

Apr. 7-8, 2018

Thoughts from the pastor,

I'm looking for volunteers. We have one of our money-counting teams retiring. They have served many years so now we need a replacement team. The teams rotate so the same people are not needed every week. A team is usually made up of 4-5 people so they can still function if one is missing. They have usually started counting before the 11am Sunday Mass and can be done by the time Mass is over. That way they don't miss lunch. A husband and wife can be on the team but must never be without a third party so no one can ever accuse them of skimming. The Archdiocese has set up some nice protocols to help things run smoothly. If you are interested or have any questions please call the office.

Last week I focused on the idea of living with or without belief in the resurrection because it was Easter and April Fools Day. This Sunday is still a part of Easter week but because it has been named Divine Mercy Sunday I will focus on the need for repentance. Many people think that since Jesus died for our sins this need for repentance is unnecessary. Many of our Protestant brothers and sisters are simply taught that all they have to do is believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and they are saved. Many Catholics have now taken this way of thinking in order to justify never going to confession. Neither group seems to have paid attention to scripture.

At Pentecost Peter finally received the Gift of Courage from the Holy Spirit. With that courage he spoke to the many Jews who were gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish Feast of Pentecost. In Acts 2:36 he says: "Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified." So according to the groups I mentioned all Peter would have asked them to do would be to believe what he stated and they would be saved. The good news is that the people who were there were smart enough to ask the obvious question. Vs. 37: "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?" Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, *every one of you*, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (I added the italics.)

So everyone wants to have their children baptized. That is great. What about the ongoing need for forgiveness that we and the children have since we don't live perfect lives after baptism. We are again in need of repenting and receiving forgiveness. That was answered by Jesus when he appeared to the apostles on Easter and it happens to be in the Gospel reading this weekend. In Jn.20:22-23, Jesus said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." So we know for sure that Peter and John were both listening and knew what was needed. The question many people today have to ask is if they are listening and know what is needed. Confession of our sins so we can be forgiven is so important that we now have an extra feast to remind us of it, "Divine Mercy Sunday." If you are not aware of what this feast is about, it is time to look it up on that smart phone of yours.

I'll see you in the reconciliation room or maybe you will be behind the screen and I won't see you. It will work either way. Just don't make this a continuation of April Fools Day. It is Easter Week, not April Fools Week.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank