

Aug. 1-2, 2015

Thoughts from the pastor,

I hate wasting paper so when I realized my letter on the other side would not have anything on the back I thought that I could add these thoughts as things for you to think and pray about.

For many of us our faith has a different impact on us as we age. For me it started as a matter of trusting in the same things that my parents trusted in and doing the things that they did. Sometimes I did it willingly and sometimes I did it begrudgingly, but I did it. As I headed into the seminary faith was something to be studied. I wanted to know if I was in the right one. I didn't want to be a priest for something that didn't make any sense. The science/math loving part of my brain was into analysis. As I grew older and wiser my faith became something that held me up in times of confusion and in the midst of troubles. Soon it became something that I couldn't imagine living without.

This all came back to me this past week when I had the opportunity to go a movie with a friend. Fr. Malloy and I saw Mr. Holmes at the *Film Streams Theatre* downtown. It is about Sherlock Holmes in his later years. He is a man who, like me only much better, was scientifically orientated. He analyzed everything. Most of his life revolved around his ability to do this. The movie is about his later years when he is suffering from memory loss. He is also dealing with guilt. He feels terribly guilty but can't even remember what he feels guilty about. He just knew that he had failed some people and had no way of making up for his mistakes.

This all reminded me of the great gifts that Jesus has given us in His Sacraments and His gift of eternal life. Mr. Holmes suffered because he wasn't perfect. He failed and people got hurt. He even felt guilty because of what he had been blamed for at one point but wasn't even sure what he had done wrong or if he actually had done the misdeed. He didn't have the tool of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He could fit this all into a context of a God who loves us and wants to help us reconcile with Him and with each other. Holmes didn't seem to have any concept of this God and how he wants to heal our wounds and can even heal the wounds we have inflicted on others. God gives us the chance to make up for our sins and reconcile in this life through the Sacraments, and in the next life through Purgatory.

If I had to face the things that Sherlock had to deal with, I would also despair if I didn't have my faith to help me understand that all is not lost. I will not give away the ending of the movie, which is moving but also kind of empty because it was probably written by a secular person trying to dabble in the sacred. If you get a chance to see it I hope you can make the connection with our faith and how it would answer so many of the questions that the movie brings up.

It also brings up the issue of aging which our faith helps with in such a wonderful way. We have this wonderful way of understanding how we are actually being forced into letting go of this world and what it contains so we can better prepare ourselves for the next. And we should know how we can offer up all our sufferings and trials for others, which is one of the ways God uses to heal the wounded. We are so blessed.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank