, he listened to questions from representatives of six continents, and engaged with them in thoughtful dialogue. He sat at a table with these representatives, an image that was itself strikingly synodal. For the American contingent, it was a thrilling, even electrifying experience to hear the Holy Father speaking in English!

Pope Leo XIV shared a deep and nuanced understanding of the challenges the Church faces around the world, and noted that “we do not all run at the same speed, and sometimes we have to be patient with one another. Rather than having only a few people running ahead and leaving many others behind—which could even cause a rift in the ecclesial experience—we must seek ways, sometimes very concrete ones, to understand what is happening in each place, what the resistances are or where they come from, and what we can do to increasingly encourage the experience of communion in this Church, which is synodal.”

The following morning, the participants joined a Jubilee pilgrimage to the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica. The word *synod* means “on the way together,” so this, too, was a profoundly synodal experience. All walked together—priests and people, bishops, women



Among the participants at the Jubilee for Synodal Teams October 24-26 were four from the Archdiocese of Seattle: Maria Laughlin, Father Gary Lazzeroni, Corinna Laughlin, and Elijah Morgan (not pictured).

religious, cardinals—in no particular order, moving together from Paul VI Hall and down through the crypt of St. Peter’s Basilica, past the tomb of St. Peter himself, and then up, passing through the Holy Door and gathering around the altar of the Basilica for a brief reflection and prayer.

This experience of the synodal church “on the move” was followed by an even more powerful experience of synodality, when we gathered in small groups for Conversations in the Spirit. Participants in each group of 10 or 12 represented the Church across the world, and it was profoundly moving to hear their stories of bringing the synod to life, whether in Jordan, Germany, India, the Philippines, Australia, or the United States. Afterwards, a variety of workshops provided more opportunities for stimulating conversation and exploration of the possibilities and challenges of synodality.

A month later, at a Zoom gathering to recap the event, participants were still trying to process all that they had learned and felt. “I still pinch myself,” said one. Another commented: “I’m still processing what we experienced. I will be forever changed.”

What is next? To return to Cardinal Grech: “We are here because we love the Church and we believe in the Church, but perhaps more importantly, because we *hope* in the Church. It is a hope that is neither based on our dreams nor on our ideas, but on the conviction that the Church is God’s Church and that its future is assured.” ♦

Maria Laughlin is Director of Stewardship and Development at St. James Cathedral. She also coordinated synodal efforts at the Cathedral in 2022.

My friend, Madre Cabrini

A lifelong connection with St. Frances Xavier Cabrini

My two sisters and I attended a semi-boarding school for girls in southern Brazil, founded by Madre Cabrini, for five years, from the age of 7 to 12. This is a formative period, and attending this school had a significant impact that I was only able to recognize in adulthood.

I still remember the elegant black habit worn by the Cabrini nuns, along with the texture of their fabric and its distinctive scent. One gift I received from the sisters, which I held onto and valued highly, was a relic from Madre Cabrini's own habit. During periods of transition and turbulence, it served me as a familiar spiritual confidant for invocation and dialogue.

In 2004, following an unexpected change of path, I moved to Seattle. One of the first places I visited was St. James Cathedral and, to my amazement and joy, I saw there the statue of St. Cabrini. I promptly became a parishioner. I also reached out to one of the last Cabrini sisters residing in Seattle and occasionally we met for prayer, tea, and conversation. Having my early childhood and later adulthood connected in this way was significant for me.

To meet the tremendously challenging world of her time, Madre Cabrini intuitively braided together philosophy, psychology, entrepreneurial skills and, above all, an unbreakable faith in God. She was an Italian immigrant who established schools, hospitals, and orphanages in the United States and other countries. She believed that children, regardless of their origin, needed first for their heart to be educated.

Rita Testa is a longtime parishioner of St. James Cathedral.



Academic education and soul education together promote far-reaching growth and foster a better society. This was her passion and mission.

Petite in stature and delicate in health, yet possessing a formidable strength of spirit, Madre Cabrini convinced authorities, including those who did not want to be convinced, to help her. Two of her quotes stayed with me: “Begin your mission and the means will appear” and “we can serve our weakness, or we can serve our purpose.”

Madre Cabrini was motivated by fundamental human struggles like poverty, immigration, discrimination, the role of women and minorities, criminality, abuse, and parentless children to mention a few. She

effectively demonstrated through her action the necessary core values to tackle them. This makes Madre Cabrini a contemporary role model.

In the present day, we are often pulled in thousands of directions, fragmented and divided by the plethora of ideas that result in confusion. We as Catholics have access to a rich repository of biblical narratives and hagiographies, which provide insights into our present experiences. Reflecting on them brings light, opportunity, improvement, and dignity to our struggles.

I consider the story of Madre Cabrini to be particularly relevant to our times. When in distress we need to be a shade bolder or braver to transcend our predicament. Madre Cabrini's faith provided a means of knowledge and insight that sustained her indomitable spirit. This was crucial then, and it continues to be essential now. ♦

Sacrificial Sunday Giving

Let's get to work, together

Thanks to Father Gary Lazzeroni for allowing me to speak to you this morning.

As Father said, I'm David Unger, and I am a volunteer, and a giver. And for several years I've been honored to serve on the finance council of the cathedral.

I am here today to say thank you. For many of you, I'm thanking you for your past and current generosity. For all of you, I'm thanking you for what you will give in the future.

The cathedral parish generously supports ministries to the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the elderly, the immigrant. The very building is a tribute to the beatitudes! Those East Apse windows which effectively spell out those goals: to feed... and to clothe... and to visit... to comfort. On a dim morning (or a dark autumn night) it may be hard to see. But this building and our community challenges us to put Christ's words into action, and to make those windows speak.

But more profoundly the people—you generous people who come through the doors each week—the people here today live out Christ's call to treat the weakest and the lowliest as we would treat Him.

David Unger, his wife Anna, and their three daughters are longtime parishioners of St. James Cathedral. David gave this witness talk at Masses on November 16 and 23. To make your pledge, visit <https://www.osvhub.com/stjames-cathedral/forms/sacrificial-giving-2026-pledge>.



And our work, that work that Christ calls us to, continues today. And our challenge now is to continue this work! To build up the body of Christ by caring for those in our community. By bringing the beauty of liturgy, music and art to a city marred by poverty and violence. We bring growth—whether in the cathedral kitchen garden or through the Immigrant Assistance program. We—together—bring the sacraments to a world sorely needing grace.

So today I bring my thanks to you. And I bring a challenge.

Can you come together with me to make these silent windows speak? Can you bring your time, your talent and your treasure to carry on all these vital works of our church—and help them grow? Can you make your pledge to sustain the great work of a great parish?

Sacrificial giving forms were mailed to your homes a few weeks ago. But they are here in your pew too. Please think about what are able to give and we know: this is a sacrifice. Good. Sacrificing is part of our spiritual and temporal journey.

We are all St. James Cathedral, whether you've been here for 20+ years like me, or just walked in the door. (Welcome!)

There is work to be done. We prayed for more workers for the harvest. You showed up! Thank God you're here. Let's get to work, together, to build our corner of the kingdom of God. ♦

Annual Report to the Parish

Looking back on Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Dear Friends,
Each year at this time, we publish a report on the financial condition of the parish. As you reflect on how you will support the Cathedral in 2026, we hope that this report will help inform your decision. The report details not only the dollars and cents, but also some of the ministries and activities which are made possible through your support.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, total parish income was \$6,274,970.

- Sunday and holy day collections (51%)
- Various gifts, grants, and bequests (25%)
- Business income (including land lease, fundraisers, Cathedral Bookstore) (24%)

Total expenses for the year were \$6,564,480.

- Salaries, benefits and other personnel-related expenses (57%)
- Parish assessment by the Archdiocese (5%)
- Our annual support of four central area Catholic schools and parish scholarships for Rainbow Schools and high schools (5%)

- Supplies, operating costs for the maintenance and improvement of the Cathedral, other parish buildings, and grounds, etc. (33%)

This left us with a deficit in 2024-2025 of \$290,010.

You may remember that Father Ryan anticipated in last year's annual report that the projected deficit would increase, as we were then in the midst of a salary adjustment for our Cathedral staff. This adjustment, designed to maintain internal equity and keep up with Archdiocesan guidelines, was implemented in December, 2024. The deficit was covered from our parish reserves.

Looking at the projected budget for 2025-2026, you will see that we again anticipate a small (2%) deficit in the current fiscal year.

I want to take this moment to note that our Parish Finance Council, consisting of nine of your fellow parishioners, meets monthly to monitor the finances of the parish and to advise me on financial matters. I am deeply grateful to them for the way they share their time and expertise.

Income and Expense	Projected 2024-2025	Actual 2024-2025	Projected 2025-2026
Sunday and Holy Day Collections	\$3,302,000	\$3,203,647	\$3,104,000
Bequests	190,400	\$249,403	439,000
Other gifts, grants, ACA rebate	910,852	998,265	952,026
Restricted donations	82,456	324,849	87,238
Columbarium income	80,000	100,055	75,000
Business income (<i>land lease, bookstore, fundraisers</i>)	1,312,458	1,398,250	1,426,500
Total Income	\$5,878,166	\$6,274,970	\$6,083,764
Staff salaries and benefits	\$3,251,844	\$3,576,559	\$3,550,518
Supplies (<i>including postage & printing</i>)	508,036	585,637	523,300
Operations and Maintenance	167,500	198,882	210,000
Contracted Services (<i>includes insurance premiums, police</i>)	524,161	605,044	570,076
Business Expenses (<i>including bookstore and fundraising</i>)	294,807	354,083	296,200
Utilities, vehicles	387,172	366,227	399,112
Archdiocesan assessment	429,148	438,627	340,884
Rainbow Schools and Scholarships	315,384	339,420	325,180
Total Expense	\$5,878,052	\$6,564,480	\$6,215,270
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$114)	(\$290,010)	(\$131,506)

Our Life as a Parish, 2024-2025

We are a vibrant and diverse parish with 3,027 registered households, comprising 5,793 individual members. We have experienced a lot of growth in the past year, with some 506 new households on our register! Our parishioners come from across Western Washington. More than 800 volunteers are involved in dozens of parish ministries.

This year, 848 households made Sacrificial Giving pledges to the parish, and 1,210 made contributions in the course of the year.

Pastoral Transitions

On April 21, Easter Monday, we received word of the death of our beloved Pope Francis. Days of mourning followed. On May 8, American born Cardinal Robert Prevost was elected Pope, taking the name Leo XIV.

On May 4, 2025, Father Ryan announced his retirement after thirty-seven extraordinary years as pastor of the Cathedral. Archbishop Etienne appointed me as ninth pastor of the Cathedral effective July 1, 2025, with Father Francis Thumbi and Father Sylvester Chanda appointed as parochial vicars to serve our parish family. We are grateful for Father Ryan's continuing presence in the Cathedral family as Pastor Emeritus.

Liturgy, Music, and Special Events

During the past fiscal year, more than 730 Sunday and regular daily liturgies were celebrated, not counting special liturgies for Holy Days, the Sacred Triduum, and ecumenical and interfaith services.

Mass attendance continues to grow. Believe it or not, we have now surpassed our pre-Covid Mass attendance! The Cathedral has been blessed to welcome visitors from around the world, especially during the summer months.

Thirty-nine children and 19 adults were baptized; 16 people baptized in other Christian traditions made their Profession of Faith and were received into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church. Forty-nine confirmations were celebrated, and 19 children received their First Holy Communion. During the year 20 weddings and 23 funerals were celebrated.

As the Cathedral Church, we are privileged to host special events which gather Catholics from across Western Washington, including Rites of Election, the Chrism Mass, Ordinations to the Priesthood, Madre de las Americas, and Simbang Gabi. The Cathedral also hosted Baccalaureate Masses for O'Dea High School, Holy Names Academy, Seattle Preparatory School, and Seattle University.

This year, on May 31, we hosted a special Mass

celebrating the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Seattle. To mark this milestone, the whole Archdiocese set a goal of offering to God 175,000 hours of service. We far surpassed that goal, with an extraordinary final tally of 317,180 hours. The Cathedral parish alone offered 23,043 of these hours.

Our Parish Family

This was our first year being partnered as one parish family with Immaculate Conception and Christ Our Hope. In addition to several "get to know you events" and shared activities with our parish family, much work has gone on behind the scenes. We have created a Family Leadership Team, consisting of staff, and a Parish Family Vision Council, consisting of parishioners from all three parishes. These consultative bodies have been tasked with envisioning how we can become one parish in summer 2027.

Outreach, Pastoral Care, and Faith Formation

Our beloved Cathedral Kitchen marked its 50th anniversary in February, 2025. The Kitchen continues to serve an average of 150 people of all ages and races a hot, nutritious meal, lovingly prepared in Cathedral Hall each weeknight—around 40,000 meals a year. The Sunday Early Breakfast feeds 100+ people every Sunday morning. In addition, our Cathedral Kitchen Garden is thriving at Madison and Terry.

The St. James Immigrant Assistance Program also marked its 50th anniversary in 2025. This exceptional program has continued to grow and to develop new outreach to immigrants and refugees in our midst. Our Mental Health and Wellness Ministry offered a variety of services, including prayer ministry, grief support, educational events, and social activities.

Our Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation programs for youth are thriving. In addition, opportunities for ongoing enrichment, prayer, and formation for adults were offered throughout the year.

Many homebound parishioners received communion in their homes each week, allowing them to remain connected to the liturgical life of St. James, and many more connected with the Cathedral via livestream. Cathedral parishioners took communion to patients at Swedish Hospital and Harborview Hospital each week.

All this was made possible by your generous contributions. We want you to know that, under the oversight of the Cathedral's Finance Council, there has been careful stewardship of the financial resources of the parish. We look forward to accomplishing even more with your support and with the help of God's grace in the coming year.

Father Gary F. Lazzeroni, Pastor

Cathedral Almanac

Snapshots of life at St. James Cathedral, June-November, 2025

June 2025

7. The Cathedral was filled to overflowing for the **Ordination to the Priesthood** of Joseph Tapia Beeman. “Each priest is called forth from the people of God and remains a member of the people of God and lives in service to the people of God,” Archbishop Etienne said in his homily.

8. **Pentecost.** This weekend there were special celebrations of Father Ryan at each Mass as he prepared to step down as pastor of St. James Cathedral. In his homily for today, Father Ryan said: “while flying that kite and watching it swoop and soar, it came to me that things were going to be okay: that the mighty and holy Wind that is the Spirit of God, the Wind that swept through the Upper Room on Pentecost, the Wind that has stirred and moved the Church down through the centuries, would be propelling me, surprising me, lifting me up. After all, God has been the Wind under my wings for all the years of my priestly ministry, taking me to some pretty incredible places, including this place. Why would God stop now?”

12. Our annual **Celebration of Ministries** gathers volunteers from the many ministries of the Cathedral for a wonderful dinner in Cathedral Hall, lovingly prepared by our friends at Pagliacci Pizza. This year, there were more than 800 people on the invitation list (as Father Ryan said—thank goodness everyone didn’t come!).

14. St. James Cathedral was honored to host Seattle University’s **Baccalaureate Mass**. In addition, the Cathedral hosted baccalaureates for Holy Names Academy (May 22), and Seattle Preparatory School (May 23), and O’Dea High School (May 28).

22. Our beautiful **Corpus Christi Procession** gave us the opportunity to take our faith to the streets as we celebrated our faith in the real presence of Christ in the



Above: Father Ryan greets old friends at his farewell celebrations on Pentecost Sunday. **Center:** Ordination to the Priesthood of Joseph Tapia-Beeman. **Bottom:** Corpus Christi Procession, June 22.

Blessed Sacrament.

29. This weekend we marked **Father Ryan’s last weekend** as pastor after thirty-seven years of extraordinary leadership. This bittersweet moment was observed with receptions following each Mass. At the 10:00am Mass, City Councilman Robert Kettle made a proclamation on behalf of the City of Seattle, and a wonderful portrait of Father Ryan by parishioner Mary Larson was unveiled in Cathedral Hall.

July 2025

6. This weekend we marked another major milestone in our Cathedral history: **Father Gary Lazzeroni’s first weekend** as our pastor. From his homily for today: “As we gather around the Table of the Eucharist now, we do so rejoicing for all that has been. At this sacred altar of thanksgiving, we bring the joy of having accomplished so much, and the sobriety of knowing there is so much more to do. We come here knowing that the real source of our rejoicing is not just in all the work we have accomplished, and all that is left to do, but in the communion we have with the Lord and with one another.”

10. The **Summer Organ Concert** series began this

evening, with a recital by organist Adrienne Cox, and an ice cream reception in the Cathedral courtyard.

14-16. Our first ever **Senior Days** was a “summer camp” for seniors, with opportunities for prayer, service, and fun.

16. The parish family of St. James Cathedral, Immaculate Conception, and Christ Our Hope joined in hosting a **Meet Our Priests** event. Mass was followed by dinner and an opportunity to meet Father Gary Lazzeroni, pastor, and Father Francis Thumbi and Father Sylvester Chanda, parochial vicars.

24. A new four-week **Bible Study** began, focused on the Parables of Jesus.

27. We celebrated our pilgrim patron, **St. James** the Greater, with special Masses and our annual parish picnic.

August 2025

11-15. Our Schola Cantorum **Choir Camp** was the biggest ever! What a great week of music, team building, and play. The high point of the week is always when the campers join us to provide heavenly music at the 10:00am Sunday Mass.

22. Today the Cathedral hosted the funeral for a beloved priest, **Father Lyle Konen, C.Ss.R.** Father Lyle, who died at the age of 92, was well known at the Cathedral, where he offered many weekday Masses for the past five years. May he rest in peace!

25. Our annual **Hunthausen Charity Golf Tournament**, co-sponsored by Pagliacci Pizza and Ellen and Terry Gibbons, raised \$195,000 to benefit the Cathedral Kitchen and other outreach ministries.

September 2025

9. To get to know the parish community, Father Gary Lazzeroni hosted a **Parish Family Listening Session** in Cathedral Hall.

13. The Cathedral hosted a somber and prayerful Mass for **Suicide Healing and Remembrance**.

14. At the 10:00am Mass Archbishop Etienne presided at the **Installation of Father Gary Lazzeroni** as pastor. It was a memorable occasion as the Cathedral was full to overflowing with parishioners from St. James Cathedral, Christ Our Hope and Immaculate Conception. Musicians, readers, and servers from all three communities united in a fitting and joyful celebration. Father Gary said: "Over these coming months and years, we will be called to listen



From top to bottom: Choir Camp tour of the Cathedral, August. Father Gary Lazzeroni's installation as Pastor of St. James Cathedral, Immaculate Conception, and Christ Our Hope, September 14. Mass for the Deceased Homeless, November 6. Dia de Muertos Concert, November 8..

well to each other and, together, to listen well to where God is calling us, and who God is calling us to become as a new parish... It is a privilege to make this journey with you."

October 2025

17. It was a privilege to welcome organist **Stephen Tharp** to the Cathedral for an outstanding organ concert.

19. At the Noon Mass, we were joined by members of the Native community of the Archdiocese of Seattle for the blessing of new icon of St. **Kateri Tekakwitha**. Read more on pages 12-13 of this issue of *In Your Midst*.

November 2025

1. The solemn **All Souls Requiem** featured the transcendent music of Duruflé.

6. This year at the Mass for the **Deceased Homeless**, we remembered more than 300 men, women, and children who died on the streets and in the shelters of King County this past year.

8. For the second year, we hosted Orquesta Northwest's **Dia de Muertos** concert. In connection with this event, a stunning Day of the Dead altar was created in the Cathedral Chapel.

21. Archbishop Etienne honored twenty-two lay people from around the Archdiocese with the **Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice** medal. Cathedral parishioners Gregg Alex and D Krasucki, Richard Ferry, and Michael Reichert were among those honored.

27. Parishioners from all three parish communities gathered for Mass of **Thanksgiving Day**. Each year at this Mass, we collect non-perishable food items for those in need. In the afternoon, the Cathedral Kitchen served a hot, delicious Thanksgiving dinner to

hundreds of people in need. ♦

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

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Christmas and New Year's Day

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

4:30pm

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD — VIGIL MASS

Father Gary F. Lazzeroni, Presider & Homilist

9:00pm CAROL SERVICE

10:00pm * MASS DURING THE NIGHT

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne, Presider & Homilist

Thursday, December 25, 2025

8:00am * THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Father Michael G. Ryan, Presider & Homilist

10:00am * THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Father Lazzeroni, Presider & Homilist

12 Noon THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Archbishop Etienne, Presider & Homilist

4:00pm SOLEMN VESPERS OF CHRISTMAS

Father Ryan, Presider

5:30pm THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Father Ryan, Presider & Homilist

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

5:30pm MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Contemplative Candlelight Mass on New Year's Eve

Father Lazzeroni, Presider & Homilist

Thursday, January 1, 2026

8:00am * MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Father Ryan, Presider & Homilist

10:00am MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Father Lazzeroni, Presider & Homilist

12 Noon MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Father Lazzeroni, Presider

Deacon Denny Duffell, Homilist

*Masses indicated with * will be livestreamed.*

Visit the Cathedral website for details.