

Pastor's Column

Rev. Michael Ratajczak
michaelr@stmoside.org
758-4100 x100

We Know That All Things Work for Good for Those Who Love God

In these days, all of us are busy about looking at our lives, the lives of our family members, our priorities, our goals, our employment, our recreation; yes, we are busy about looking at everything.

\$4.50/gallon of gas is now the lens through which we view all facets of our lives. Change is not on the horizon. Change is here!

All of us are feeling the pain as we are beginning to reprioritize our lives. All of sudden so many of those things that we thought were needed and essential now become expendable.

The daily "Starbucks" now does not need to be daily. A sandwich made at home and brought to work becomes more desirable than lunch out. The manicure and pedicure on a less regular schedule, a haircut every five weeks rather than every four weeks, more family meals at home rather than in restaurants, more thoughtful errand runs in order to save gas, and vacations closer to home are all becoming the norm of the day.

These are some of the easier changes that we have to make. For many, the decisions, already, are much more serious and grave than just letting go of a few extravagances.

This is a painful time. For many, it is already in crisis mode as households struggle with mortgage, car, and credit card payments.

The present economy is reshaping how we live, how we think, and how we will plan for the future.

The perspective with which we approach this moment will make all the difference in terms of how we will survive. As we face pain, the choice is always between "bitter" and "better."

We can be bitter about what is happening to us, become angry and disillusioned, or we can see the challenges as opportunities to become better.

If we see these challenges as ways of becoming better, we will see our painful realities as ways of growing closer to family members and friends, of looking at our lives and sorting out the weeds and the wheat, of playing in ways that truly are times of re-creation, of slowing down and immersing ourselves in the present moment. Ultimately, this time can be a time in growing closer to God.

Sr. Joan Chittister said this about facing the unknown: "Newness is exciting but not always easy to accept. It often takes a great deal of faith to accept change in life. But then again, newness and change may be one of the few times in life that we really get the chance to believe that God is everywhere, even where we've never been before."

Because of our present economy, we are going places where we've never been before. But we are a people of faith, and we believe that God is everywhere, is with us now, and will be with us in our future.

As we embrace our painful realities, for some, much more painful than for others, we know that all things work for good for those who love God!

As a Parish Family of Faith, may we continue to walk together and help each other ease into the future!

F. Mike