

Feb. 6-7, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

I hope that those of you who were signed up to attend the Archbishop's listening session at St. James got the word that it was canceled. He is not rescheduling one for our immediate area but there is one scheduled on Wednesday, 2/24, at St. Roberts. Hopefully there won't be a blizzard for that one.

Registered parishioners should have received their yearend contribution summaries. Included with that was a two-page guide to the financials of the parish. As I mentioned in my homily last weekend, I will be adding to that over the next two months so everyone has a clear picture of what your contributions are helping with and how they are being spent. As I mentioned, we have a parish that is a real blessing for a lot of people. With the different activities that we host, we are also doing our share of our responsibility to help the larger church. The marriage preparation sessions, the Music for Catholic Schools dance, the Magnificat meeting on 2/27, and others are just one month's view of how we serve.

As I also mentioned the thing we are most known for is how we provide a peaceful, welcoming environment for people each week as they come to worship the Lord. We can never take that for granted, and I hope that you will join in on the part which I mentioned at Mass. I encouraged you to reach out to the people around you after Mass to ask them what they are praying for. It is a very simple thing to simply smile at a person and say "Hi." It is a little bolder to introduce yourself and hopefully meet a person. Then to learn their name and ask how you can pray for them is the most fruitful step. God brings us together for a reason. Our being at Mass is to worship the Lord but also to be there with and for each other. By practicing this simple exercise of "greet, meet, and pray for someone" we can become a more active member of God's prayer team. My family calls that being prayer warriors. Remember that even children have things that they are praying for. This can also happen before Mass. I am confident that you will find your faith life growing as you take this on.

This week we have Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the powerful season of Lent. I will not have meditation booklets out to take home. I am encouraging you to go high tech this year. A couple weeks ago I had mentioned the website, *formed.org*. I am strongly encouraging you to go to this website and sign up. 67e4f3 is the parish code you will need to sign up. It will ask you to register by giving your name, etc. After that it is easy to LOGIN. Then you can start viewing programs like The Footprints of God, Catholicism, Sybolon, Peter, The Bible and the Virgin Mary, and more. You can also watch wonderful movies like: St. Rita, Saint Peter, The Story of the Nativity, Padre Pio, John Paul II, Cosmic Origins, and others. There are also tons of audios that you might have seen in the Lighthouse Media rack, that cover all sorts of helpful topics. Then there are the books that would normally cost you but with this you can get them on your computer. I'm sure that many of you are more computer able than I am so you can get them on your phone or tablet. This is what I hope you will be doing during Lent. I have already started early. The parish has paid for the license that will carry through Lent. If you like the site, let me know and we can carry it throughout the year.

One last bit of information. In the letter I sent with your statements it noted that we are behind this year and that some of that has carried over from last year, but then it showed that as of Dec. 15, 2015 we had \$50,000 in the bank to pay bills. That was before we had the school subsidy and Archdiocesan Tax to pay. That totaled to almost \$90,000 that month. So we still need your help.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank