

## ***FROM THE MIDDLE OFFICE...***

September 18, 2011

In last week's bulletin we read: *"After Masses this weekend I head off to Rome... Fr. John and Fr. Vitalis will each try to do an occasional letter from the "parish priest." I still get the privilege of holding the title of Pastor. I will also submit a later occasionally. I know I wouldn't be able to leave if Fr. John had not been brought to Holy Name at this time. Most of all I know that without a great staff I would never feel comfortable enough to leave for ten weeks. My personality has a little field-marshal aspect to it. It would be impossible to for me to go if I didn't believe the troops were in good hands."* At the end of last Sunday Mass, Fr. Frank also said: "I am going to leave about 2pm and Fr. John is going to be the **"Grand Puba"** of the parish." These are the words Fr. Frank wrote down and said when he was about to leave us for while. We hope he had a nice trip and has started a fruitful ten weeks sabbatical in Rome close to the Holy Seat. These words bear a lot of senses and orthodoxy. But I need to clarify the slang "Grand Puba". In other words, "Grand Puba" means "BIG BOSS", which could be interpreted according to the world or to the Gospel.

According to the world, the Grand Puba is the one who is above all, dominates all and makes all his slaves. *"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them"* (Mt 20: 25). I could never be such a "Grand Puba." The "Grand Puba" according to the Gospel is the one who serves his people: JESUS CHRIST. Indeed, Jesus, the Son of God and God Himself, is the King of kings, the Grand Puba of grand pubas. However, *"Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave (Ph 2: 6-7).* From the deepest of my being, I really want to be your slave, or your "servus" (Latin), or your "doulos" (Greek) in fulfillment of the Word of the Lord saying: *"Whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many"* (Mt 20: 26-28). This is the model of Grand Puba that Fr. Frank was talking about, the one we all need to become.

By the time I was writing this letter, I was confirmed and comforted by the appointment of Archbishop Lucas the first and last paragraphs of which are: *"In accord with cc. 157 and 539, and in view of the Rev. Frank J. Baumert's absence from the parish due to his sabbatical, I hereby appoint you as parochial administrator of Holy Name Parish, Omaha, effective September 11, 2011, and thru November 20, when Father Baumert returns.*

*I know that this will be a challenge, but it is one that I believe you will do well with. Be assured of my continued prayers and support for you."*

I am grateful to Archbishop Lucas in very special way for his wise pastoral care. I am pretty aware of the challenge he is talking about. By the grace of God, the support and the collaboration of Fr. Vitalis, Deacon Kevin, the "great staff" and the entire Church Community of Holy Name, I will make the most of this ministry.

Let's pray for Fr. Frank, our Pastor, for a successful sabbatical and for one another.

God bless you  
Fr. John