

Dec. 10-11, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

We start the last two weeks of Advent. This is the first time we will have a full week for the last week of Advent. That is the blessing of having Christmas on a Sunday. It means that you will actually have two bonus weekends in which you have two-for-one Masses. You will have Sunday Mass and Christmas Mass in one. You will have the next Sunday Mass along with the Feast of Mary the Mother of God. Usually you would have four Mass obligations within 13 days. This year you only have two. One of the few down sides to this opportunity is its effect on parish budgets. There are two less collections. It means I have an extra prayer this Christmas. May the reality of low gas prices and high stock market levels help the generous moods of everyone toward the parish budget and the roof project. The roof project will be the second collection.

In terms of the roof, the Parish Council has been viewing houses this past week and has come to the same conclusion that I have heard from many of you. The metal roof is a go. The color chosen is the dark brown, or Windsor, that I showed a couple weekends ago. The style for the church section would be the Classic Style, which was also one of the options shown that weekend. As I mentioned before, the style of the rectory and parish hall roof would be a regular shingle look. This will keep the costs down since the insurance will only reimburse the cost of replacing asphalt shingles and the metal roof is more expensive. The shingles have been ordered and they should be available in six to eight weeks. We have also contacted the architects of the church to help deal with any problems as we deal with the sagging church roof. Keep praying and remember that unless otherwise noted, the second collection will be going toward the roof project.

This past week we celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. This feast helps us understand what God had in mind as He prepared things for the conception and birth of Son. He didn't seem to be worried that his Son would be born in the poor circumstances of a stable, for that would actually help us understand His mission on earth. But the Son had to be protected from evil as he was growing through those nine vulnerable months in the womb. The Father is the God of Love so the Son must be Love also. That is the center of His identity. It must not just be protected as he is most vulnerable but it must be nourished. This cannot happen if the very womb He lives in has been tainted with sin. For that would mean that Mary would have been and would continue to be working with the devil. That cannot even be seen as a possibility for the Son of the God of Love. So Mary was conceived without sin so she would have had no contact what-so-ever with Satan. For the Book of Genesis tells us of God's plan, which is that the woman and her offspring would crush the head of the serpent and its offspring. Mary's being without sin is important to God's plan. Our being made free from sin is the purpose of that plan. Then we too can be made worthy to have the Lord within us as we receive communion.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank