

LOOKING THROUGH STAINED GLASS

A Column by Fr. Tom

We are One Parish Family!

In our introductions to Sunday Mass, we begin by welcoming everyone to the parish *family* of St. Paul of the Cross. Our family, like any family, has much that unites us. We share a common worship, a common faith, and a common mission.

Recently, members of the parish have worked together to find ways that we might express our one parish family in a tangible way. Some of the results of that effort can be seen in the physical changes that you may have noticed. We have a vision statement, new signs and a new logo (or crest). In future columns, I will talk about the new signs and the vision statement, but for this week, I would like to discuss our new crest. For many centuries, crests have been used to represent a family – for what it stands and what is important to that family. Crests are also quite common in the Catholic Church.

Our crest consists of three sections. The base (or lower half) of the crest shows a descending dove, a sign of the Holy Spirit. Everything we do here rests on the Holy Spirit and we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us in our mission. The color of the base is purple, which indicates, the sovereignty of God here at St. Paul of the Cross, and everywhere.

The left (or sinister) side, when viewed from the back of the crest, is a palm branch. This branch and the waves that divide the base

from the top (or chief) of the crest are a reminder of our connection with the larger Church in the Diocese of Palm Beach. They also symbolize our closeness to God's own creation, the natural elements of water (the sea) and flora (Our Lady's Grotto). The palm leaves are green, symbolizing the joy of the Gospel, which we profess, and the waves are blue, symbolizing the truth of the same Gospel.

The right (or dexter) side, shows a "P" that has been altered to include a Cross and has the abbreviation "St." above it. This symbol is a graphical representation of St. Paul of the Cross, our Patron. It also is symbolic of Christ Himself, as it reminds us of the

Chi Rho, , an ancient sign for Christ. The symbol is yellow resting on a red background, representing the charitable works of our parish, as we give our lives in the ways that Christ requires of His disciples. [JN 13:12-15]

I hope that you have already noticed our new crest on the signs around our Church campus, on our website, our new letterhead and our bulletin. In the near future, you may even find this crest in surprising new places. Keep your eyes open!