

From the P.A.'s desk

Open Door Policy:

Last week a parishioner stopped in to my office because he found a paper clipping from July 15, 1975, titled, "How much time do you give to God?" I thought it was worth sharing.

"Suppose God granted you a life of 70 years. How would you distribute that time? Statistics divide these 70 years this way—8 years are spent in amusements, 6 at the dinner table, 5 in transportation, 4 in conversation, 14 in work, 3 in reading, 24 in sleeping. How much time to you give to God? IF you went to church every Sunday of your life, and if you prayed 5 minutes every morning and evening, the entire time given to God in direct prayer—in your entire 70 years would be 5 months. Isn't that amazing? Maybe we could think about it if we complain that Mass is 10 minutes longer sometimes!

As Jack Burtovoy and I talked, he noticed a model on my desk of a B-24 Liberator bomber, which was used throughout WW II in both Europe and the Pacific Campaign. I explained that plane was what my father flew in World War Two over the Philippines. Turns out Jack too was a veteran of WW II and in the Pacific Campaign also. He was in the Navy aboard the LST naval ship transports.

Long story short, we had a nice brief chat because he chose to stop by the office and pass along something he found. I became to think of how after our brief 15 minutes conversation, that I now know something about him that I didn't know before, and how grateful I am, not only for his service in WW II, but that I had the opportunity to get to know him a little bit better.

My door is always open, and if you ever want to come by to chat about something you've found, or an experience you've had, I'm here to listen and share in your life, even briefly. My door is always open!

Evangelization Meeting:

Next Thursday, September 1st, at 6:30 PM, there is an Evangelization meeting for a group of parishioners I've been personally inviting to brainstorm the topic with me. If you are interested in attending and learning what Catholic Evangelization is, and how we can begin to be more intentional in doing it, please feel free to join us.

Scripture Today:

At first glance, today's Gospel reading might seem like a list of tips on how to act at a dinner party – and, at worst, a cynical guide to how to make ourselves look good. Just act like you think you should sit in the back, knowing you will be invited to move up – and look good in front of everybody else at the party.

Jesus is really more concerned about how we see ourselves, however. Do we feel that we deserve the place of honor? If so, we risk the humiliation of being put in our rightful place – further back in the

banquet hall. As human beings, we can easily fall into the trap of comparing ourselves with others. We decide either that we're better than they are, or they are better than us. Either way, comparing ourselves with others is a mistake. Only God, who can read the human heart, can make true and wise comparisons.

The words of Sirach in today's first reading are a wonderful antidote to this human tendency to compare. *Conduct your affairs with humility ... What is too sublime for you, seek not, into things beyond your strength search not.* This does not mean, of course, that we should not try to be better Christians, or to improve our professional skills in order to have a more responsible and challenging job. However, we need discernment and prayer to help us determine what is right for us in God's eyes – and a realistic knowledge of our strengths and weaknesses. A person with no musical talent, for example, would find no success – or peace of mind – in striving to be an opera star!

Today's reading from Hebrews gives us a sense of what we can expect in our life after death: citizenship in heaven, with the angels *in festal gathering*. Here on earth, we can prepare for that wonderful day by staying close to God and listening to the way he leads us in our daily lives.

Today, as we prepare for another week in service of God and neighbor, let us pray for the gifts of wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit – that we might be led in the direction that is best for us, where we can best make a difference in the lives of others by using our talents and skills to the utmost. And let us pray for the humility we need to know our place in God's kingdom. Then, we will truly be humble, not comparing ourselves with others or seeking places of honor, but conducting our affairs with humility.

RCIA:

Thinking of becoming Catholic? Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process established by the Church for individuals to become Catholic and receive the sacraments of initiation Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. The RCIA is not so much of a class, but a process which respects the personal faith journey and conversion experience of each individual, regardless of their faith, or lack of faith background. For more information, please contact Jerry Green.

Parish Website:

Website is coming . . . stayed turned!

Adult Faith Formation:

Beginning in September, I will be offering some adult faith formation topics-classes for the parents who have children in our faith formation program. ALL ADULTS, YOUNG AND OLDER, ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. Topics will be listed soon. Also, beginning in Advent I'd like to start an adult bible study reflection group in the evening slightly different from the weekday morning bible/book study group. More information will follow soon.