

March 19-20, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

I have multiple topics this week also. The first is that we received a thank you from the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). They appreciate the \$559 that you gave in the second collection in January. We also received a thank you from Bethlehem House for the baby shower gifts that our parish provided in January. Like I tell everyone, this is a very generous parish.

Many of you should have received an e-mail from me a few days ago. I wanted to get the Holy Week schedule out to those who always seem to be surprised that there are no 5:30pm Masses on Easter weekend. There is just the Easter Vigil Mass at 8:15pm and no Sunday night Mass because there are four Masses on Easter morning, 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, and 11:30am. If you can keep that e-mail on your smart phone it will be there to remind you. That presumes that your smart phone is smarter than mine, because my phone is only as smart as I am in dealing with it. So it has problems.

Some of you will be bringing visitors to the Easter services, like visiting family members or students on Easter break. You can impress them with your knowledge on the stained-glass windows. Besides what I have pointed out in the last two letters, you can also point out the different colored wings on the angels. The most glorious angel is at the Resurrection, honoring the Risen Christ. That angel has amazing blue wings. My thought is that this angel is Archangel Raphael who is the angel of healing as mentioned in the Book of Tobit. Raphael's being there is to show that his power to heal is from the Lord, and that the Resurrection is the focus of that power. The three angels at the Nativity scene seem to be of two different choirs of angels. The banner that they hold has the words of their song, "GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO" or glory to God on high. The angel holding the banner has green wings and has stars on its robe. The angels have long been associated with the light of the stars. At least that is what my childhood imagination felt. The other two angels seem to be "lesser" angels. They have red wings. So it is like we have representatives from three of the choirs of angels. Apart from the archangel I wouldn't have a guess which other choirs they would be.

Many of you would know about halos but don't presume that our children know the meaning. The halo around the Risen Christ is the most magnificent. It shows the light going out in all directions but having the cross design as a part of the halo helps us to realize that the love of Jesus comes to us most powerfully in His death on the cross. The crucifix behind the altar in church is meant to give the same impression. Instead of the round halo, which would look like a plate, the artist simply portrays the love of Jesus on the cross as shining from his head in the form of a cross. Like the halo in the window you can't see the bottom part of the cross because of the angle of view.

The next most glorious halo is the one on Mary. On hers you see stars. The Book of Revelation tells of the woman, who is the mother about to give birth, has a crown of twelve stars. The halo on Mary in the window does not have that many stars but then the apostles haven't been chosen and some like James and John may not even have been born. I think of the little circles or dots on the halos as specific points of love in that person's life. For Mary it might be her virginity, her saying yes to being the mother of Jesus, etc. I don't know what special merits the angels might have received to get these badges of honor in their halos of love. Impress people with your knowledge and have a holy, Holy Week.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank