

Jan. 28-29, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

I have no idea why but this seems like the longest January I have ever experienced. I am writing this letter one month after Christmas. It seems more like three months ago that we celebrated Christmas. It will be another month before Lent starts. Maybe it is because I am looking forward to Lent, which is starting later in the calendar year than usual. I do look forward to Lent as a time for spiritual renewal.

This past weekend I mentioned a possible way to prepare for Lent. The Gospel passages for this Sunday and the Sundays before Ash Wednesday are segments of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7. These chapters are a power presentation by Jesus that sets things on course as He tries to lead us to heaven. I strongly urge you to take the next month to truly study those three chapters of the Gospel of Matthew. You will not be reading about good old sweet Jesus or the Jesus that loves us “just the way we are.” You will be reading about what He actually expects from us. If you can read and reflect on those chapters you will understand why St. Paul says: “work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Letter to the Philippians 2:12) For those of you who go through Lent after Lent thinking you don’t need to go to confession, reading the Sermon on the Mount may help you come up with a more extensive list of sins. It won’t be a list of new sins. It will be sins you have never thought of as being that bad. Jesus begs to differ with our lax approach.

This month of January has been filled with marches. Recently we had one that was held in different cities across the country. I am still trying to figure out what it was marching for. It started out as the women’s march. That sounded great. But then I listened to some of the speeches that were given in some areas and it made me happy that the other marches that have been happening have a clearer message. These are the Marches for Life. On 1/14 we had one in Lincoln. There were others across the country on 1/21. Then we had the major one in Washington, D.C. this weekend. It was held off a week because of the inauguration. We had about 300 people from the Omaha Archdiocese head east for that one. Last year it received great coverage because of the snow storm and our own Scott Watts became famous for playing the trumpet on top of a snowbank.

The March for Life is clear. We want to stop abortion. We stand up against the idea that it is good that we have the right to rip infants from their mother’s womb. It is not a confusing issue. But there are aspects that seem to confuse many people. It has to do with women’s rights. Ever since the birth control pill came about we have had some confusing viewpoints presented. The Church has always said that these artificial means of birth control are wrong. But many people say that these pills give them freedom.

The Church continues to challenge us to look at this a little deeper. Who actually benefits from the birth control pill? Do women benefit or do men benefit? I would suggest that the ones who truly benefit are the predators. Women on the pill are sexually available. They can be used with little or no consequences. That is what a predator enjoys. Wolves, lions, etc. do not go after prey that will end up hurting them. They go after those who are vulnerable. Between the pill and the backup for the pill, abortion; women have made themselves vulnerable. What I find interesting as a man is that these vulnerable women think of themselves as stronger or less likely to get hurt by men. In reality, men can now have what they want from women without having to respect them or deal with any consequences. How has this freed women? I hope someone can answer this for me.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank