

## Advent II, Year A

**Romans 15:7. welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God.**



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This reading jumped out at me. This reading is me. I welcome people. When I see new people in choir, or new people at church I always speak to people. People need to know that you're glad to see them - that you've noticed that they're there. There have been times in my life when I've felt like a "nobody," so it's been important to me that no one else feels that way.

In fact, that is how I met my husband! He was new in choir and I noticed that he looked a little lost, so I welcomed him and helped him put his music in order. I let him know we were glad he was there. One day we were talking and I just said. "I know that you're alone. I am, too. Maybe sometime you'd like to get together and talk." So, we exchanged phone numbers and we got together and talked.

I think a lot of times we don't make people feel welcome. We get comfortable with our own circle of friends and we don't want to get outside that circle. The Gospel tells us to act differently.

This spirit of hospitality is a distinguishing factor of St. John Parish. Years ago when we were a smaller parish, we were like one big family. I remember that on Holy Thursday evening at mass, we would pass our babies around. Everyone knew everyone else and we cared about each other.

Now as we've grown larger, it's a bit more challenging, but there is still that feeling of welcome. When I was going through tough times and difficulties, I was welcomed into the bell choir and the Celebration Choir. That helped me get through a very difficult time in my life.

Even now I can see that small challenges in my life aren't worth dwelling on. You have to maintain a positive outlook. You can't always expect people to behave as you think they should, but we all need to welcome one another – and we need to mean it!

Anyone can do this, even those who are shy. Once you welcome someone, it becomes easier each time. It also becomes contagious. Your welcome may give that person the strength and the initiative to speak to others. It may change the entire course of their day. And it all comes full circle, too. A welcoming spirit lifts my mood. I thank God every day for this gift of a welcoming personality and for a loving church family.

Sometimes you have to make the decision to be in a good mood. If you make that decision, eventually you'll find that your mood has changed and those around you are in a better frame of mind, too. You gain ten-fold. You have more energy.

*More information can be learned about St. John Choirs elsewhere on this website, or you may wish to contact Julie Richards at [jrichards@stjohndavison.org](mailto:jrichards@stjohndavison.org) or by phone at 810-658-1135.*

*If you are interested in the ministries of lector or Eucharistic Minister, please contact the parish offices at 653-2377 for more information.*

*Do you have a welcoming spirit? Perhaps you would like to be a greeter at mass or be part of our Welcome Committee, please contact Sherry Haynes at 658-6129.*

*If you would like to offer your services as a Welcome Desk Assistant, please contact Laurie Miles at the parish Family Center: 652-0304, ext. 269, or e-mail her at [lmiles@stjohndavison.org](mailto:lmiles@stjohndavison.org)*