



Reflection from Deacon Ross Beaudoin

. A whole lot of emotions run around in us at this time of year. Check how you are *feeling* about your preparations for Christmas, your communications with family and friends, your desires/dreams for the coming year, etc.

Most of us have a basis for a positive attitude going into the holiday season. There are some, though, and you or I could be among them, who find it hard to keep upbeat. Struggles of life and relationships may weigh heavily. We'd like a sign that the reality that we celebrate at Christmas may perhaps bring new hope where our lives are hurting.

Early this week, many lives here in Kansas City were touched with new hope and some real joy. Fifteen families, 54 people in all, came here from the border in El Paso, Texas. Some 70+ volunteers from diverse backgrounds and faiths prepared for these immigrants. They welcomed them and accompanied them in their time here. They assisted them as they started out on their journeys to family or friends who would welcome them into their homes.

Families immigrating from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Nicaragua. Each sacred family unit intent on leaving behind violence, drug wars, unbearable poverty.... These people began to see a new horizon in the ministry and faces of the volunteers of KC Welcome Alliance. And to hear it from the volunteers, they also came to find a new outlook through awareness of the struggles, determination and resilience of the migrants who risked to come here to make a new life.

Are not all of us at some time immigrants? Jesus, whose birth we prepare for now was an immigrant with his family fleeing violence and going into Egypt shortly after his birth.

Today's first reading, from Isaiah, begins, "Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God." Things were not going well for the people. But Ahaz would not ask a sign. God himself gave a sign: "The virgin shall conceive and bear a son..." Hope was alive for a hurting people.

Early this week God gave a sign. A people assembled and brought love and new life – to each other. There is reason to feel hope and find in this Christmas season new life for ourselves and to share with one another.

*Blessings,
Deacon Ross*

GREAT THANKS from "Missing in Action"

I need to express my deep gratitude and ongoing support to our parishioner **Bill Cordaro**. Bill stepped up and offered to help with preparations for the bus of immigrants that was going to arrive in mid-December. Little did he or I know at the time that I would end up in the hospital in early December. Bill took the reigns and *did a magnificent job of organizing, developing and coordinating the event* and shaping the **KC WELCOME ALLIANCE**. *Kudos, Bill, and a thousand -THANKS. — Ross Beaudoin*