

From the Deacon's Wife

Thanks to all who participated in Priest Appreciation Sunday last weekend! While Fr. Frank is on sabbatical, Fr. John is learning what it means to be a parish priest in Omaha, Nebraska. A perfect example of how our priests' time is never their own was last Sunday.

During the 10:30 Mass a police officer called looking for a priest. A woman had died and after calling several closer parishes and not finding a priest available, Holy Name got the call. Fr. John left immediately after Mass, taking him away from the brunch being held in his honor (and Fr. Frank *in absentia*), before he even had a chance to eat. The woman had died of cancer and the family needed someone to comfort and pray with them as they gathered at her house.

In the meantime, a phone message was left from the Kozol family. Gene, who was dying from cancer, had a turn for the worse. After a quick stop at Holy Name, Father and Deacon Kevin went to the Kozol family's home. Father, along with the entire family who had gathered, celebrated the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and the reception of "Viaticum" (Latin meaning *that which you take on the road*, i.e., provisions for a journey.) This last Communion prepares us to travel with the Lord on the final part of our earthly journey. Sue, Gene's wife, was not present. She was in the hospital with pneumonia. Gene died that evening, with some of his family at his side, while others were with their Mom.

After leaving the Kozol family, Father had one thing on his mind – "If I don't get something to eat real soon, I won't be able to eat until late tonight." Father returned to the rectory to eat and prepare for a 4:30 PM appointment. After parting ways, Deacon Kevin met with the Perry family, whose husband/father passed away on Friday to plan the wake and funeral. On the way home from there, he stopped for a quick visit with Sue Kozol in the hospital.

After getting to Holy Name at 8 AM that morning, Kevin and I did not reconnect until 6 PM. That would just have been another ordinary day for Fr. Frank, if he had been here. Most of you probably don't realize that Fr. Frank is one priest who never turns his cell phone off – so he gets "bothered" at all hours, but is privileged to serve so many people in the hour of their greatest need.

Later Sunday evening, when reflecting on the day, Kevin said that it is truly a gift to watch and assist Father John. Yes, there is some frustration when it is difficult to understand what Father John is saying, but one-on-one, whether it is eating with our school children at lunch, or visiting with a family who is struggling with some hardship, the language barriers melt away, and the humility and holiness of this man fills the room. We are reminded that no matter our origin or life experiences we are all the same – the beloved children of God. We at Holy Name are very lucky to have priests as conscientious as Fr. Frank and Fr. John.

As a follow-up to Priest Appreciation Sunday, keep all priests in your prayers during the month of November – especially our Fr. John, – and pray also for safe travels for Fr. Frank as he returns home later this month.



On another note, mark your calendars for **Sunday, November 20th** for the St. Nicholas Family event after Mass (lunch included) sponsored by the Confraternity. Kevin and I will be speaking to the adults about ideas for Advent, and kids will be having fun activities in the cafeteria. And I hear that St. Nicholas himself just might be stopping by Holy Name that afternoon!