

Aug. 15-16, 2015

Thoughts from the pastor,

Next weekend will be busy. There will be an additional Mass and yet there will be one less Mass. The 5:30pm Sunday Mass is canceled because of the picnic but there will be a Mass at 1:00pm in French for the Togolese community in Omaha. Fr. John started this monthly Mass a while back to help the many immigrants from his native country of Togo to stay strong in their Catholic faith. There are about 6,000 in Omaha. Fr. Harvey, who is studying English at Creighton and staying at St. Mary Magdalene Parish, has the Mass now that Fr. John is heading back. Fr. Harvey will eventually be taking the same Spirituality Program at Creighton that Fr. John completed and will then help him in developing a Spirituality Program for their seminarians, clergy and lay people.

Next weekend will also be our mission appeal weekend for the Propagation of the Faith. We have a different missionary effort presented each year to help us understand the work that the Catholic Church is doing around the world and to give us a chance to help in those efforts. This year Sister Lucia Benedict will be speaking about the Ad Gentes Missionary Society. She is from Nigeria and is the Mother Superior of her community of Sisters. They work with the young teenage mothers, school drop outs and children in the rural areas of Shiroro in Nigeria. The Society was founded by Fr. Vitalis who is currently the pastor of Holy Name Parish in Omaha.

Next weekend we also have our annual picnic. I hope you have had the chance to purchase a few raffle tickets and have your chance to win \$10,000. I also hope that you will attend this parish event and if possible even volunteer some of your time to help it run smoothly. It is very easy to just space off this event as just another one of many things that don't fit into a busy schedule. There are several reasons I hope that will not be the case. The first is that Sundays should not be a part of our normal busy schedule. It is supposed to be a day of rest from those kinds of crazy activities that make our lives so hectic.

The second is that a parish is a very important part of the family of God. It is where we experience our common meal, the Eucharist. Obviously the picnic is not as important as the Sunday Mass obligation. Missing that is a mortal sin. It is not a sin if you miss the picnic. It is just a shame because that is where we get a chance to get to know some of the other members of our parish family. Mass is a sacred time during which there is little time for conversation with each other. It is meant to be our time to listen to the Lord and have a conversation with Him. That time of dialogue conversation should happen mostly when we have just received Him at Communion. He is doing a lot of the talking before that through the prayers and readings.

The picnic is for us to have that kind of dialogue with each other. We always have a lot of new parishioners that have moved into our area. This is a chance to get to know some of them so they don't feel isolated in a church full of strangers. Mass should be a gathering of brothers and sisters. So I encourage you to come and meet some new friends and/or reacquaint yourselves with some long-time friends. It is only supposed to hit about 90 degrees as the high and for those of you who have a hard time with that, the parish hall is always a cool place to hang out.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank