

Aug. 5-6, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

Kim Burmeister volunteered to take over the prayer-line duties. I want to thank Dot Avila who had been taking care of that for years. Thanks also for all of you who are a part of that marvelous and powerful work of prayer.

This weekend we take a break from the regular Sundays of Ordinary time and celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord. This is one of my favorite days. Jesus knew that the apostles would end up having a hard time with His passion and death on the cross. To help them He took the three top ones, Peter, James, and John to the top of the mountain and allowed them to see prayer in action as it might be seen in heaven. He showed Himself to them more gloriously than usual and had a conversation or prayer with Moses and Elijah. That must have been amazing to see.

Jesus showed them that He was not just a nice teacher who had a message for better living. He showed that He was the Son of God who Moses and Elijah still wanted to be with in death, or as we understand, new life. He is not like Buddha or like Lao-tzu, who wrote the Tao, or any other man of wisdom. Jesus is different than every teacher that was before Him or has come since. They were doing their best to understand truth from their experience of the world. Jesus is showing that He, the Word by which the world was created, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Studying the word of God is more than looking up references with your Smart phone. It is more than reading great works of literature. It is a message from God Himself. Many of you have studied the Bible. Some have done that book by book by using great teachers like Jeff Cavins. Many of you went through the whole Bible with me a few years ago. There is something totally amazing about reading the whole Bible that is different than going a book at a time.

As I have mentioned before it is like studying a forest. You can look at leaf after leaf. That is what people do as they reflect on passages of the Bible. You can study different books of the Bible. That is like studying different trees and getting to know them very well. But it is different to walk through the forest and study it as a whole. All three of these aspects are important. But my specialty is the whole thing.

That is why I will be offering the chance for people to join me this fall to start trying to read and understand the Bible in a year. Actually it might be more like a year and a half. I will be starting Sept. 17, Catechetical Sunday. That will give those who are new to this a chance to purchase a Bible and get a flyer that will be their guide to what readings to do every day. I will be using the New American Bible, St. Joseph Edition. It is the closest to what we have in the Lectionary and comes in regular and large print. The footnotes and illustrations in it are helpful. Other bibles are certainly workable for this endeavor and can actually be helpful as we look at particular passages. I'm sure there is even an app for this. Actually The New American Revised Edition is available on the USCCB website. The problem with that is you can't underline or write notes to yourself in the margins. That is very important for this process.

The class will be held in the church and sometimes in the parish hall from 9:30-10:30 on Sunday mornings. There will be breaks when I am gone for a weekend, Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day and maybe even next summer if we have a seminarian who has something else to teach. I will have sign-ups to purchase bibles in the vestibule these next weeks.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank