

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Here we are on the home stretch of the summer. In just a short time, the children will be returning to school and we will be back on our regular scheduled routine for programs and meetings. In these days, we are welcoming new employees to the office. Two of them arrived the week before last, Kely Euan as an Admin. Assistant and Rachel Teresi as the PA for Youth and Young Adults. This week, we will welcome Kristen Abbananto as the PA for Adult Evangelization. We are grateful that God has sent these wonderful women to work with us for the building up of the Kingdom here at St. Anthony. We will be having a staff retreat for two days at the end of August to get acquainted with our new staff and to get used to the new dynamic that they will bring to the staff.

On this Sunday, as we have our parish picnic, it is a great time to reflect on the gift of our parish. Ever since I arrived at St. Anthony, I have enjoyed an abundance of good food. We are so blessed to have so many generous parishioners that like to share the gift of their cuisine with the community. The parish picnic is always an opportunity to come and enjoy the parish in a different setting than we normally would. It's outside of Mass and not for a meeting. It is a time to come down for a good lunch with friends and get to know some more members of our parish community. I hope to see you there after the 12:30pm Mass.

In the week ahead, we celebrate the Queenship of Mary. Having celebrated Our Lady's Assumption into heaven last week on August 15, the Church celebrates her Coronation as Queen of heaven and earth a week later. This is the fifth Glorious Mystery and the final mystery of the Rosary. In contemplating the coronation of Our Lady, the Church invites us to make her the queen of our hearts and our lives. This is a wonderful time to think about our devotion to her and how we might be called to live it more conscientiously. The rosary is a wonderful way to make our devotion to Mary a priority in our lives that helps us to grow as children of our Heavenly Father and disciples of Jesus. Mama Mary is always willing and eager to guide us on the way to a deeper relationship with her Son. As I ponder this fifth Glorious Mystery, I am drawn upward, my heart longs to be where Our Lord and Our Lady have gone before us. As Jesus said to us in the Gospel last Sunday, "*Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.*"

There are so many things that divide our hearts and so many pursuits that distract us from the one that is primary, to love the Lord our God with all our heart. Mama Mary and the saints always encourage us and show us how to order our lives in accord with God's love. One of my favorite sayings comes from the Desert Father Abba Poemon, who said, "*Do not give your heart to that which does not satisfy your heart.*" Our hearts were made by Love for love and only in that pursuit will we encounter that which we are looking for, that which we desire the most, true peace and happiness.

"Brothers and sisters: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." Heb 12

Sincerely yours in Jesus Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fr. Jack D. Shrum', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Fr. Jack D. Shrum
Pastor