

Meditation from the new Junior Daughters Chaplain

As I write this article as a new chaplain for our Junior Daughters and their directresses, I am in the middle of a major transition. I have just accepted a call to serve as a rector in a vibrant and loving parish and I am full of curiosity, wonder, excitement and - well, apprehension and nervousness. Will I meet their expectations? How will I fit in in this new diocese and part of the country? Can I serve them as well as I hope to, each day and in so many ways? I also wonder about this new call as chaplain. Will I be able to serve our Junior Daughters and their leaders as well as I want to- in prayer, support and in showing appreciation for the commitment and service both JDOKs and Directresses demonstrate in their lives?

As I pondered expectations and new challenges, and especially new joys and excitement, it made me think of the girls in the Order and their lives. The ages of the young women in the Order are ages full of almost constant transition. Young girls become young ladies; they move from safe and small elementary schools to the challenges of junior high or middle school, and then on to high school. Their friends change, the expectations placed upon them changes, and young women today face many challenges and temptations I never had to face at their age.

Throughout periods of transition, we all need our rocks and our strong footing. How wonderful for our young ladies that the Order of the Junior Daughters of the King is here to offer the support of the Savior and a loving, caring support group of peers and Senior Daughters. I believe so strongly in the Junior Daughters of the King, that I believe a church that does not offer this opportunity for participation and dedication is taking away a powerful tool and support system to help keep our young ladies safe and strong on their spiritual journey. Jennifer Mariano has done an incredible work in strengthening our Order and moving us forward, and I give thanks for her leadership and tireless energy. I look forward to working with her and supporting her in any way that I can.

To the directresses and Senior Daughters who help lead this treasured ministry:

Please know that this priest, mom and long time youth minister values you and your call deeply. You are in my prayers and I am always available for you to offer support, to listen to your frustrations, and (drawing upon my background in youth ministry) to help with your ministry with ideas, retreats, and any other suggestions you might need. As soon as I settle in the first of September, you will have my phone number and e-mail.

To our Junior Daughters of the King:

You have made a strong, mature and wonderful decision in joining the Order. I know that you will be blessed and encouraged by those around you as you pass through the many changes ahead of you in life. Please know that your Directress, parish priest and Senior Daughters are available to answer questions and guide you on your spiritual journey, and now I am, too. I will give you my e-mail in the next issue, or you will be able to find it on our web page in early September. In August, we celebrate the Transfiguration of our Lord, the time on the mountain when Jesus was revealed in shining glory as the Son of Man. You, too, are transfigured as you reveal yourself as a child of God to the world around you. Be bold, and carry Jesus out into your world, because the love of Jesus has the power to brighten everyone's world, make life's hard times easier, and the good times better. Take time to 'go on the mountain and be with God'- in other words, take your daily prayer time and study and be true to it, so that God can continue to transform you into the incredible Daughter He created you to be. Let YOUR light shine, just as Jesus' face shone so brightly to those on the mountain with Him.

I can't wait to see where we travel together in the Order, and I am proud and excited to be serving as Chaplain.

In His Service,
Mother Susan

The Rev. Susan Q. Claytor