



FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

If today we are excited about the re-opening of our church--and we certainly are--imagine the emotion of the parishioners of 1917, when, one hundred years ago today, they attended the first mass in the newly constructed main church. For the eleven years prior the parish held her liturgies first in a store-front space down the street, and then in the church basement which was later named Fatima Chapel. After years of planning, fundraising, and building the parishioners were finally in an edifice that would serve as their, and now our, definitive spiritual home. This beautiful church is our inheritance given to us through the faith, hope, and love of the spiritual giants that have gone before us.

Most recently, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was blessed by the pastoral leadership of Fr. Eric Rapaglia (2008-2014) and Msgr. John Ruvo (1984-2008). I want to thank both of these great men publicly for the major contributions they made to the history of our parish. The more time I spend in this neighborhood, the more stories I hear of how well they loved their people, of how well they tended their flock. It is not primarily in the administrative work where the pastor fulfills his vocation. It is in his personal prayer, his sacramental life, and in the selfless and quiet service of each and every soul that is entrusted to him, especially those

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who are most needy. Thank you, Monsignor Ruvo. Thank you, Fr. Rapaglia. Thank you priests, sisters, and all the lay faithful who have brought us here today.

Now we turn our attention to the future. Our priorities are clear:

- Development of the personal prayer and sacramental life of every parishioner
- Cultural and spiritual programming for youth of all ages
- Continued faith formation for children and adults
- Marriage and parenting education for young families
- Social service to our neighborhood, especially the most needy
- Outreach to and evangelization of the spiritually disconnected in our neighborhood
- Upkeep and improvement of our facilities and finances to serve better our mission
- Spiritual support and leadership for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel elementary school

With God's help, and through the maternal care of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, there is nothing he asks of us that we can't accomplish, for his greater glory, and for the human flourishing and eternal salvation of souls.

I hope you already know that I have great love and affection for each of you. Please pardon my weakness and help me to be better.

**God Bless,
Father Jonathan**