

Nov. 14-15, 2015

Thoughts from the pastor,

One of my favorite cartoons is Frank and Ernest. Who would have thought this to be the case? But it deals with humor that is at my level. Most of them are puns or a play on words. They tend to look at strange things about our culture so even the puns are more than a play on words. Recently they had one that was fun for me to think about: "Here's a brain-teaser: Is it possible to be enlightened and not know it?" It made me laugh about an age-old problem that I know is an age old problem because the "Book of Wisdom" in the Bible looks at it. We have been going through some of that book in the daily readings at Mass recently. The readings paint this marvelous picture of wisdom. "In Wisdom is a spirit intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, agile, clear, unstained, certain, not baneful, loving the good, keen, unhampered, beneficent, kindly, firm, secure, tranquil, all-powerful, all-seeing, and pervading all spirits, though they be intelligent, pure and very subtle." (Wisdom 7:22b-23)

So the brain-teaser could be reworded, can you have wisdom and not know it? I would think that it is more likely that we could think we have wisdom and not realize it. But this is not new. That description of wisdom is very positive. I see it from another perspective. I think of wisdom as a giant jigsaw puzzle. I have been trying to put it together all my life. I seem to have the corners in place and some of the perimeter done. Those are the boundaries that I have in my life. The problem is that they are not locked together very well so I'm not sure that I have them correct. There are a lot of pieces that I know are significant because of the image on them. It is like when you know there is a face in the puzzle and you have the eye shown on one piece. This becomes an anchor for putting the rest of the face together. The problem comes in when there are more faces and you can't tell which nose goes with that eye. It gets tricky. Trying to get the background together is also tricky. There are times that I think I have a part put together correctly and then find that one of the pieces has been upside-down. So it kept me off track because I rejected correct pieces that would have fit except for that one wrong piece.

Throughout my life I have been working on this puzzle. Trying to gain wisdom. One of the problems is that this life puzzle did not come with a box that had the picture on it. I don't know what the final picture will look like. I do know that some of it has turned out very amazing but even with that I am not sure how those spots fit into the main picture. The one thing that has helped me greatly is the Word of God. Whether I am working with the Bible, Jesus the Word made flesh, or the Body of Christ which is the Church; I find that it has been very helpful in understand what I am putting together.

Through the Word of God I have figured out that all the pieces are a part of the picture. I am not talking about "relativism" in which everything goes. I mean that I know that even the temptations that the devil puts in my way and the bad things that God allows to happen to me are all a part of the final picture. So even though the temptations slow me down in putting the puzzle together, they are still a part of understanding the picture itself. It is fun meditating on how God is trying to get to the point of being "enlightened". Just like it is fun watching you work on your enlightenment puzzle.

This past Tuesday, Deacon Ernie Gencarelli passed away. He had been retired for quite a while. He was 90 years old. I did not have a chance to get to know him. I was always happy to know that our deacons in the parish kept in close contact with him these last years. He baptized some of you and/or some of your children. As I write this his funeral services are not set but please pray for him. He has served this parish and the Archdiocese well.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank