

Dec. 24-25, 2011

From the Pastor,

The first Christmas came at a very unique time in history. The Church calls it the "Fullness of Time." It was one of those rare times when there were no wars. The Romans made sure of that by conquering almost everyone. It wasn't that there was justice in the world, just short term peace. This was important for the safety of the Savior but also so the fledgling Church could spread along the Roman roads.

Even with that peace there was still a great deal of danger. Herod tried to kill Jesus out of fear of losing his job. The early Christians were tortured and killed for their faith. But this did not derail God's plan. It fit into it. The slaughter of the Holy Innocents fulfilled the image of the new Moses who was almost killed in a similar slaughter. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the next generation of Christians. All of this bloodshed is why we need a Savior.

That concept of the Fullness of Time tells us that the coming of Jesus was perfectly placed in the midst of this sinful world. Everything was prepared for the coming and everything since the coming has been to give each person that God has created the best possible chance to come back to Him and join Him in Heaven. Each one of us is in the right place. God has things in mind for each of us.

We can look at the life of Jesus to see how that works. He was born in the right time and place, but He still had to live out His life according to the will of the Father. He did that all the way to His death, "Not my will but thy will be done." Jesus did what the Father asked of Him. We are asked to do the same. We are born with an instinct to do what would please our dads. We still yearn for that affirmation.

With the Father in Heaven we can receive that affirmation, but it will not come in the form of success as the world knows it. The success that the Father gives us is growth in holiness and movement towards our heavenly reward. Discerning what the Father wants of us is sometimes tricky. Too often we are looking for the big things when He might just be telling us to "Clean my beach," like He did with me at the Sea of Galilee a few months ago. When we are trying to find the path he wants us on, the best way we can do it is by doing the little things that we know He always wants us to do.

It is for that reason that I would like to especially thank, the St. Vincent de Paul people, the Giving Tree donors, the musicians, the decorators, those who visit the shut-ins, donors to the parish and school, and everyone who simply tries to do the things that Christians have been doing for twenty centuries.

The world is still a mess. There is need for peace and justice. We live in danger just like it has always been. The difference is that the Savior has shown us why we would bother to try to make it better. We are not making heaven on earth. If that were the case it certainly would have happened by now. We are preparing for new heavens and a new earth and God has put each one of us in the perfect place to show Him whether we are ready to live there with Him. Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

God bless you all,  
Fr. Frank