

Ministry of Hospitality: Ushers and Greeters.

Numbers 11:25-29; Mark 9:38-43.

In the Scriptural readings of today, Joshua is confronted by Moses and John by Jesus. Though stated differently, both Joshua and John have placed before them an important question: “How great is your desire to welcome the souls of your brothers and sisters to the Lord and to your group?”

Both men were a part of an “inner circle”: Joshua was close to Moses and John was a dear friend of Jesus. However, when others, perceived to be outside of that “inner circle”, began to prophesize, to heal, and to bring others to the Lord, both men complain. Yet Moses and Jesus will not tolerate such exclusivity. In the end, Joshua must decide whether following rules was more important than his brothers and sisters receiving the prophetic message. And John must examine his soul in order to see if he is more concerned about who is on the inner circle or with the mission of the good news reaching and giving life to as many people as possible.

In many ways, Pope Francis is placing before each one of us these same questions. He is challenging each one of us, members of the “inner circle”, to reflect on how we care for the souls of those who decide to wander into our parish and liturgy, many of whom are spiritually poor and emotionally broken. He is asking us to think about what these people will find when they come among us. Will they find a sense of welcome and belonging? While our Cathedral Parish is a truly warm and welcoming community, as I count myself so truly blessed by God to be among you, each Sunday when we gather for Holy Mass, we have the opportunity to let people who join us know that their presence is not only welcome, but that it makes a difference in our own personal and communal celebration of the Mass.

And this is why the Ministry of Hospitality is essential for our continued mission of the new evangelization here at the Cathedral. Yes, in Baptism we are called to invite others to come to know Jesus in the breaking of the Bread. But when these people walk through our doors for the first time, how are they welcomed and made to feel wanted and needed as a part of our family of faith? I have a dream for our Cathedral, one that was also Msgr. Giordani’s, that everyone who walks through these doors, no matter their story, their struggle, be they among us for first time or the thousandth time, they feel wanted and needed by God and by each one of us! I look forward to working with those who would like to help see this dream to fruition by serving as Missionaries of Hospitality here at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

Msgr. Geno Sylva