

A WORD FROM OUR TRANSITION PASTOR . . .

One evening recently as I was walking to my car in the parking lot of a local hospital, I was approached by a young woman with three small children. Spying my clerical collar, she asked if I were a priest. Telling her who I was, she began to share with me some of the troubles she was having in her life. Assuming at first that she was about to ask me for money, I was taken aback when she asked, "Will you pray for me? I really need it." Right there in the parking lot, with cars pulling in and out of parking spaces, people walking by, and with a considerable amount of noise capping this scene, she obviously wanted someone who represented God and God's caring love for a life in shambles.

I have had similar experiences in the past . . . in the grocery store, in mall parking lots, in hospital corridors. I share these experiences with you because I have thought about them often. I need frequent reminders that as a pastor, I represent not just myself to a rather anonymous world around me. Rather, I also represent to an unknown number outside the boundaries of our parish the **availability** and **accessibility** to the love, mercy, forgiveness and power of the God whom we worship and serve. Each one of us here at Gloria Dei is a treasure chest of resources to help connect . . . or re-connect . . . persons with the healing presence of God they seem to have missed. They might be the person at the next desk where you work; they could be the person across the table at dinner; they could be the neighbor down the street; they could be the person sitting next to you at a club meeting. Wherever they are . . . and be certain they **are** there! . . . they need hope; they need encouragement; they need a boost in a new direction. Whatever their need or question or request, they are looking to **you** because they see in **you** someone who already has some experience with the deep and lasting things in life, as someone who already has found a rock in the midst of life's shifting sands.

What an awesome responsibility for someone like **you** and **me**! Yet, what an awesome privilege to share the amazing grace of God that has already touched your life!

Peace!

Pastor Weeks