

July 29, 2018

Thoughts from the pastor,

Summer is quickly coming to an end. Teachers will be starting to dress up their classrooms. In the next two and half weeks most students will be heading back into classrooms. All of those peaceful days will be over. Hold on! Whatever happened to those peaceful days? For many of us the big difference that summer has brought was longer days. There has been more hours of daylight in which to get things done. For most of you it is a time for golf or some other outdoor activity that hopefully energizes you. For me that is tennis.

With school starting and fall coming it is another time to adjust our lives with the Lord. As a confessor and also a person who has had years of practice in recognizing my own sinful patterns and trying to eliminate them, I know that with every chance we go through in our schedule and life style, we need to adjust our focus on the Lord. If a person hasn't set up powerful priorities for protecting their prayer-time, the slots they depended on for prayer can disappear. Anything from a new expectation given to us, to a change in sleeping patterns can throw some people off. For parents this is a very important thing to be watching in your children and your own life. Transitions from elementary to high school, or from high school to college, can be very disruptive to time with the Lord.

This is one of the reasons that the presentation we had last weekend on the John Paul II Newman Center was so important. They and other Newman Centers at colleges provide chances to refocus. This one at UNO is also a dorm but not all of them have those. But they do have Masses, Bible Studies, support groups, and helpful chaplains to help any Catholic student who is in the neighborhood. You don't have to live in their dorm. Our local Catholic high schools also provide some level of this kind of support, but it is up to the student to hook into them or they easily get lost in all the activities. Once again that is something the parents can be of help by reminding and encouraging their children.

Every person needs to be aware of this difficulty. The Archbishop keeps trying to remind us to build a relationship with the Lord. How many friends have you lost track of because of a change in your life? Don't let the Lord be one of those lost acquaintances. You will need Him too many times in your future for that to be a good idea.

This Sunday I will be leaving to drive out to Colorado for a day with my sister and her family and two days with many of my classmates from graduate school. Most of them were ordained but some of those who didn't will also be there. It is an opportunity to compare notes after forty years. As those of you who are over 60 will understand, we will surely be comparing experiences relating to our health: colonoscopies, hair loss, surgeries, etc. The part that I enjoy the most is a chance to compare experiences of God's interaction with us as priests. I will be back Friday morning.

As mentioned Fr. Don will be subbing in North Bend and Snyder this weekend. Next weekend he will be subbing in Pierce and Plainview. Next Sunday, 8/5, the Archbishop will be celebrating the 11am Mass. This is because we are hosting the annual "Seminarian Send-off" here at SEAS. Most of the approximately 20 seminarians will have some of their families joining them for Mass. After the Mass the seminarians and their families will join the Archbishop for a light meal in our parish hall. Also attending this event will be some extra priests and Serra Club members. The Serra Club works to promote vocations and support priests. After the meal the seminarians will go out and practice playing softball. I am so glad we are getting them ready early so they can help with the I-80 Collar Series in coming years. It will be a full church so be ready to share your pew, but enjoy a view of the future of our Church.

God bless you,

Fr. Frank