

2ND Sunday in Ordinary Time January 15, 2017

M & M 's

Who wouldn't have wanted to be in Chicago last fall at the final world series game between the Cleveland Indians and the Chicago Cubs? Indeed, it was superb baseball at its best and the rain delay only added to the suspenseful thriller. And what a gift as the Cubs "disrupted" baseball history!

But here is my public confession: I could not name a single player today on either team. And it was the only game I gave attention to all season. I have no TV service and regardless, I simply do not follow major sports. I left my attention back in my youth with the names of Rocky Colavito, Norm Cash, Dizzy Dean, George Kell (got his autograph), Willie Horton, Jim Bunning, Stan Musial (daily Mass), Mickey Mantle and many more. I did not get near as much out of that game as folks who prepared for it in reading the sports pages and following up keen discussions in barber chairs and café coffee tables around the country.

Is it allowed to make a comparison with our Sunday Eucharist? The people in the pews MUST come to the church and the sacred Eucharist fully PREPARED, knowledgeable, in order to fully engage the story. And the Eucharist is TRUTH and fully alive with salvation NOW, not in some passing and enjoyable game. Do you have any awareness of Isiah and the Babylonian captivity that so many prophets spoke about? When were the Gospels written – a few months after the ascension or 30 years later? Does it matter? Where do we get our teachings on marriage, all the sacraments, and why is our church one of the few who remain adamant, loyal, to what Christ taught? Sin taught from the New Testament, is the same today? Where does it say that? Does grace spread out in so many stories told by Christ, the same that is offered today – "I came so that you may have life and to the fullest"? "The Truth will set you free". (St. John Paul's favorite, key verse, in all of scripture). How? Why? What is it?

I can easily give a mediocre homily. Yet, the reflections of myself or Deacon Kevin are NOT the key to an engaging Mass. Nor is the music. Nor the appeal of flowers and quality decor (blessed as we are with superb volunteers who make it possible!). True, we desire and are obligated to present the best proclamation of His word and the setting. However, I often comment on an exuberant funeral or wedding that flows from the obvious depth of holiness brought together by the individuals. THEY CAME PREPEARED. The deceased with a faithful life. A couple with fervor well beyond glitz and glitter. A presider can literally be fed by them! Sadly, if the opposite exists, it can be frustrating to lead the liturgy....shamefully said, "to get through it". I dare not say anything then, only ponder that sadness.

I have been speaking of some resources that can be easily accessed on the internet for means of preparation. One can probe and easily find the scripture texts of an upcoming Sunday Mass. In addition, homilies can be read or listened to. I use such resources to help with a better understanding of the upcoming liturgies. We find ourselves in Cycle A for Sunday gospels, heavily dependent on gospel of Matthew. Some of my favorites or simply ones you might want to review.

wordonfire.org Bishop Robert Barron

uscbb.org U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; numerous resources to wander through

1/15/'17 cont.

catholicireland.net Of course – right from Ireland! sip something alongside of the brogue

saintvincentabbey.org Monastery and seminary in Latrobe, PA

stmaryvalleybloom.org a sample of numerous priests who offer homilies online

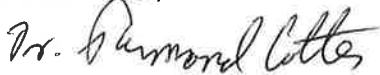
You may have to wander a bit to hone in on the texts and the reflections. Indeed, punching in cycle A homilies will give you a myriad of choices. You will be looking for Cycle A, repeated every three years..i.e. homilies in '14 would be a match, so you do not always need the exact date in the month of '17. The bulletin already lists the upcoming Sunday to look for – this Sunday's bulletin notes the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary time coming up for January 22.

Go for it. Friday night...whenever...an ideal time to do your study. Maybe individually and then discuss within a family or simply in ongoing prayer well before Mass.

I am aware that people paid thousands of dollars for a seat at Wrigley Field. Priorities? Churches offer free seating. Indeed, if we truly knew what was going on during every Mass, we would also be putting up bleachers. Please help us move toward that building plan. And with open seating, come early! Can you imagine how early YOU would come if Wrigley field was open seating.

The Evangelization Committee has been meeting for the past year. We recently discussed bringing the purpose of it into the parish as a whole. Small groups in Lent. Stay tuned and impress us to no end by asking about it! And as always everything can be found online: document from the Diocese of Arlington Virginia Diocese has been our mainstay. GO FORTH with HEARTS ON FIRE was released by Bishop Paul Loverde on the Solemnity of Christ the King, November 24, 2013. Interesting challenges on the WHY and How that reaches back to Christ's gospel and critical need in Catholic community NOW.

In His surrender,



Fr. Raymond Cotter / Pastor

A sample within the 17,000 word encyclical of St. Pope John Paul II , Ecclesia De Eucharistia: (Letter on the Eucharist)

I wrote this encyclical in continuity with my writings on the New Millennium and on the Rosary to rekindle a Eucharistic "amazement". I want the Church to contemplate the face of Christ with Mary. This means to recognize Christ in events and in His many forms of presence, especially in the Eucharist where the faithful relive the experiences of the two disciples who 'recognized him in the breaking of the bread'. (LK.24:21)