

From the Pastor's Desk:

In the Gospel people hear Jesus' speaking and think that what he is saying is very good - they marvel at his words. A little later he says something they don't like, and they go to toss him off a cliff. For all of us it's easier to hear the things we like to hear, and then reject negatively at the things we don't like. When our Lord tries to communicate with us it is always for our benefit. Sometimes it is encouragement, and sometimes it is a word of challenge. Always the motivation is love. If we can accept the challenges we can see that he is only really trying to improve things for the better - it just may take a long time to see the results of our positive responses to these challenges.

You will notice a change as you contact or come into the office. Grace who has been a familiar and welcome presence in our office is moving on. Taking her place is another parishioner, Luann Thibodeau who will be working with Joanne to continue to provide you assistance, and to keep many of our vital functions moving along. Thanks to Grace for her work and the things she has helped us accomplish, and a welcome to the team to Luann. Speaking of moving along towards accomplishment, Don will be meeting with the contractor who will be providing a proposed budget for the renovation of the former Reagan Street convent into a more functional Parish Center. This process has been underway for some time and has been discussed in Finance and Pastoral Councils, and in Staff Meetings. Any suggestions are welcome.

Our "Theology on Tap" was a success. Nearly 20 people gathered for this informal discussion. The idea of such an event is to provide a comfortable setting for young adults to come together and discuss faith issues. We reserved a function room at the Williams Restaurant and the young people were able to order a meal (and a beverage appropriate to their age), and get to meet some people. I was happy to see how quickly individuals who had not met were engaging with each other. After a brief introductory talk (under 10 minutes) we opened the floor for discussion and spent over an hour in a lively conversation. We will be doing this again for this 18-39 age group (and due to some requests from those "beyond" this age are thinking about a similar format for others as well).

We also had some good information shared with us at our Evangelization talk; afterwards Maura and I were discussing how to apply this knowledge to help us build our efforts. The first meeting of our committee working to develop our parish logo and signs occurred and Joanne reports great progress, you'll hear more about this. We are close to finalizing next year's financial aid offerings for the school (which will include some new scholarships), and I was pleased to hear that some parents have commented on the positive effects of our curriculum development efforts. The school is on a definite upswing, pass the word!

I write this before I leave for my vacation (had to get it in before I went) - next column I'll tell you about my trip. As I listen to the challenges the Lord communicates to me during my daily prayer, or through the words of my spiritual director or others, they are not always easy to hear - but the Lord knows us and wants to guide us to fulfillment. If we can accept these things in a spirit of love, and open ourselves to God's will, great things often come from it.

Peace and Blessings,
Fr. Steve