

Pastor Bill Mugnolo

St. John/Zion Parish

January 2018 Article: "Amidst All Our Clutter"

This past month, for my family and me, has been an eventful end to an eventful year. It was my blessed privilege to celebrate Christmas with all of you for the first time. Here, I would like to thank the folks at both St. John and at Zion for the many wonderful gifts that you've given to us. The gift cards to local restaurants certainly have come in handy especially as we've been moving and unpacking. Then, as I also discovered in your gifts, the two congregation have some great cooks and bakers and, in addition, that both Elyria and Lorain have some awesome chocolate shops!

Then, after months of seemingly endless paperwork, we were finally able to move into our new home at 417 Windsor Drive in Elyria. I'd like to thank those of you who helped us out with our second major move in nineteen months. We are starting to settle in and go through the long process of unpacking (Some of what we have we hadn't even unpacked from our last move!).

As we sort through all the boxes, I've found myself thinking about Jesus' words, "Sell your possessions and give to those in need" (Luke 12:33). I wonder if those words were given just as much for our sake as they were for the needy? I find it all amazing how over the years we've managed to accumulate so many possessions. How many of them, as I move yet another box, do we truly need or are they just taking up space? It seems that over the years we can fill up our lives with so much clutter that we could just as well do without.

The same goes for the way we clutter up our lives with wasted time and misdirected purposes. I can't begin to count all the time that I've looked up trivial facts on my "smart" phone. Then, I spend hours in my mind devising grandiose schemes to make the world and the Church "better places" while I often miss, right under my nose, an opportunity to help someone who is truly in need.

As we move from Christmas into a New Year, many folks make "resolutions" as to how they will look to better their lives. Amidst all our clutter, comes the Christ who resolves to give to us His word which is our "one thing needful" (Luke 10:42). His is a word that both unburdens our souls and works to unclutter our lives. It will be my blessed privilege, and my continual gift to you, to bring you this living word in 2018 and, hopefully, for many years to come. May Christ's peace be with you in this year ahead.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Bill