

Jan. 28-29, 2011

From the Pastor,

I will be having Masses in Battle Creek and Schoolcraft, NE this weekend. It is almost impossible for our rural priests to get coverage when they are away, so I volunteered because then when I need coverage it is easier for me to get it.

I hope that all of you have heard the news that the Holy Name Advisory Board led by Pete Ricketts has decided to go public with their intention to start a Foundation that will help with funding for Holy Name School.

This group has been working with Holy Name School for a year and a half. They wanted to make sure that everything was in place for this to be a worthwhile endeavor. They wanted to make sure that their impressions of the excellent work that they heard about at Holy Name were true. They are true. They wanted to make sure that finances are all taken care of in appropriate and effective ways and that we are not in the habit of wasting money. We aren't. They wanted to know if our development work was good. It is not. It is great. So after looking at all our strengths and weaknesses they knew this was a place that would be a worthwhile use of donor's money.

The Meitler Study Round 3 proposals pushed them to change their time table. They realized that they could not wait for more rumors coming from those proposals to scare off more students, families, and donors. They know that the Archbishop is still looking at all the information before he makes his final decisions, but they wanted him to know, without a doubt, that there is support to keep this place open.

After the Masses this past weekend many of you were able to take some time to discuss these issues. Obviously we aren't the only parish and school being looked at. The Meitler Study is for all the Archdiocesan parishes east of 72nd St. This leads to the question of whether there might be help available for some of the schools in South Omaha that are in jeopardy. As Mr. Ricketts said; "We hope there can be similar funding sources for the South Omaha Catholic School system just like he is doing for Holy Name and like CUES is doing for Sacred Heart.

Two other significant parishes that we discussed after the Masses are St. Therese of the Child Jesus at 1423 Odgen St. and St. Benedict the Moor at 2423 Grant St. St. Therese has a dwindling Anglo community and a growing Hispanic community. It is predicted that the Hispanic community is going to outgrow the aging facility very quickly and might have to look for a new home. One of the proposals is for St. Therese to close because of these factors. I asked people if they would be open to the idea of adjusting things at Holy Name so that they could have their Mass, functions and religious education at Holy Name. The goal would not be to slowly turn Holy Name into another Hispanic parish but to eventually have them as a part of our already growing integration of cultures. I mentioned setting up an Our Lady of Guadalupe Marian altar and having the chapel change from a St. John Neuman Chapel to a Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel. The additional comment that I heard, that most people would not have, was to look at having some statues of African saints for our African-American and African immigrant members. I personally think these are great ideas. St. Martin de Porres, St. Benedict the Moor, St. Peter Claver, and St. Charles Lwanga and St. Josephine Bakhita would be some of the possibilities.

One other quick note, the White House administration is trying to force all religious organizations that aren't churches to have coverage for abortive contraceptives as a part of their health coverage within one year. This is outrageous so please pray that it won't happen.

God bless you all.

Fr. Frank