



Beloved of God

As we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, we remember one of our patrons, St. Paul, who is called the apostle to the Gentiles. He served as an instrument of the Light to the Nations. As we now move forward into the New Year, St. Paul can become the model for us in reaching out to those who do not know the unconditional love and unbounded forgiveness of God.

As a parish community, translating our words into deeds is a challenging task and a risk. It is challenging because we must allow God's love and forgiveness to shine through us, and it is a risk allowing ourselves to become vulnerable instruments of God's love in solidarity with all God's people.

We at Christ the Servant come together in the name of Christ; it is in Christ that we reach out to the poor; it is in Christ that we welcome the stranger and cloth the naked; visit those in prison; feed the hungry and give drink to those that are thirsty; it is in Christ that we offer our lives in ministry and service within the community; it is in Christ that we allow the generosity of God to flow through us and into the life of God's people. Being part of a Catholic community means "decentering" ourselves and allowing Christ to become "*The Center*" of our motivation, intentions, and commitments.

This past Advent and Christmas I have been overwhelmed at the generosity of the people toward those most in need. So many responded through the giving tree and gifts for those in need; food and clothing donations; gift certificates of food; opening our hearts to children and families; greeting and welcoming our visitors and guests for our masses; reading the scriptures at mass; serving as Eucharistic ministers; giving of your musical and singing talent for our community liturgy; serving at mass; being catechists for the RCIA and for the parish school of religion; visiting the sick and the homebound; preparing meals for the families of those who have died; volunteering for the various activities that make everything happen each week; volunteering for the building and grounds projects; welcoming our neighbors. There are so many ways in which you truly translate the Word of God into visible signs.

I thank God for the gifts and talents that God has given to our people. Those who choose to belong to Christ the Servant shows themselves to be a community so aptly reflected in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, "I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthener among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Lgaetano