

9/11

M&M's

So here I am with my first manuscript of sorts to the parish. I avoid the word, degree or proclamation, for the abbreviation of "M&M" ;minor,memo,manuscript, musings, etc. I first started the M&M's logo while pastor at St. Mary's Kodiak Island Alaska in 1995, and have not exactly recalled the meaning of the letters myself – lost in the waves amidst a rocking kayak in the Pacific. Regardless, you will see these bulletin entries from time to time. I utilize them as a tool share news items in the parish and my reflections on same. Few people have every saved them in a three ring binder. They are hardly READER'S DIGEST caliper.

A WELCOME: The hospitality shown to me in the first few weeks has been quite engaging. It came as no surprise. I guess I can note that I wrote a one page letter to Bishop Hebda requesting this parish when it became available. This parish has a very favorable profile from around the Diocese. I have to be cautious not to settle into a comfort zone. As a priest, the gospels clearly expect challenges in our service to the church. My mantra to supervisors in business when they considered moving me (4 times in 10 years) was direct: "Send me where no one else wants to go". I obviously have broken with that tradition in this case!.

PROJECTS UNDERWAY: The commitment to construct our outside stations of the cross is formidable. I note that three unique ones are already in place. I seek in files and from you how this effort will be completed by individuals that took on a station. An upgraded baptismal font has had to be set aside at this time. We simply do not have the monies and the design may be a bit extravagant for our style of worship.

THE RECTORY. For my time here, I will always be grateful for the quality living arrangement the parish provides the pastor. I do not need much. (owned five homes and one of them might have been improved if it had an outhouse, but one did have an in ground swimming hole!) I can easily make a bit of a hobby in improving the grounds and exterior of house and outbuildings. I would welcome assistance on trim color and maybe even some painting at levels below Picasso. I am hoping for an open house in October. After all, it's the parish house, not mine.

A FEW CHALLENGES AND INFORMATIONAL EXCHANGE:

- In the financial sector of that realm we are running a bit too lean...i.e. no monies saved for unavoidable capital improvements An eventual new roof is often mentioned
- In the undertaking of parish volunteers, we need to expand the numbers to avoid having same small group doing everything. (common struggle from parishes, Kiwanis, etc)
- You will hear evangelization constantly trumpeted in the constant proclamations of Popes Benedict and John Paul II.
- a great deal of study has gone into planning a new baptismal font. Students of the endeavor are to be commended . I have informed the artist, who by chance I know well, of placing project on hold. A key element of this nature is to do it so that will not need revisiting for decades to come!
- I always have to choose my words correctly and avoid misinterpretation. I use the word "wounded" for some backdrop of undertakings within the parish. It can evolve from

communication to management style. We all have styles that put down foot prints of commendation to a new attempted formula. I am excited for upcoming footprints we will place on a trail. Bishop Hebda will install me as pastor at 11:00 Mass on Oct. 9. Do not hesitate to remark: "Is this the best you can send us?". He revels in such commentary as he hears it about the "odd ones" of his troops.

AND THE NEW ROMAN MISSAL: The Diocese has been putting forth an enormous amount of training with priests and parish leaders on some changes in the Mass that will start First Sunday of Advent. Fr. Duane Wachowiak, former pastor of Christ the king and now director of Liturgy for the Diocese, has been doing a superb job of training. I do not have that caliber of implementation he has, but I will begin talking about it with my best shot..

My newest e mail for all parish and school communications: jn831free@gmail.com. Pope Jon Paul helped design it for me. You surely can figure out the translation of the abbreviation?. Ask me why I chose it with its meaning tucked within.

In Christ's fervor,
Fr. Ray Cotter