

Oct. 15-16, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

This weekend Imad Qumsieh will have the hand carved olive wood religious articles from the Holy Land on sale. Imad and his family live close by but he works with 27 different Catholic families in Bethlehem and Jerusalem in order to help them out as they live in an area with so much persecution. **Next weekend, 10/22-23, we will have the Anointing of the Sick at all the Masses.**

This past week I had the opportunity to drive to Denver to talk with my nephew's wife. It was a quick trip because I left on Sunday night and got back Wednesday noon. I was able to spend 2 ½ hours of uninterrupted time with her. Then I left the 26 page document that I have posted on the parish website called "Offering the Gift of Faith." It is right on the front page so it is easy to find.

She listened very carefully but did not respond. She has a lot on her mind, having lost her husband less than four months ago, a baby due in February, and trying to complete nursing school. I told her that this was an offering of who I am. What she does with it is up to her. I mentioned that she might have questions that come up soon or not for years to come, but that I would be there to try and answer them. Now I pray and ask you to do the same. She is well cared for in this world. I want to make sure that she and her daughter will be well cared for in the next. Yes, she is expecting a girl. And as always I will be praying for your loved ones who you are hoping will see the light. In the world right now, with even more religion bashing and religious freedoms on the line with elections, it would be hard for anyone to want to step forward to join the church at this point. It seems almost like saying: "Pick me, I want to be martyred."

This week all three priests from SEAS will be at the clergy conference at the Benedictine Retreat Center in Schuyler. The Archbishop has called us to come and hear his plan for the future. This is a follow-up of the listening sessions that he held a while back. After he reveals the plan to the priests he will be making it public to everyone. We will leave Monday morning and get back Wednesday afternoon. I am excited to find out what direction he has in mind for us for the next five years.

I feel like I am gone a lot recently. A week ago I was in Grand Island for a wedding of a parishioner. Then I had the trip to Denver. This weekend I am doing a Christians Encounter Christ (CEC) so I will be at the ARCC or Sheehan Center. Then this week I will be in Schuyler. Then next week I will leave for even longer. But this time it will be for vacation. I leave early Monday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, to take a slow boat from China. I fly to Hong Kong and will be the chaplain for a two-week Holland America cruise that makes five stops in Vietnam, two in Cambodia, and two in Thailand, and then will end up in Singapore. I will be able to visit friends in Vietnam and in Singapore. Being the chaplain on the cruise makes something like this possible or I wouldn't be able to afford it. I get the cruise free because I am working. I do Masses every day, which I want to do anyway; and cover if they have an emergency, which doesn't seem to happen very often on Holland America Cruises. They are not the ones that seem to have all the mishaps. I will get back late on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank