

The Paper Pulpit

(Reflections from the Pastor)

7th Sunday in Easter (The Ascension of the Lord)

Scripture: "No sooner had he said this than he was lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took him from their sight. They were still gazing up into the heavens when two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking up at the skies? This Jesus who has been taken from you will return, just as you saw him go up into the heavens." Acts 1: 1-11

Jesus' Ascension into heaven was both an end and a beginning. While it was the end of Jesus' physical presence with his disciples, it marked the beginning of Jesus' presence with them in a new way. Jesus promised that he would be with them always to the end of time. Now as Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father in heaven, Jesus promised to give them the power of his Holy Spirit, which we see fulfilled ten days later on the Feast of Pentecost (Luke 24:49 and Acts 2:1-4). When the Lord Jesus departed physically from the Apostles, they were not left alone or powerless. Jesus assured them of his presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' last words to his Apostles point to his saving mission and to their mission to be witnesses of his saving death and his glorious resurrection and to proclaim the good news of salvation to all the world. No one did this more than Paul the Apostle. Their task is to proclaim the good news of salvation to all the world. God's love and gift of salvation is for the whole world – for all who will accept it. The gospel is the power of God, the power to forgive sins, to heal, to deliver from evil and oppression, and to restore life.

This is the great commission which the risen Christ gives to the whole Church. All believers have been given a share in this task – to be heralds of the good news, to work for and be ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We have not been left alone in this task, for the risen Lord works in and through us by the power of his Holy Spirit through the Church. Today we witness a new Pentecost as the Lord pours out his Holy Spirit upon his people to renew and strengthen the Body of Christ and to equip it for effective ministry and mission world-wide.

Speaking of ministry, over the past few weeks I have mentioned the need of volunteers in a number of areas in the parish. To help with the prayer garden. To help clean the church. To help count money. To help teach or assist with CCD. To help with the music ministry program. To sign up for the Knights of Columbus (men's group). To sign up for an area of interest you may have in the parish among others. Thank you for those who stepped up and many of you have. But not everyone has. Some folks think that "Someone Else" will do it. So last week at the end of Mass I mentioned we had a death in the parish. The death of... Someone Else.

I got this story from the internet... Someone's passing created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Else has been with us for many years and Someone did far more than the normal person's share of the work. Whenever leadership was mentioned, this person was looked to for inspiration as well as results. Someone Else can work with that group. Whenever there was a job to do, CCD to teach, clean a window, plant a flower, or a meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's lips, "Let Someone Else do it."

Were the truth known, everyone expected too much of Someone Else. Now Someone Else is gone. We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did? Remember, we can't depend on Someone Else anymore. So we need you. Please see Fr. Jim on how you can help "Someone Else" out.

Church cleaning: Looking for volunteers to help clean the church. Only qualification needed is to be able to push a broom and turn on a vacuum or wash a window. The more folks we can get the merrier. Very flexible scheduling (come in when you can). If a few folks donated 15-30 minutes periodically would go a long way to help our church stay clean. Want to make a few extra bucks? We are also looking for someone to clean and to oversee the cleaning. See Fr. Jim for details.

Thinking about the priesthood? In Middle or High School and thinking about being a priest? Here are a couple of opportunities this summer to meet with other young people also thinking about the priesthood. See Fr. Jim for details.

Who? Grades 6th-10th

When? June 20 - 22, 2014

Who? Grades 11 and older

When? July 11- 13 2014

Where? House of Formation, Holy Cross Diocesan Center, 3710 East Ave. South, La Crosse, WI 54601

This weekend retreat of prayer, fun, liturgy is hosted by seminarians. There will be discussions about being open to priesthood and what priesthood is. If you are interested in attending, please contact Fr. Jim or at the diocese, Shirley in the Office for Vocations at svonruden@dioceseoflacrosse.com or (608) 791-2667. Please download and send in the age appropriate consent and medical forms to the above address. The forms can be found at www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/vocations/events.

Fishing: Interested in going fishing? My boat or yours? See me to schedule a night.

Annual Appeal Update: Thank you to all those who pledged to the annual appeal. We need everyone's participation, not just Someone Else's. So far we are getting back about \$5,000 "tax free." Please submit your pledge to the parish office no later than Sunday, June 10th for this fiscal year's drive. All funds received after June 10th will be for the 2014-15 pledge.

Sincerely in Christ, Fr. Jim Trempe