

Dec. 26-27, 2015

Thoughts from the pastor,

I been praying that all of you have had a blessed Christmas. Unlike some of you I was really happy that we didn't have a white Christmas. The older I get the more I become conscious of what some of you go through to get to Mass when the weather is good, much less when it is nasty. For that reason not having snow or ice was a real blessing. Having this nice weather was also helpful for Fr. Don and I as we traveled from parish to parish to help with the many different penance services. I will continue to pray for all of you at all the Masses during this holy season. My prayer is that this coming year will bring more graces on SEAS parish and all who are involved in it. May all our efforts to bring people to Christ be fruitful!

I am always reminding myself to count my blessings. Some of you know that I do that by the way I fold my hands when I pray. I have four fingers pointing upward to represent my prayers of petition. I have the four fingers on the other hand represent that I need to balance my petitions with an equal number of prayers of thanksgiving. I also cross my thumbs to remember what Jesus went through so those prayers would be heard by the Father.

This past week I had one of the many special blessings for which I am grateful. We had several baptisms. A couple of them were done by Fr. Mark Beran. He came to be here for his nieces. This was a special moment for him that reminded me of all the times I was able to help with family events on the level of grace. But this one also was a special blessing because I used to hang out with Fr. Mark's grandparents. They were great friends of my parents. So I played with their kids, one of which was Fr. Mark's dad. This was especially significant at this time of year, because my mom died right before Christmas in 2008. It was wonderful having a special reason to go down memory lane.

Two of the baptisms this week were adoptions. That is also a time for me to be thankful. I know only a little of what parents go through when they are bringing a new person into their family. There is so much that they go through to make it possible for this child to have family. My life is different. I get a letter from the Archbishop and I have more people in my family. It is that easy for priests to gain a more solid connection to a parish group of the family of God. SEAS is the 16th parish that I have been asked to adopt. Like all parents, I wish that I could do more for my family. I have those moments when I wish I could provide everything that you would want, just like many of you momentarily do as you get ready for Christmas. Then after that moment passes you realize that you can't possibly give your children every Christmas gift they desired and if you did it would not be in their best interest. In that same way I know that Fr. Don and I can never provide every service that you desire. But that is when I look back at my thumbs in the form of a cross as I pray that the grace that comes from Christ's life and death will be what you really desire. And that you will work to receive that grace even when I can't do it for you. But like most of you, it is at Christmas that I feel the most grateful for all the family members that God has given me and I also feel the most inadequate at being there for all of you.

On a lighter note I hope that you saved the information on the big St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Feast Day celebration next Sunday night. We will be having the ceremonial burning of the debt papers after the Sunday evening Mass, with a party with pizza, popcorn and show. I hope the show will be fun for all ages. We will be watching episodes of the Rocky & Bullwinkle Show. That means you also get to see Fractured Fairy Tales, Dudley Do-Right, Peabody, and more. You can invite your friends but the admission is \$5.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank