

Aug. 19, 2018

Thoughts from the pastor,

SJS School and many others have started this past week. Many of your houses are quieter for a few hours most days as the children go back to their routine. Because of that I would like to pass on something that one parent reminded me of as he sends his children to public school. Remember that OPS still has its sex-education program that was put in a few years ago. Too much of that program is about teaching the children to trust their instincts, get rid of their inhibitions, and go with the flow of the current culture of sexual permissiveness. Oddly enough this is one of the things that it seems about 300 priests did over the last decades in Pennsylvania. Those are in addition to the ones I mentioned in last week's letter. But the reminder was to make sure you let your public school know that you want to keep your children out of those programs. This means that you have to fill out the opt-out form every year or they will presume you no longer have a problem with what they are teaching and your children can then learn how to use male and female condoms.

I would also like to promote two other programs this week. The first is the RCIA program, or the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. As you hopefully noticed in the bulletin the first night for this class is 9/6, the Thursday after Labor Day. There is contact information in this bulletin under Parish/Community News. My Sunday Bible Study has been to help people get to know the Word of God better and better. This class is to help people to know the Catholic Church better and better. This would be for anyone who is wanting to deepen their faith but most especially for those who aren't Catholic to look into understanding the Church better to explore the possibility of becoming Catholic. Some of you have been hanging out with Catholics for a long time. It may be time to make the move to officially join.

The other program I want to promote is Christians Encounter Christ (CEC). The first part of this is a weekend experience in which you get a chance to deepen your faith in the midst of others who want to know Christ in a deeper way. There are presentations during the weekend by some of the best priests in the area. There are also lay witness talks and presentations. You will be with others who are in the same boat as you in wanting to be closer to Christ. By the way, He is in that boat with you, ready to calm some of those storms that you are experiencing. You will see a flyer on that in this bulletin also. It gives the dates for the weekends that are coming up this fall. Most of our deacons for SEAS parish and for the Archdiocese started with this weekend experience. Also many of the most active Catholics, who you see around making this and other parishes strong, have also made the CEC weekend. Maybe it is time for you.

I made my first weekend about 38 years ago. Since then I have given talks for them and have been the priest Spiritual Director for other weekends. This is a tried and true way of coming closer to Christ. If you haven't made one, please consider the possibility. If you have made one, please invite someone you know to experience what you have already felt. Again, there is contact information on the flyer in this week's bulletin.

Then I want to give another reminder about the parish picnic. It is next Sunday, 8/26. The picnic goes from 2:30-7:00pm. You will be able to really test out the new parking lot. Actually, some of you might want to do what many people do and bring lawn chairs and even canopies to set up on the soccer field. It is for the whole family and as I mentioned last week is a good opportunity to invite others to see what our parish family is like at this point. Just remember that there is no 5:30pm Mass on the evening of the picnic, so plan ahead.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank