

Oct. 28-29, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

With any luck I will have had a few days off by the time you are reading this letter. I am doing it early because I am hoping to go out and visit my sister and her family in Denver. It also gives me a chance to see my nephew's wife, who I have been praying for. She is the one from Japan with whom I have been talking about faith. I also get to see my three great nieces. I will be driving out there, but I still hope that I will have a little time to do some writing on my book.

I am pretty sure you will all be sick of hearing about it before it is done, and then it will be anti-climactic for you. I seriously thought about not telling anyone that I was supposed to be doing this. Then I thought about how New Year's resolutions go if you keep them to yourself. They fizzle out really fast because you don't have accountability. I was afraid of the same problem with this book. So I will mention my progress periodically for the purpose of pushing myself. So if you want to keep track with me, I am now on page 27.

The next couple of weekends we will have a full crew, because Fr. Don has not been called for extra duty outside our parish. After that he will be gone for a couple weekends because he is taking a trip to Ireland. It will be interesting to see if he comes back sounding a little more Irish.

Last weekend I had what I call a teaching Mass at the 5:30pm Sunday Mass. I did some basic things during the Mass and then after Mass shared a little more with the youth group. My emphasis was on how we are coming before the King of Kings. This is why we bow or genuflect as we enter or leave. It should also have an impact on how we dress as we come to the throne room of the King. I also mentioned the procession that happens at the beginning and the end of Mass.

For that procession the first in line is always the altar server with the processional crucifix. Then we have another altar server and the lector. This is usually followed by the deacon with the Book of Gospels. Then the celebrant comes last. This is meant to give us that feeling of a royal presence. The priest comes in to lead the prayer but also to take the role of the King during parts of the Mass. This is especially important during the consecration and the final blessing. The words of consecration are not this is Jesus' body, but "this is my body." The words of blessing are not may almighty God bless us but "may almighty God bless you." The priest stands in for Christ at those points.

The Book of Gospels is the words and actions of the King himself. It is critical for us to focus when it is present. That is why there is so much ceremony around it. It is not just story-telling time. This is a message from the King of Kings who is the Word of the King of Heaven made flesh.

The crucifix is like the flag of glory for the King and much more. It is His sign of glory and it should be ours, for by His death we are forgiven. We should be standing at attention when it is leading the procession into church and when it is leading us out. The next time you rush in late or are heading out early, to beat the rush to the parking lot, you might think about how you feel when some of our athletes are "taking a knee" when the flag is being presented. Those who have given greatly for our country are disappointed at their actions. How do you think Jesus is feeling when we are ignoring His sign of glory.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank