



SAINT JOHN FISHER PARISH

September 20, 2017

Dear Parishioners:

This past week the construction of the expanded columbarium wall was completed. It has almost doubled the capacity. Even though the columbarium is only four years old, almost half of the niches have been sold. I frankly never expected the niches to sell so quickly. I expect future sales to go more slowly. The same architect who designed the original columbarium designed the expansion. Now that the work is completed, I am pleasantly surprised as to how well it blends in. The second set of walls has given the columbarium area a certain intimacy. Often on my way to the priest's sacristy, I notice people stop there on the way to church to pray next to their loved ones. It has really made that area a sacred spot.

A sacred area next to the columbarium that is often overlooked is the labyrinth. Although it looks similar to a maze, it is most definitely not the same. In a maze the pathways lead to dead ends. In a labyrinth it is a continuous pathway that leads to the center. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth is designed for ease of navigation, and it is impossible to get lost within one. Walking through the labyrinth is a form of prayer as one meditates in a journey to the center. A prayer labyrinth is a labyrinth used to facilitate prayer, meditation, spiritual transformation, and global unity. The most famous prayer labyrinths today include an ancient one in the cathedral of Chartres, France, and another in the cathedral of Duomo di Siena, Tuscany. Although they may not be involved in deep meditation, I often see children after Mass carefully walking through the labyrinth until they arrive at the center. At other times I see people prayerfully making their way through our labyrinth immersed in meditative prayer.

In another sacred area outside our Church you will find the Stations of the Cross. Where the stations inside the Church go in a clockwise direction, ending up next to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, the outside stations go in a counter clockwise direction and end up just outside that Chapel. Since the Eucharist is reserved in that chapel, it becomes in effect the 15th Station, the resurrection. Calvary is not the end of the road. Good Friday leads to Easter Sunday; Christ's death leads to his resurrection from the dead.

This should remind us that the sacred places in our campus are not confined to the church.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. David A. Sork
Pastor