

Dear People of St. Christopher's:

The gospel for this second week after Pentecost reminds us to keep our heads by keeping "first things first." It is a good reminder under any circumstances, but most certainly we at St. Christopher's need to take these words to heart. For us, thoughts about "What shall we eat?" and "What shall we drink?" easily get translated into terms about how will St. Christopher's recover from its recent setback, what will be done? Understandably, it is easy to worry, to be anxious about "tomorrow." No one is fooled into thinking that the way ahead for us will be easy, and concern for today and tomorrow will cause many among us to worry and wonder; but all of us need to remember two things in this regard.

First, we tend to worry when our plans don't work out, when our expectations are not met. The antidote for such concern is faith, that is, trust in life as God knows it. Plans and even dreams are important, but ultimately our faith commitment calls us to trust life on God's terms. This is to say that as Easter people, we rely on more than what we can manage to produce.

The second thing to point out about such worry is that allowing anxiety to anchor itself in our cores not only distracts us from what matters; it also prevents us from being at our best. Allowing worry to dominate makes us all ineffective. Besides which, it is much easier to worry than it is to present oneself as part of the new solution.

So, this time at St. Christopher's is a fundamental matter of "first things first." Jesus tells us that the important practicalities of food, shelter, and clothing certainly matter, and our heavenly Father knows we need them; but these necessities are not enough. We require what we have been given in Christ: New and lasting life.

This summer, I want to invite each of you to join me and other Diocesan leaders in leading St. Christopher's in a guided visioning process that will quickly culminate in this community fashioning a renewed purpose statement and identifying in the most concrete of terms new priorities for ministry, mission, and common life. Re-equipped with this refocused identity and purpose, St. Christopher's will not only be in a dynamic position to move ahead in fruitful ways toward renewed parish status; St. Christopher's will also be in an exciting position to invite others to join in on this new life.

But for now, let's help one another keep "first things first." As we have promised in our baptismal vows, keeping "first things first" entails honoring and learning more about the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, keeping the community sound by showing up and by keeping the prayers, and by breaking the sacred bread together and tasting God's life in our midst.

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