



Reflection from Deacon Ross Beaudoin

Last Sunday we celebrated the 115th Birthday of our parish. St. James “the Less” Parish was established when the local area was just developing. First Masses were celebrated in an upstairs ballroom in a building at 39th and Woodland. The parish paid \$5 for the use of the space for an hour. Two other churches, Baptist and Mormon, also rented the same space for their Sunday services.

St. James eventually purchased the land at 39th and Harrison/Troost. A wood frame building became the church for a few years, before the present stone church was built, in 1912. The stone came from an abandoned bridge project.

St. James had a humble beginning. And the founding pastor, Msgr John Keyes, was known as a person who welcomed all and who responded to the needs of all. This welcome and concern became a hallmark of the parish. It still is today, 115 years and counting.

I don’t know if the name of the parish was decided by the diocese with or without Msgr. Keyes’ input. But considering the message of the Letter of St. James, which we read this Sunday (James 2:1-5), there could hardly be a better patron for our parish than St. James. He writes, “show no partiality as you adhere to the faith... for if a person with gold rings and fine clothes comes into your assembly, and a poor person in shabby clothes also comes in, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, ‘Sit here, please,’ while you say to the poor one, ‘Stand there...’ have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil designs?”

“Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that is promised to those who love God?”

Here’s to the next 115 years of being a community of no partiality, of welcoming all and ministering to all – and discovering that “those who are poor in the world [are] rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom” of God.

*~ Peace,
Deacon Ross*