

- My friends and coworkers are using bad language, and it would make me stand out if I did not join in. Yeah, but put Jesus in the room with you. Will you stand out with Jesus or fit in with your friends/coworkers?
- My kids are visiting from out of town and they don't go to Sunday Mass. It might seem rude of me to not remain behind and host. Okay, but put Jesus in the room. Will He keep the Sabbath holy by attending Mass, as He has instructed all the Catholic faithful to do, or remain behind?
- It seems all of my friends who have graduated and are dating now live with their partner even though they are not married. My partner and I are the odd ones out living in two separate places. Maybe it is time we just join the crowd. Well, put Jesus in the room. What would He say to your intention to move in together? How could He reconcile that decision with His instruction for couples to live chaste and holy lives?

Too often people (yes, even Catholics) can leave God out of the equation altogether. And so I say, put Jesus in the room. Treat Him like you would a friend or spouse, treat Him as your first friend, and see how easy it is then to act in an unchristian like way. We can be so sensitive to making sure other people feel good, or that we don't make them feel bad. If so, it seems all together more noble and good to treat God like His feelings matter, too.

WWJD? I don't know. However, I hope I will know the way I would act if Jesus were in the room.

Thank you to all of you who read the transition document. One response I have received from a few folks, and wanted to respond to, was the impression that the process is more concerned about the things inside the church buildings and less concerned about the people. I can understand the concern but also want to explain why the process is at all concerned with assets and items if, as the document states, my first concern is and remains care of souls.

As your pastor, I cannot be concerned more about our church buildings that I am concerned for you. The first reason our church buildings are of concern to me is because they matter to you. This is not to say the buildings and the sacred items within do not matter to me. It is not to say that churches are 'just buildings' or 'stuff.' I love churches, great and small, near and far. I love our four churches. However, as your pastor, these things should firstly matter to me because they matter to you.

The transition document articulates the process which parish transition teams, composed of people from each parish, will complete. This will ensure we carefully attend to both our

FATHER MITCHELL'S PASTORAL BULLETIN

Sunday, March 22, 2026

To the parishioners of Saint Andrew's, Greenwald,
Saint John the Baptist's, Meire Grove, Saint Mary's, Melrose &
Saint Michael's, Spring Hill, of the One In Faith Area Catholic Community

parishioners and the assets of our parishes in a careful and compassionate way.

This process will be partly concerned with the things of our parishes because I believe these things matter to you. And part of the way I can respect you is by respecting those things which you honor and cherish.

And know that this is the document for our transition team. I have composed my own document to help me attend more intentionally to the pastoral concerns of the parish. It is not my intention to neglect our people or dismiss what you may be feeling. With God's help, I hope we can navigate this time of change together.

Pilgrimage, movement and change, these are repeating themes in the Scriptures: People who must leave behind something familiar for something new. But God never sends or calls them forth without hope. I do not believe we are without hope now. God has been, is and will be with His people.

Immaculate Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us.

In Christ,

Father Mitchell Bechtold

Greetings.

WWJD? Anyone who lived through the 90's probably knows well what these letters mean. What Would Jesus Do? It was on t-shirts, wristbands, billboards and more. With just a few letters, WWJD, a person could examine the actions of their life by simply asking what would Jesus do if He were in my place? I liked this question then, and I like it still.

More recently though I have adopted a slight variation of this, summarized in the words: Put Jesus in the room. The idea is, if Jesus were physically here with me now, in this room, in this place, in this moment, would my behavior be any different? WWJD ask what would Jesus do if He were living my life. Put Jesus in the room asks how I would live my life if Jesus were physically there with me in the moment.

Some examples of this in practice include: