

From the Pastor's Desk:

In our liturgy this weekend we commemorate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Maybe we all think of how we can make more room in our hearts and lives for Jesus. How we can spread out a welcome mat like the people laid their palms on the road as he approached. This may be something we have done before, this may be something we don't have the first clue on how to do - but trying to discover the way to do so may yield more benefits than we know. We can begin by giving a little more time to the Lord on a regular basis - Mass, devotions, study, holy reading. These are all opportunities to lay out that welcome mat and be waiting when that knock comes to the door.

At the Mass at the prison this past week we welcomed the men who will be making their sacraments at Easter. Some are entering the Church, some making their confirmation after many years delay, all others in support of them. I can assure you that these men are appreciative of the prayers you provide, and they always pray for the parish and for those in need during these Masses. A similar scene plays out in the monthly Masses we hold at the local nursing homes in the city. Individuals who cannot attend Mass with us in church being ministered to by parishioners who try to fulfill the Lord's directive to care for the ill and imprisoned. Thanks to all who assist in these important ministries.

Some of you will notice the new parking lot light at Holy Spirit has been installed and is working. I drove down to see it in action after dark. No more needing flashlights for Mass! The LED lighting replacement in Holy Rosary is also complete and is providing a fuller light to the church at a cost savings. The final lighting project is the replacement of all the lights in the school - I was on a long conference call going over details of the contracts before signing - again, this will be done through the electric bills (being paid for by the savings in electrical use), and not with an outlay of capital. We hope to have this done by early summer.

The Scouts of Troop 4 had their Swedish Meatball supper last weekend, and the Scouts of Troop 9 will have their Pancake Breakfast this Sunday. Please support these groups and share in an opportunity for fellowship. Another wonderful event I attended was the annual Art Show at the Caring Place. Seeing the children beaming to show their parents and others their artwork, seeing the parents' pride in their children and satisfaction with the education their children are receiving - it was great! So many of these youngsters are the children of parents who once attended The Caring Place, a fine testimony to the spirit and family atmosphere that encourages generations of children to attend.

We had our Lenten Penance Service this past weekend. It had a very prayerful atmosphere which encouraged a number of individuals to seek the Lord's mercy. Sometimes just taking the step to do something like this after some years away can be a powerful and beneficial experience. We have both School Board and Pastoral Council this coming week - I'll let you know how those went in later columns.

As we make our final movement to Easter I encourage you to attend as many of the Holy Week services as you are able, the more you put out the welcome mat, the more likely the knock.

Peace,
Fr. Steve