

Recently, a group of men/women that belong to one (or more) of our many parish ministries, and serve in any capacity on a regular basis. were invited to answer a few questions. We knew our responses ~could possibly be shared if we decided to participate. I have no idea who or how many were invited to participate. but upon being asked, the first thought in my head was Why ask me"? And here is my reason.

Before this year concludes. I will celebrate my 50th birthday. and 50 years ago I became part of St. Christopher Parish. This parish has so many men and women who serve in multiple ministries. I know for a fact (remember. 50 yrs.) that some began serving when I was still a child - and still serve to this very day. It \as only 7 years ago that I decided to become "active", and more than a "pew-sitter". So again - "why me"?

After some careful & prayerful thought, I realized that someone must think I have something to add so.. .my answers.

— *Is there a person or any special event or circumstance that might have inspired you to serve in the role(s) or ministries of St. Chris?*

Several people - past and present. As a child, the formation in the Catholic faith my parents provided \~as more than just a Catholic education and going to Mass each week. They led by example. As far back as my memory allows, they both were involved in the church, school, Holy Name Society and Rosary Altar Society. My father passed away many years ago, but my mother is still active in our ministries.

Seven years ago, **all events & the people I** encountered there moved me from the pew to hear HIS call to serve others. I attended a CRHP retreat - and not since I was a child had I experienced any spiritual growth like this. What was equally special is that the men hosting and attending this event were from our parish. The relationships that began that weekend have formed into none I had previously known. These men were already involved and serving in our parish: so it did not take them long to begin recruiting inc to do the same.

Why and how would you extend an invitation to another to serve in a parish ministry ('maybe changes or blessings that entered your life)?

The answer to this question begins with the new friends I encountered. I met and have served alongside so many good people with so many different gifts. They receive much pleasure in serving others. It would also be from ~whom' we serve that influences my life.

It is while serving others that I would learn humility, see/feel the troubles facing others, the longing for hope, compassion and the kindness of a friend. All these graces, I casually took for granted for most of my life. It would be the ones I served '~with, and the humbleness discovered from those 'ye minister to, that my blessings came. For each has made a positive impact in my own life, and even life I touch.

The retreat might have been the catalyst to my renewed spiritual growth, but the day I chose to serve others was the very same day that any anger, hate and ~wrongs in my life would no longer control my life.

Earlier in this letter I left Parish in bold print -- and for over 40 years I believed that to be the correct word. **Only now, after serving along with so many good people, do I know we are much more than a parish, but a family.**

God Bless, Marty B. - - Usher