

July 16-17, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

Well I did miss the bus for the trip to the Steubenville weekend at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO but you still didn't get to see me around last weekend and it wasn't my fault. One of the priests overslept so I ended up driving down in my car with him as a passenger for part of the trip until we caught up with the buses. I let him get back on the bus and enjoy the young people's enthusiasm and I drove on my own the rest of the journey down to Springfield and back here. It gave me a lot of time to pray, which I wanted anyway. The one thing I really missed about being on the bus as the group was heading back to Omaha was to hear their stories. The participants are encouraged to share their experience with the Lord from the weekend. Those stories are always very moving. I always love to hear about someone finally experiencing what I have been lucky enough to enjoy all through my life.

There are those points in most people's lives when the Lord is finally able to get through to them. For many of our teenagers this is a major problem because they live life at such a high intensity that they seldom quiet down enough to be open to the Lord. One of the strategies of the weekend is to give the teens the intensity but also have times of quiet so they can feel His presence. The intensity of being surrounded by 4500 other teens, loud music, and rushing around gives them a sense of urgency and thrill that the Lord will meet them where they are. But it is inevitably in the quiet time before the Blessed Sacrament during Exposition that is usually when the Lord reveals Himself to them. I am blessed in having Him reveal Himself to me in many different ways and thankfully it doesn't have to be bracketed with chaos or urgency.

Starting this weekend we have Totus Tuus, which is also to help our young people experience the Lord. Much of it will be a matter of them learning how the Lord operates and what He wants of us. He can't be the Lord if He is not the boss of us. That is why our baptism promises are a duality. We do have our three statements of belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but we precede that with three statements of who we reject. For we can't honestly say that Jesus is our Lord if we don't reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises. So the participants in Totus Tuus keep learning how to live the meaning of being "totally yours." This year they will again be able to meet some of the women religious who have said to Jesus, I am "totally yours." Fr. Tobias and Fr. Tom from St. James will also be helping with Masses and confessions. This year we have seven young people that will be working with the groups so it should be fun. I hope your children and teens are signed up.

As I mentioned last week, we will also have a banner display set up around the facility that tells some of the stories of the Eucharistic Miracles that God has provided over the centuries to help us understand that His Son was not being figurative when He said the words, "This is my body." These banners will be up from 7/16 to 7/24 so you can look at them and learn what the Lord is doing to help us believe.

A part from one stop-over day, Fr. Cleary will be gone from the parish until August 8th. He is spending some family time, taking his retreat, and doing some vacation. Pray that he has safe journeys and comes back refreshed and inspired.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank