

Sunday, January 3, 2016  
EXPRESSIONS by Father Ed

## Celebrate

While a new year is often associated with optimism for the future, it also is a good time to celebrate past accomplishments. This is true for both individuals and organizations. Saint Timothy's has much to celebrate.

We have a reputation of welcoming people. Visitors who come here immediately sense a spirit of friendliness and openness and wish their own parishes were the same. They come back as often as they can. Some even move here. We welcome persons of every identity for, according to the Bible, "we are all made in the image and likeness of God." There is no valid reason, then, to ever exclude anyone. Furthermore, Jesus told us to love everyone. Our policy at St. Timothy's, therefore, is to accept and honor each individual.

We also endeavor to work with other parishes and religious groups. The Women's Guild sponsors an annual ecumenical retreat. I belong to interfaith associations. St. Timothy's works with community civic groups, especially on social justice issues. For two years, we hosted EBAC, a network of city and county social service providers. Once a month every Tuesday at the Vets' Hall and on the last Wednesday of each month in our parish hall, a team of volunteers, including staff from French Hospital, under the direction of Bonnie Jones, provides a home-cooked meal for 70 persons. We also have a food pantry for those needing extra supplies.

It seems that everyone wants to borrow our facilities, to the extent that I wonder what the other churches and non-profits do for the community. The Salvation Army refers people to us! So does EBAC! ESL (English as a Second Language) uses the hall twice a week. AA uses it once Saturday a month. The Birders come every January – though not this year because of the renovation. The Chamber of Commerce, The Car Show, the Girls Scouts every week during the school year, among others, use the hall. Cuesta College, and other musical groups use the church for concerts. As a sign of support, the parish charges nothing to these groups, though some, like the Birders, just presume our good will. We host the Guerrilla Gardening Club who, different from the rest, volunteer their time and effort, as a sign of appreciation. Though St. Timothy's is a vital participant in the community, we are rarely thanked or publicly acknowledged.

St. Timothy's, as far as I am concerned, is Morro Bay Beautiful. We have the most attractive landscape in town. With the Guerrilla Gardening Club, we provided 50 trees to the city, celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of it founding. Because of our generosity and commitment, we are beautiful in spirit not just in appearance. Let us celebrate our goodness this new year.