



THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

June 30, 2024

St. James Catholic Church

*3909 Harrison * Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

"Small enough to know your name, big enough to make a difference."

Reflection from Sr. Michele Morek, OSU

WELCOME

Seven years ago, I went to my first Mass at my new parish in New York City—Saint Francis Xavier in Manhattan. A little elderly man, rather poorly dressed, slid into the pew next to me. I started to reach for my purse, thinking he was going to ask for money.

Surprise! Instead, he welcomed me to the parish, and handed me a free missalette. I loved many things about that parish, but my most vivid memory was of my first welcome.

First impressions are so important. My first impressions of Saint James were:

- The flags on the back wall (I was just coming from a job that involved work at the United Nations and I was looking for a parish with diversity)
- The diversity and friendliness of the congregation
- And—believe it or not—I was favorably impressed by the water damage on the walls. That indicated to me that the parish priorities were people, not “cosmetic”!

Saint James has lived up to its first impression for me, and is my favorite of all my 80 years’ worth of experiences in parishes. I was happy to be asked to be a Greeter, part of our parish Hospitality Ministry, and have met some wonderful people. When I meet a new person, I usually welcome them, point proudly to our flags, and tell them what a great parish we have here.

Recently it must have worked on a new lady I greeted; the next Sunday she came back and let me know that she brought her husband with her! And showed him the flags.

So wear your name tags proudly! They are a simple way to help newcomers feel welcome, (and a way to help old timers like me remember your name). I think our official song for Saint James should be “All are welcome in this place!” Choir, what do you think?