

Dear Friends in Christ,

As I began writing this article, I reflected on the importance of communication and sharing in various roles, particularly in light of my son's upcoming wedding. For a husband and wife to make a life-giving, life-long marriage, good communication is essential. It is also critically important that they mutually share in building up the relationship, "the ministry of the marriage", in their individual roles. One person "doing all the doing" does not a marriage make.

These gifts, communication, and shared ministry are also essential to the growth and development of the parish. Communication, and especially clear communication, is vital for a parish to continue growing. This communication must be mutual and respectful. Because if the church exists to evangelize, it does this through communication of the Gospel in both Word and Deed.

In the communication of the Word, it reveals the truth that we are Created, Captured, Rescued, and called to Respond. In the actions of the church's sacramental and social ministries, we shine forth the truth that God became man and left behind his light and life that all may have a share in it.

And we must share all these roles. The Diocese of Saginaw depends on Bishop Gruss; he shares in the ministry of Jesus and, in turn, shares it with us because he cannot do it all. Fr. Fred, Fr. Loren, and I don't make the parish; we share what is entrusted to us by Bishop Gruss, and in turn share it with you. No one person proclaims the Gospel, no one person cares for the church property, no one person feeds the hungry, no one person teaches the faith, no one person celebrates Mass.

We are strongest when many share in these roles, and we reach the furthest when they are shared as well. We must always be on guard against owning our ministry in such a way that we prevent someone else from exercising their baptismal call to ministry. If we are tempted to say to someone, "No, I do that." Then we must find the strength to turn to God and say, "God, is there a way I can share this?" Because, as my friend Fr. Jim likes to say, "There are no Lone Rangers in ministry."

Good communication and good sharing in ministry are essential for a strong marriage and a strong parish. God grant us the strength to do both.

Peace and blessings,

Deacon Todd