

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Year C August 11, 2013

Theme: Our Faith Community

This gathering is really quite an extraordinary event.

Not at Christmas, not even for Easter does the parish of St. Paul, Weirton, West Virginia, come together as one community in such numbers in one place at one time.

And significantly we are not at our usual home in our own building, but in a rented shelter and on borrowed ground

Go ahead and take a look around all these folks.

Some you know as friends and neighbors: go ahead, you can give them a little wave if you like.

Some you see every week at mass even if you don't really know who they are.

Still others are total strangers.

But all of these people, with the exception of a few visitors whom we certainly welcome, are the St. Paul Parish, your faith community.

Briefly today, I'd ask you to think with me about what that means to be a faith community white one another.

It means more, I would suggest, than we all happen to go to the same building for Sunday mass.

It also means more, I would hope, than St. Paul's Church is closer to my house than St. Joes.

And finally, let's hope it means more than, I like this priest better than that priest.

Being part of a parish surely means we have made a commitment to Christ Jesus and to this community of people to form with them the Body of Christ in a particular place and time.

This idea which comes directly from the writings of our patron St. Paul, holds that together with our Head, the Lord Jesus himself, we together, are the Living Christ alive and active in the old center city of Weirton here and now.

So look around at all these people again.

These are your people:

they belong to you and you belong to them and together we all belong to Christ.

Together all of us are committed to being the arms and legs, the hands and feet, the mouth and ears of Jesus Christ in this part of Weirton.

Each using our respective gifts, carrying the load together, supporting one another's efforts, we follow the lead of our Head, Christ Jesus, to keep his memory alive and continue his work.

With this community of believers we each will live out our Christian faith.

Among the people of this community we will worship and thank our one God.

And supported the sisters and brothers of this parish community will each find our way home to heaven.

So, yes, take a good look around at these people today:

Aren't they wonderful people! God's holy people! The Body of Christ! Saint Paul Parish!

Don't you think they deserve a big hand!