

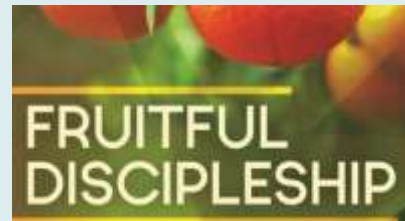


*From the Desk of Father Peter*

*Each of Us is Called to Faith and the Life of Discipleship*

*Pope St. John Paul II, from the very first moments of his papacy, constantly and continually cried out, "Do not be afraid." His strength was great, and it encouraged and empowered many people.*

*Many of us have found ourselves in the difficult situation where there is conflict between our faith and the choices those closest to us make. At times like these, speaking up, even with respect for others, is difficult. Sometimes remaining faithful to God can drive a wedge between friends, and even family. We must remember that each of us is called to a life of faith and discipleship in Christ. No one person can do it alone. We do need each other here at St. John's to shape our future and grow. We have to look for new ways of doing the same things, away from what is not yielding the desired results. We have to make new parishioners and visitors feel welcome from the door of entrance to the pews. God has a plan for our lives. He loves us. He will stay with us during trials and struggles. He will pour down His healing mercy, but He also needs us to stand up to our baptismal virtues of faith, hope, and love.*



*Do we remain honest to our faith? Or just simply honest? It may be terrible things being said about another person, and people turn to us expecting our agreement or participation. Do we join in the Gossip or defend the reputation of others?*

*We could be asked to approve of something with which we don't agree. We may need to express an opinion that is consistent with the Gospel, but in conflict with those with whom we share friendship or family ties.*

*In all these circumstances, whether a priest, a father or mother, single or married, we are faced with the truth which is found in Christ. Remaining faithful to Christ can mean division, persecution, and possible rejection> How do we stand firm and be gentle and kind at the same time? How can we, when everyone wants favors in his or her circumstance? If our words are harsh and without love, we may deserve the alienation our words bring. If our words of support are spoken with compassion and accompanied by charitable actions, they may still bring division in the “me-society” we find ourselves in, but at some later time, our faithfulness may provide a bridge for others back to God.*

*Yes, in our call to be a Christian witness or disciple, we may face rejection. There will be times when people might say, by word and deed “off with you.” Yes, there may be times when our transgressions will discourage us, but it is worth it to remain faithful to the one who is always faithful to us—Christ.*



*Peace and love to all,*

*Fr. Peter Enyan-Boadu*