

Dec. 3-4, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

This week we have special day of prayer with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Thursday, Dec. 8, is that Holy Day of Mass Obligation. This is the patron saint feast for the U.S.A. So besides having the Holy Day Masses at 7am, 12:10pm, & 7pm, we have also been having a special time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament that evening. This has been happening for several years. This prayer time is meant to ask Mary's help to intercede to help stop abortion in this country and even around the world. If there was a war going on in which a million innocent people were being killed every year in our country we would be going crazy trying to find ways to stop the killing. According to the World Health Organization there are between 40-50 million abortions world-wide each year. That is close to a half billion in the last ten years. Planned Parenthood is working very hard to increase that number through political pressure on countries all around the world. This is part of why we would like to defund Planned Parenthood.

But we know that Mary has a vested interest in each child. She wants to be their spiritual mother. She does not want her spiritual sons and daughters to kill more children in the womb. So we pray that with the Lord's guidance she can help us find the best and fastest way to end this horror. So from 8:00pm-midnight on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, I invite you so spend an hour or so praying in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament to ask for her help.

This Season of Advent is a time of preparation. The original time of preparation for the birth of Jesus was a couple thousand years of chaos in which God intervened through His prophets, priests, and kings, to bring a special moment of peace in our world in which His Son could be born. That peace did not last, for within a very short time King Herod was out killing innocent children in order to get rid of what he thought was his rival king. So the chaos began again. But there was peace for the birth of Jesus.

Our four week Season of Advent is supposed to help us work toward that sense of peace that should be in our hearts at Christmas. It can be a time of frenzied activity but it should slowly help us gear down, so that on Christmas Day we can envelop ourselves in the peace of the Christ. Ways of making sure that this happens are up to us. The Church tries to help us with the signs of the season. I don't mean the commercials that encourage us to shop until we drop, but the emptiness of the church slowly starting to look like the place in which the Savior was born. The lighting of a candle each week should help us keep track of the time.

These things should help us gauge our time so we get our hearts and minds in tune with the peace of Christ. We can read the nativity stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and the special description in the Gospel of John of the coming of the Word. We most certainly should get our souls cleaned up by going to confession so we do not have the messy aspects of our backlog of sins to keep us from finding the peace of the Lord.

Please do not rush around so fast that this Christmas comes and goes before you realize what the Lord has to offer.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank