

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

A “paradigm shift” is a fundamental realignment of one’s perception. The classic example of a paradigm shift is this well known story:

The captain of a United States Navy destroyer was sailing his ship in a dark and stormy night on an important mission. From the bridge his lookout reported that there was a bright light in the distance headed straight for them. The captain radioed to the other ship, “This is the USS Boston headed in your direction. Change course immediately.” The response was “You change your course.” The captain roared, “This is an admiral in the United States Navy, we are headed for an imminent collision. Change course immediately!”. Came the calm reply. “I demand that you change course!!” Said the furious captain. “Don’t you realize who you’re dealing with? I am the commander of a United States Navy destroyer”. “I’m the master of the Rocky Point Lighthouse.” Came the reply. “You change course.”

The captain had a paradigm shift.

In our church life together, I think many people who worship at OLR need a paradigm shift about parish life.

As Americans our default setting about most things is that we are customers and consumers. This attitude applies to church life also. We shop around for the church we like best. As Catholics we shop around for the parish we like best. This is understandable, and in 21st century USA where we drive everywhere, we get used to “having it our way” - not only at the burger joint, but also at church.

However, the church is not a burger joint or an ecclesiastical shopping mall. If you choose to worship and belong to Our Lady of the Rosary, you should see yourself as a community member, not a customer/consumer. You see, customers are basically indifferent and uninvolved. As long as they are getting what they want - that’s where the involvement ends. A community member, on the other hand, is concerned and committed.

Do you need a paradigm shift from consumer to community member? If you worship at OLR but are not yet registered as a member, you are a consumer not a community member. If you worship at OLR but do not regard appeals for volunteers as applying to you, you are a consumer not a community member. If you worship at OLR but are not committed to planned and sacrificial giving, you are a consumer not a community member.

In December we will embark on our annual stewardship campaign to register our planned giving for the year and in the first quarter of 2025 we will promote a small capital campaign called *Bridge to the New School*. To give an update on our master plan there will be a parish meeting on Tuesday evening, December 3. In both

campaigns we will ask all our parishioners and those who attend OLR to get up, get involved, and get committed.

For some this will require a fundamental shift in their understanding of what it means to be part of what God is doing at Our Lady of the Rosary, Greenville.

So, this is the Lighthouse Keeper speaking. Do you need a paradigm shift?

Your Pastor,
Fr. Longenecker