

## ***Non Parcum ibi***

(With apologies to Fr. Alek and other Latinists)

### **A Pastoral letter on parking lots... And Charity**

#### **To the People of Good Will of St. Raphael the Archangel Parish**

1. "Do not park there" is a regular request in these recent days. As more people return to attendance at Mass—and this is a very good thing—we are noticing increasing difficulties with parking. There can be nothing as ugly or scary as the church parking lot before and after the celebration of the Eucharist.
2. Within the new boundaries of our parish, we maintain three properties, each with its own area for vehicles. Each is of a certain size and design, and different in its convenience. As expected, all of the lots are designed to make the best use of the available space. Unfortunately, some come to Mass with their "escape plan" already in order and, in planning so, miss the point of coming for worship by darting away before a necessary blessing for the week, and lacking consideration for the others who will be in attendance at the same celebration. Those who arrive early park in the slot most convenient for them, and in the meantime make it difficult for many—including some elderly—to be able to park close to the respective church.

### **— THE CHURCH PARKING —**

#### **At Ss. Simon and Jude Church**

3. As I addressed recently, there are arrows to be followed, not only in the direction for driving, but in the direction toward which you should park. For good order we should not park contrary to the arrows. If you come early, pull up to the end of the row. The arrows are there for a purpose. They point in one direction (and incidentally toward Jesus in the tabernacle). We should enter the lot toward Jesus and not against him. There are more than 100 possibilities for LEGALLY parking in this lot.

#### **At St. Margaret of Scotland Church**

4. We are fortunate to have ample parking, but there tends to be hesitation at the upper lot. There are approximately 206 spaces available. The lot has lanes designed so that the parking could be maximized. Please follow the directions to park in the designated interior lanes first and leave for the clergy and staff those slots indicated by signage near and in front of the former admin building. It has also been a long-standing kindness by the administration of the Jacob Center on Fleet Street that, on weekends, the business lot (285 spaces) is available to our parishioners. Caution in crossing Mansfield Avenue is necessary in this case.

#### **At St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church**

5. A reminder that, in addition to on-street parking, the lot at the corner of 3rd Avenue and 4th Street can be filled. The lanes indicated by arrows are only to remain free on weekdays. On weekends, all lanes can be used. (Again, follow the arrows and pull up to the end.) Additionally, there is parking (80 spaces) at the former St. Joseph lot on the corner of 3rd Street and 2nd Avenue.

#### **At ALL lots**

6. On each lot, be attentive to "No Parking" areas as well as "Fire Lanes." It is amazing how sure some are of themselves, that they park right in front of such signage. Drive on the property at a speed at which you will not hurt someone's person or another's car.
7. In all of these possibilities, we should enter the lot with the charity of Jesus, not lacking in it.
8. It is a regular complaint that five minutes before the end of a hockey game or football game in Pittsburgh fans run to their cars so to depart in a manner more convenient to their schedules. More importantly—and except for emergency—no one should leave the Mass until the celebrant or the deacon gives a dismissal.
9. I hope we have some sense of selflessness toward those who join us in the pews on the weekends. We gather there to worship God and to grow in our love for Him and for those around us. The Sacrament of Charity—the Eucharist—is received by many of the same persons who cross the thresholds of the churches and betray what and Who they have just sacramentally received.
10. Be attentive to your brothers and sisters in the St. Raphael community. Think about your neighbor. That's a great way to begin your weekend worship and an appropriate attitude to carry beyond the Mass.