

April 30 - May 1, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

What an exciting week! We have the Anointing of the Sick for many of you this weekend, which is a powerful time of grace. We had the funeral for a founding member of the parish, Mary Clifton. We had the first wedding of the spring season, which starts a bunch of them the next two months. We had Archbishop Lucas here for Confirmation on Thursday. And we already have the new stained-glass window installed that was the result of the concert a couple Sundays ago. We even had a tornado go through part of our parish. I am glad that everyone was okay. There is never a dull moment but some weeks are more exciting than I can handle. That is why I pray. Know that I always pray for all of you.

We are still looking for volunteers for the Parish Council. We are a few short. I realize that it is a big commitment but having a Council really helps me out. This is a group that oversees many of the aspects of the parish. They guide me with their input so that I stay on track with the decisions that I have to make from month to month. Without their input I would really struggle to know what the people of the parish are thinking. The Council has also taken on different tasks over the years. It is a three year commitment but it goes fast, which is why some have done second terms over the years. Call the Council President, Sam Jizba at 402-707-3496, or the parish office if you are interested.

As I mentioned, the new stained-glass window is already installed. This was paid for by the concert we had. The donations from that concert were approximately \$6,400. \$5,000 of that was matched by an extra donor. Then because many people had been asking how they could easily become a part of this we had a one-week second collection for the effort. That one second collection brought in the extra \$3,600 that was needed for the Annunciation window. There were a few people who were concerned that the second collections are now starting to go to the windows. That is not the case. The funds from the second collections generally go toward maintenance issues that are hard to cover with the regular budget. There are exceptions to that with the special collections that the Archdiocese sets up each year, like the Catholic Communications Campaign that is next weekend. On those weekends the whole second collection goes to that special need, and it is always mentioned in announcements before Mass. Occasionally we do have a special, special collection like we did when we put together funds to help Fr. John Zotoglo start a Theological library in Togo.

This Thursday, May 5th, is the Feast of the Ascension. The Masses for this Holy Day of Obligation are at 7am, 12:10pm and 7pm. Like Easter this feast is to remind us that Jesus did not just rise as a ghost. He came back body and soul, so the creed we recite each Sunday reminds us that we believe in the “resurrection of the body”. Jesus ascended to heaven to show us that this is not our true home but that he is going ahead to prepare a place for us. That will be the new heavens and the new earth that we hope to live in when the world ends and we get our glorified body. The older I get the more exciting that is.

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As I mentioned last week, the Archdiocese is continuing the celebration of the Jubilee of Mercy by having a pilgrimage on the Solemnity of Pentecost, Sunday, May 15th. Masses for this pilgrimage will be at the Cathedral at 9:30am, 11:30am and one in Spanish at 1:30pm. Pilgrims will be encouraged to park at the Duchesne Academy parking lot on northwest corner of 36th & California. They will approach the Cathedral on foot via Burt Street (north on 36th, west on Burt, and then south on 40th). As they approach the front steps of the Cathedral they will be sprinkled with Easter water by a deacon as they ascend the steps and pass through the Holy Door of Mercy. They will then be directed down the main aisle to place grains of incense into a brazier before they take their seats. After Mass there will be refreshments available in a tent in the Cathedral parking lot.

In its simplest meaning a pilgrimage is a journey on foot to a holy place. The practice of pilgrimage dates from the earliest civilizations and is common to many cultures including Judeo-Christian. Abraham and Sarah and their household walked to the place of God's promise. The Jews left the slavery of Egypt and wandered forty years before entering the Promised Land. Jesus and his family traveled every year to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. Throughout the centuries Christians have continued the practice of a holy journey. Many brave hardy pilgrims trekked to the Holy Land at the risk of life and limb. Others traveled the road to Canterbury or followed the Camino to Santiago de Compostela. These trips were not undertaken lightly. A sizeable number of pilgrims set out never to return home.

Our modern pilgrimages are not so arduous or dangerous. But true pilgrims still undertake them with great seriousness. Our archdiocesan pilgrimage in the Jubilee of Mercy is a simple journey taking only part of a day, but the spiritual gift it offers cannot be gained without intentionally turning away from sin and towards the Father whose mercy overflows for His children. Passing through the Holy Door is a truly worthy goal in this Jubilee year.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank