

Oct. 14-15, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

It truly seems like a month since I left for my retreat. It was a half month and it seems like everyone is doing the work of two anymore so that is not far off. Another reason was that it was a silent retreat. I found out that is a little different than going on a cruise by myself. On the cruises I seldom talk. I read, pray, walk, eat, sleep, and have Mass for the Catholics once a day. *Those Masses are one of the blessings of the Holland America Cruise Lines.* On this retreat I read, prayed, walked about 9-10 miles a day, ate, slept, and concelebrated Mass with the other priests each day. The differences are that on the cruise I can speak when I want to, even if there are very few times that I need to. That is not the case with a silent retreat, because each of us is trying to respect the quiet time with God that the others are having. The other part is that it is very energizing for me to speak about the Word of God, which I do at Mass. I don't get to do that on these retreats. The goal is to let God speak to us. In eight days He had a lot to say. As a chaplain on a cruise that would be a blessing but not the goal.

God had a lot to say to me, so he kept me busy. One of the messages he gave me was that I need to do a bunch of writing. He hasn't told me what to do with it once it is done. I'm sure I will be getting further instructions when I finish his first assignment. The whole message had to do with the idea that He is the Lord and I am His servant. I am not to give Him directions. At the Annunciation Mary said: "Let it be done unto me according to your word." And at the wedding feast at Cana she spoke my favorite line: "Do whatever He tells you." That last one has been my motto for years but now He is going to be pushing me harder. I wish there was more I could explain but that will have to come with the material that I am writing.

It is good to be back and into the swing of things. This weekend will really be swinging. Fr. Don will be helping out up in Randolph and Osmond. This weekend we will be praying for the participants in the sports programs that our children are a part of. So I will be praying for them and the coaches. This is for both St. James and SEAS. In January they will pray for the participants in the winter sports at St. James Church. We also have a wedding this weekend for Shelly Gray's son, Paul. It is the second training weekend for teachers in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program. They come to SEAS from all over the area to learn the basics of this program so it can grow in their parishes. I hope they will enjoy the new Good Shepherd window that has been installed behind the HOPE table. If you haven't had a chance to study it, I suggest you take a moment and just see the face of Jesus.

Along with that we will have olive wood carvings from the Holy Land on sale to help the Catholics in that dangerous area. Imad Qumsieh, who lives in our neighborhood, will be doing this again. On top of that I will be helping out with the confession for the Beginning Experience Weekend at the ARCC, which is for widowed and divorced Catholics. That is always a powerful experience. Let me know if you have any interest in that type of weekend. It is wonderful.

So there are a few things going on this weekend. But that is a great set up for next weekend, which is the parish stewardship weekend. We had the Archbishop's Annual Appeal weekend a month ago so now we want you to think about SEAS. There will be forms in the pews and I will explain things as best as I can next week. We do have a lot of new parishioners and the Archbishop has a new Vision so it might be a little more complicated this year.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank