
Pastor's Journal...
Fr. William P. Felix



02 October 2022 + Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear parish family of All Saints,

I wanted to write this letter before I left for Italy in preparation for this Sunday when you will have Fr. Eugene Wolf as the celebrant of the Masses. I might have mentioned before, but Fr. Wolf was associate pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in Chippewa Falls when I left for the seminary in fall of 1977. Because my dad could not get off work to go with me to St. John's University in Collegeville, MN, Fr. Wolf kindly drove a truck with my belongings and accompanied me at my arrival. Fr. Wolf has been a friend and a hard-working faithful priest of the Diocese of La Crosse for many years, who was present at my ordination and Mass of Thanksgiving. I thank him for taking the Masses this weekend.

This is also the weekend Deacon Willkom, will be speaking on our parish/diocesan capital campaign. I thank him for doing this while I am away. Now, I want to say a few words about Deacon Willkom's place in All Saints Parish. I would never have attempted a merger of parishes with an increase in parishioners at my age without the commitment of Deacon Willkom to help me. I knew an associate pastor would not be possible, but with his incredible gifts and willingness to serve, I was confident that we could do this together. Being from and in this area for so many years, along with knowing so many of you through his dental office, he is a presence of unity in our parish. I write this while I am away so that he doesn't stop me! I know you appreciate his diaconal life and service as well.

Regarding our capital campaign, both of us believe that the success of this campaign is not just about money. I know that many of you are concerned about the future of our parish, especially with the lack of young families and children present at Sunday Mass. This is a trend in all churches, even the evangelical churches, that often see younger members because of the services they offer which seem to be more contemporary. The fact is, they find that after their children get older and enter into a very secularized, non-Christian world, the numbers drop severely as well.

The "success" of our parish cannot be based on "numbers." Our most important task is to continue to provide a Catholic-Christian home for those who will eventually find our deconstructed Christian society not a good place to be. Our goal must be to stand our ground and be a viable, permanent Catholic community of faith in a world that is losing its soul. From the earliest ages, our children are being sexualized, demoralized, and antagonized against the most basic and fundamental principles of Christian faith. Throughout history, the Catholic Church has seen many "dark ages." It is during those times that the Catholic-Christian parish became a refuge. That is what we are, and must remain, a refuge for those who find Catholic faith and community a foundation for their lives and families, and a shelter for those caught in the storms life brings.

The capital campaign is about insuring the future of our community of faith and life. As I prepare our young people for Confirmation, I have come to realize the complete difference there is between those young people who are actively present in our parish, and those who are distant. My relationship to them is completely different, and so is their relationship to me. I know Deacon Willkom sees the same thing. I see the power and influence of true Catholic-Christian community. Let's continue to provide that home, that refuge for one another, and for those who need us in the times to come.

Blessings and best wishes! See you when I return from Italy! Love and prayers,