

'MY MOBILE PHONE AND GOD' – ST. JOHN FISHER COLLEGE – 26 August 2016
FOR THE BLESSINGS OF NEW BUILDINGS AND REFURBISHMENTS

I wonder how many of you have your own mobile phones.
(Quite a few hands are raised.)

As I hold up my iPhone, I know that I can converse with others, take photos, record videos, catch the local and world news, play games, listen to music, send emails, tweet, watch YouTube and the list goes on.

But I can't at this moment because the phone is turned off.

I need to put in my passcode before those wonders appear on my phone.

What about talking to God?
Trying to see the world through God's eyes.
What is the passcode for turning that on?

I invite you to use this code. "[Come as You Are](#)".

I don't mean type the words into your mobile phones.

We talk to God today, or any day, in any place, in any event, however we feel,
By just coming to God from where we are in life at this moment.
We interact with God.

But God offers even more.
Sometimes we don't need words to pray.
Just be with God, without any codes to begin a conversation.
Just being there for God.

Look at all those incredible apps and opportunities on our phones.
We want to turn the mobile on.
But the phone doesn't love us.

How much wider and deeper are the opportunities when we turn to God.

God loves us as a person. Intimately.

When we come to Bible or scripture passages, we read, we listen, we imagine, we feel.
We dialogue with the passage and we prayerfully go the next step.
We interact with God.
The Bible, the Word of God,
Opens up a conversation - silent or spoken,
Opens up an encounter with God - who loves us so deeply.

Sometimes God doesn't say anything to us,
But chooses to let us feel the love of God within us.
At some moments we feel God healing us.
And other moments we feel being uplifted when we are in trouble, carrying us and caring for us.

Today, you - as students and staff of St John Fisher College - reflect on a key Biblical passage for your existence as a College. [2nd Letter of Peter 1:5-10](#).

Over the years the College has dialogued and interacted with that passage, In the College Motto and in your College Prayer – [Goodness, Knowledge, Discipline](#).

Verses 5-7,

“For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.”

Goodness, Knowledge and Discipline (Self-Control) become your motto.

Faith is to be lived.

Goodness in this passage can be translated as virtue.

Godliness as we reflect God in our lives.

Endurance or Perseverance. Every day.

Mutual affection is a translation of a word for respecting each other as siblings, as members of the Family.

Family as belonging to a family group with the “Big Sister, Little Sister” program.

Family as a member of the College Houses of Bridgeman, McAuley, Quinn and Rochester.

Family as a member of each Year level.

Family as a member of the whole College.

Family Love.

The last word is [AGAPE](#) as love.

There are three words for ‘Love’ in Biblical Greek -

1. Romantic love
2. Family love - treating each other as sister or brother or friend – mutual affection
3. Love as [AGAPE](#) - called “unselfish love” in the College school song

[LOVE as AGAPE](#).

Jesus on the cross, dying for us all, to save us.

[LOVE as AGAPE](#).

Not just inner circle, not just our best friends or cliques or the people we admire most.

[LOVE as AGAPE](#).

That deep committed love of God for all people.

Love that is [INCLUSIVE](#), not exclusive.

And as the College Song says, everything comes back to,

“God of Love and God of our lives, we sing the greatness of God.”

We continue throughout our lives to interact with God, and to respond to God’s inclusive love for us all.

May God bless you this day.

Fr. Gerry Hefferan