

Sept. 27-28, 2014

Thoughts from the pastor,

At this point Fr. John has been away from the parish for six weeks. His trip started out as a working vacation. He traveled to France to find books in French that could be used next year in the three seminaries that he will be working at. He will be using the Master's Degree in Spirituality that he finished at Creighton University to develop spirituality programs for the high school, college and graduate school seminaries in his country. He will also be starting a spirituality formation program in his diocese. Since French is the common language that they share the texts need to be in that language. He was very successful in that endeavor. But then problems started up.

He has been trying to get his Visa set up so that he could come back and forth occasionally the next few years so he could help build a team of spiritual directors for his diocese with the help of Creighton. He hadn't gotten all of that figured out before he left and was trying to get that taken care of when he ran into the pilot strike in France. This slowed him down a little but then he had to get to his home country of Togo to take care of these Visa problems. That is where the problems stand at this point. His application is on hold for now. We have no way of knowing when or if this will get straightened out. If it doesn't he may not be able to come back. If it does he would be back to the plan that his bishop mentioned when he was visiting. He clarified that Fr. John would start this work in Togo at the end of next summer.

This has made things very interesting for me here at SEAS. Having an extra Mass or two every day is a strong reminder to me of how much we need more vocations to the priesthood. The five guys we have from the parish in the seminary impresses everyone in the Archdiocese. That is the good news. The bad news is that no other parish is anywhere close. We may have to ask God if he can double the vocation calls in this parish to help with the slack in other parishes.

This week Matt Niggemeyer will be ordained a deacon in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. I wish I could be there but I am very happy that there are about 30 people from the Archdiocese that are going to be attending. Many of those are from our parish. With God's help and the Archbishop's okay he will then be ordained at the Cathedral here in Omaha on June 6, 2015. The next day we can celebrate our second 1st Mass at SEAS in a year. That is very exciting. I hope you will keep those days open in your calendar.

For now I will be impatiently waiting for word on Fr. John's Visa status. I am putting the Mass calendar in the bulletin this weekend with the hope that he will be back soon. If not you can throw it out because I will be doing almost all the Masses. It will be interesting to see what the State Department and God have in mind. Stay tuned.

God bless you all,
Fr. Frank