

## **From the Deacon's Pen**

Being one of your two deacons during 2022 has been a great source of joy and vocational affirmation. Thank you for the opportunities to serve together and grow in faith and solidarity love!

Our spiritual lives grew deeper as we, together, engaged through the content of my sermons, or by serving in the liturgical team under Father Luis' leadership and mentorship. Offering Pastoral Care counseling sessions to individuals, teams and during times of conflict had been also important milestones in the deepening of our relationships: I cherish every conversation held in confidence as well as the informal conversations we had at coffee hour, in the hallways, via ZOOM, and public spaces.

Here is a brief summary of what we have done together, reflecting my commitment to our development and spiritual life as a congregation, I:

- Prepared a young member for Confirmation at the Cathedral of Saint John's the Divine,
- Organized and coordinated our participation in the LGBTQ Pride March,
- Wrote reports from meetings at the multi-congregational response to the migrant crisis affecting NYC during the time of massive new arrivals,
- Supported the work of the Stewardship Committee by writing a sample-letter, which could have helped to mobilize the congregation.
- Wrote Pastoral Letters to the lay leadership in support of Fr. Luis' response to the immigrant crisis,
- Joined the Profile and Community Committee by facilitating processes, designing documentation protocols and interviewing parishioners, and most recently,
- Facilitated a session, "The Spiritual Gifts of Advent, A Time of Hope and Anticipation" for the Vida y Abundancia Ministry.

Sharing the Deacon seat with The Reverend Gene Bourquin revived a 20+ years old friendship: We both came to our discernment processes from the same sponsoring congregation! Working these past few months with Mother Maria Isabel on the many liturgical aspects and traditions here, has been also a wonderful joy. Most importantly, doing church under the mentorship of Father Luis has been one of the greatest and most profound experiences of my entire vocational life.

To all and each of you, THANK YOU for being a vibrant community of faith and for giving me countless opportunities to grow into the priesthood that is just around the corner. Thank you! Thank you!! Thank you!!! May God continue to bless Holyhood/Santa Cruz with vibrant ministries and the spirit of the Church's People.

Faithfully, in solidarity love and hope,  
The Reverend Anahi Galante, Deacon