

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Shrub Oak, NY



All Are Welcome,

ALL Are Welcome in this Church

. . . as if it has to be said! It does, of course!

Two families walk into church on Sunday, they arrive minutes apart, use the same door, and sit in the same pews. By the time Mass is over, *one* family says “that’s the friendliest bunch of people we know! The *other* family feels unwelcome, neglected, overlooked, even shunned.

How is that possible? Was it their expectations, the greeting they did or did not receive, facial expressions of fellow parishioners, priests or deacons, noise, personality types? Who knows? But it’s a vital thing for Christians to contemplate.

We work very hard at being a Christian faith community—one faith, one Lord, one baptism--and we are proud of our efforts to connect with God and with each other around the common Scripture and altar table. Still, to love God and neighbor (two sides of the same coin) requires us to look around, be more aware of those who sit and stand and kneel around us, acknowledge those physically closest to us as brothers and sisters in Christ.

A Church is nothing if it is not welcoming, and we thank you for working at that virtue. How about **making stronger effort at showing more consideration for each other**, making room in our hearts, as well as in the pews, for everyone, so we can worship in spoken and unspoken ways? Smile, pause, shake hands, make room for people with special needs, those with children and the elderly among us, and otherwise be Christ to a fellow believer. Let’s do more to help each other prepare for worship and then bring the fruits of that worship into the world.

We didn’t get to be the “greatest parish in the world” (as our founding pastor used to say). We had to work at it, and we still do . . . all the time, and that’s time very well spent! Don’t you agree?! That’s right Seton; that’s very right. Thank you.

The Charity of Christ Compels Us!