



### ***From Fr. Joe's Desk:***

Several weeks ago the HSYG (High School Youth Group) of St. Catherine's sent me an e-mail via Kerry. Speaking of Kerry, I heard that she will no longer be serving our young people in the same capacity. I extend a deep thanks to her for all the work she has done for the younger members of our parish and wish her best of luck in her future endeavors.

The e-mail contained a list of 20 questions. The questions were so good that I thought I would answer them through this medium so everyone could find a little bit more about me and where I stand on several key issues. Some I will be able to answer very quickly; like, 'Do you like Pizza?' Duh, it's my favorite food group! Others will take a bit longer to answer like this one:

**Q.: *WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT YOU EXPECT OUT OF BEING AT ST. CATHERINE'S?***

**A.:** Initially, I didn't think I had any expectations but after some reflection I came up with this: I expect to be treated the same way that I treat others, hopefully with compassion, dignity, and respect (sometimes I fail at this and apologize in advance...please feel free to remind me whenever I fall short of this expectation). I expect to listen to your stories and history and to learn because I don't have all the answers, which I find very liberating, because if you don't have all the answers you can be open to the truth in new and creative ways. I expect to grow in my faith and my prayer life. I expect to become a better disciple/student of Jesus the Christ and I will need your help to do it. I expect all my preconceived notions to be challenged. But most of all, I expect to have fun and laugh often!

**Q.: *HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A PASTOR?***

**A.:** About a week now. I have been nourishing people most of my life, initially from various kitchens throughout New York and lately from the table of the Lord, all of which has been most rewarding. What I've learned is that there are many ways to shepherd or pastor. You could lead from the front and blaze the trail and let folks follow, meaning being very charismatic which is really life-giving but risks the ones in the back of the flock who may wander off; or you could lead from the midst of the flock where you can see more of what is happening with the people of God, a much more collaborative method but also runs the risk of not seeing what's behind you and not moving forward quickly enough; or you could lead from behind the flock...you could have a much better perspective but you can only move forward as fast as the slowest sheep, every once and awhile you have to prod the slow ones along or the ones up front will be too far ahead. I use all three ways to lead but my preference is the more collaborative model. It's a more difficult model but I think offers a more holistic ecclesiology.

Didn't I tell you they were great questions? Have a good week!

Peace,