

Feb. 10, 2019

Thoughts from the pastor,

After dealing with the State of the Union address and all the commentary that followed I almost dread giving this State of the Parish address. First of all, don't panic. The parish is in fine shape. The roof over the parish hall is finished. Although it is harder to notice when it is snowing, there is a vertical part around the parish hall sky-light that stands out because it is now white. That looks a little strange to me. Let me know what you think. It can be painted later, just not in the winter. The new surface of the roof is white rather than black, which will help with the cooling in the summer. The one thing that was unforeseen was that the metal trim was rusted out and disintegrated when it was removed to extend the new surface underneath it. To replace it meant refabricating that trim, which was an extra \$18,000 that we weren't expecting. We should be able to cover it with all the other things we paying for. The sky-light project is supposedly coming fairly soon. I don't have a date on that. Happily the insurance will pay for that.

As I mentioned last week, the parish mission is March 10-12. I will be presenting on the spirituality that comes from the book I wrote. This is the weekend after I return from my trip, and the first weekend of Lent. You will be seeing posters soon. This is open to anyone. So you can invite anyone or warn them according to your perception. Each person attending will receive a draft of the book. I will be working on improving that draft while I am at sea between stops in China, South Korea, and Japan. I have done this presentation several times and people have really liked it.

Another bit of news is that I received news this past week that I am being reassigned this summer. On July 1st I will become the new pastor of St. Thomas More Parish on 48th and Grover. I will have been here at SEAS for seven years at that point. This will be a good move for me and a hard one at the same time. As usual I have made a lot of friends here at SEAS, just like each of the other fifteen parishes I have worked at. It will be hard to leave so many great people. Obviously that is the hard part. The good part is that over a period of years I see so many things in a parish that sadden me. I see people who for one reason or another don't attend church any more. In my mind I actually see them in the empty pew that they used to sit in. Each one of those empty spots is a burden on me as your pastor. I always wonder what I could have or shouldn't have done that would have kept those people faithful to life in the parish. By going to another parish I don't see those absences for a few years. I don't know who might have left that parish. I can start again without that weight on my mind.

Of course the question that comes up is in terms of who will replace me. That has not been decided yet. A letter will go out to the priests soon to let them know that SEAS will be open for a new pastor. Then priests can apply and the Archbishop and the personnel board will decide who would be the best fit. The good news is that with the many changes that are happening this year there are a lot of guys who would be looking for a great parish like this to move into as pastor. So start praying for the Holy Spirit to guide this process.

You should have already been seeing a lot of information on [Arch Omaha Unite](#). Now is the time to register, which you can do on-line. Next weekend there will be people around for the Masses to help answer any questions and to help with getting people registered. That is for those of you who are like me and don't play well with computers. Fr. Jeff Lorig will be having the Masses the next few weekends and he is one the people that helped set this event up so hopefully he will be a source of information.

While I am gone the priests from St. James will be covering most of the weekday Masses and confessions. There are a few spots that will have to be communion services, like this Friday, and the Saturday mornings.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank