

Dec. 3-4, 2011

From the Pastor,

I recently had the blessing of Skypeing some friends whom I had not had any contact with for over fifteen years. They live on the other side of the world. When they saw me they laughed at how much older I looked. They weren't being mean but it made me think of my life as a pastor. Maybe pastor years can be like dog years and count for more time. As I write this I realize that I have been back for just over a week and been able to get at least a month's worth of work done. Another three weeks like this and I will be caught up. God help me to do that.

Most of you are living lives that are going at a breakneck pace. That is the way our world is right now. During the Advent season we are asked to meditate on the meaning of our lives and how we are in need of a Savior. That way when Christmas comes, we are ready to receive Him more deeply into our lives. One problem with that is just having the time to meditate. I really have to fight to protect my prayer time which is mostly after 10:30pm. Then it is a matter of fighting to stay awake. I have my techniques for that. I hope your system of prayer is working. If not this is a great time to develop rituals.

Awareness is a technique that doesn't take extra time. It is based on the "take time to smell the roses" philosophy. It is a matter of setting yourself up to watch for markers in the world. Notice the signs of God in your life. We added one at Holy Name just recently when our church cross was put in place. It is a marker and a beacon to focus our minds on Christ for at least a moment. I personally find myself staring at it because it just seems so inspiring. The cross on a steeple is to show us the power source for the ark that is taking us to heaven.

When we take just a moment to realize the need we have for Christ and His love, we are momentarily in prayer. Setting up a Christmas crib can do the same thing. Just a few weeks ago I was at the place where St. Francis set up the first crib. By the way I hope to have that part of the blog done very soon. It is a part of the work I must do in the next three weeks. Take joy in the moment of having a sign of Christ in your life. Scripture says that a day in the house of God is better than a thousand anywhere else. A moment with the Lord on your mind can power the thousand moments that follow it. It is a prayer style that can grow on a person if they let it.

I am planning a presentation of my Sabbatical Sunday, December 18th after the 10:30am Mass. You will be able to see and hear about some of my experiences that I hope will keep me going the next ten years. I figure one week for every year is about right. Even I am excited to see some of my pictures on the big screen. This Sunday and next I will simply be discussing different parts of the sabbatical with anyone who would be interested at the 9:00am Bible Study time. After Christmas I am hoping to start the "Catholicism" series by Fr. Barron. Many of you have had a chance to see it on EWTN. The series is really awesome and I am hoping that having some discussion on it will be an opportunity to grow in our faith. If you know of anyone who is thinking about joining the Catholic Faith or is just interested in learning about their faith, this is a good opportunity. There are ten videos but the discussion might make it more than ten sessions. I hope to see you at these learning opportunities.

God bless you all,
Fr. Frank