

PARISH MERGER

November 9, 2008

In his Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI points out the three elements which make up the essential nature of the church: Proclamation of the Word of God, Celebration of the Sacraments, and the exercise of the ministry of Charity. In another letter (Spe Salvi), he related how "the Church cannot neglect the service of charity any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word". The Gospel then is not merely a communication of things that can be known - it is one that makes things happen and is life-changing. These words, especially during this time of transition for our two parishes of St. Cecilia's and St. Veronica's offers us a hope-filled comforting insight.

As Pope Benedict writes: 'The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of new life". We are all asked to look at the changes that lie ahead in the merger process in a positive and fulfilling way. This does not mean it will be easy for anyone of us. But it can and does mean that we hold too much sacredly in common not to take hold of this opportunity to build for ourselves and those who will follow us, and even stronger more faith-filled community with the ties that can forever knit us as one.