

September 29, 2020

Hello and greetings to all members of Saint Joseph's Parish here in Alexandria:

Needless to say, I miss seeing your faces and greeting you in person as we would each Sunday. I pray for you, your families, and your loved ones every day and my prayer is that you are well, that this pandemic will soon end and that we can be reunited in-person very soon!

Given our physical separation over the past several months, as well as the social and political excitement that is unfolding now within our country, I feel that we have an opportunity to energize our parish and reflect on who we are and how to best prioritize our actions going forward.

To that end, I am launching an "Embracing the Future" effort that will offer all parishioners the opportunity to participate in a series of engaging and collaborative small group workshops. The goal of these workshops is to hear your thoughts on how to prioritize our actions and initiatives going forward so that we may best advance the Church's mission in our community. It is also my desire to bring us back into meaningful contact with one another - as best we can - after this period of separation. You might call this a follow-up to the strategic planning we did in 2016 as we began thinking about how we should "Embrace the Future" after having "celebrated our past" with the 100th Anniversary of our Parish.

I have formed an advisory committee of over a dozen St. Joseph parishioners to help me in this effort. I have also engaged an outside facilitator with relevant experience, Rashad Badr, Founder of ImpactBeta, to support our undertaking. This committee and I will work hard over the next few weeks to thoughtfully prepare for these workshops to make them fun and meaningful.

I will keep all of you updated on our progress every step of the way through our various avenues of communication. You may also reach out to me or Rashad anytime with questions, comments, or ideas. You can reach me at stjosephalexva@gmail.com or at (703) 836-3752. You can reach Rashad at rashad.badr@impactbeta.co or at (703) 328-0952. Stay tuned and I will be back in touch with all of you about how we will conduct these small group workshops soon.

With prayers as we continue confident in our gracious and generous Father as we pray for the success of this endeavor, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Donald Fest, S.S.J.
Pastor

"Embracing the Future" Advisory Committee Members: Committee members are responsible for advising me on how to best prepare communications, materials, and exercises to support these workshops. Committee members include: Deacon Al Anderson, Rhonda Allen, Beverly Anderson, Joe Brooks, Pete Downes, Mike Doyle, Eugene Harper, Tracy Kindle, Tom Lantz, Jason Louis, Shawn Pressley, Reginald Shufford, Beverly Thornton, and Maceo Webster.