



Dear Little Flower,

The Lord is magnanimous, the Lord is generous. In the first reading from the book of Genesis, Abraham is portrayed as the host who serves and is generous with his visitors. I have seen a great deal of generosity and hospitality as I get to know more about the people and the parishioners of our little parish here in Berkeley Heights.

The Mount Carmel town festival has been celebrated this past week. And it has been spectacular! I am thrilled to learn that the Mount Carmel Society has had a long history of relationship with our little church, and I am looking forward to the Lord's blessings through the deepening of our relationship together in the future.

In my last homily last Sunday, I reflected and spoke about the Lord's invitation to show mercy, compassion and love to ALL. Little Flower, I would like our parish to have a significant contribution in creating a spirit and a culture of welcome and hospitality everywhere around us. I have heard stories about hospitality and care that our parish family have extended to strangers and friends alike. We want to keep the Spirit working in us and through us.

You have heard your priests say: *it is all about relationships*. In this week's gospel reading, Jesus wants to point out to me and to you that in any relationship - in any *friendship* - *the one who is actively listening is the one who has chosen the "better part" of the deal*. Hospitality begins when we start listening; relationships begin when we engage through different means and forms of communication, sometimes - simply through active listening. Yes, it is all about relationships - but we can offer relationships whereby growth, healing, and perpetual learning from each other is present.

Realize that we really could give more of ourselves when we truly learn to pour out our hearts by actively listening to one another better.

Your Parish Priest,
Fr. JC Merino

Go and Make Disciples. Go and Make Leaders.