

22ND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME YEAR C 8/31/2025

THEME: CLOSE TO YOU

Dear Beloved Parishioners,

Burt Bacharach and Hal David wrote some mighty-fine songs. One of them was a big winner for the Carpenters in 1971: “Close to You.”

“Why do birds // suddenly appear // every time // you are near? Just like me // they like to be // **Close to You.**”

Who doesn’t have a person or some people they want to get/stay close to? Not to gain something tangible—just to be with the other, to share the space, to feel the love.

A few weeks ago, I was visiting with a patient in the hospital. We talked about a lot of things—from the man’s health, to his family, to a memorable moment that, years later, stands out as one of the most moving events of his life.

He was a Chicago Police Detective detailed to protect Pope John Paul II during his visit to the city in 1979. His mind was fully occupied with watching for trouble and keeping the pope safe. But there came a moment when the pope was passing through a doorway and this police officer and he were very close and their eyes met and the pope spoke a simple, heartfelt, understanding, “Thank you.” **Close to you.**

The guests at the Pharisee’s table who were the target of Jesus’ parable “were choosing the places of honor at the table,” places closest to the host of the dinner. Not particularly because they liked the host, but because they wanted to seem important in the eyes of the other guests and on-lookers. And Jesus counsels them to yield the places of the Great Ones to others and assume a place among the small.

And then Jesus counsels the host to invite the least “useful” people to his table, the ones Jesus came to identify with himself. *I tell you, as often as you did right by the needy ones, you did right by me. (See Matthew 25:40)* **Close to me.** That’s where Jesus wants us to be.

God bless our Parish, and God bless you.

Msgr. Mike (while Fr. Albert is away)

