

From My Rectory Window...



I got a chance to spend some blissfully silent time in our adoration Chapel this past week and I found it to be very relaxing and reflective as I regarded the holy presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with all the other adorers who likewise were dynamically silent and prayerful. It got so relaxed a couple of times that the afternoon calm and the hum of the small fan had me catching myself as I felt myself getting a little “too relaxed”. During a retreat at St. Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, quite a few years ago, the wizened old Trappist Monk who spoke to us was asked what we should do about the phenomenon of dozing off during prayer. To our amazement and even amusement, he emphatically stated that we should offer a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to God! How’s that for Divine Intimacy with the Almighty? Seriously however, may I recommend **all** our Parishioners to be making a regular visit to our Adoration Chapel during the weekdays when we have the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Why not join the regular adorers as He *waits* for us? Why not pay Him this special attention? Apropos of getting a bit of rest, I am finally hoping to take a few days off after all the Easter festivities just to get a breather. It’s important to do this every so often so that your mind remains sharp and your perspective clear. Weariness can cloud things and so I’ll be gone for just a few days, with a retreat to follow at the end of June (also an absolute spiritual necessity for any cleric). I will however make one exception and it will be for the reception and investiture of new Altar Servers for our Parish at the Ten A.M. Mass this weekend. Over these last 43 years (I can’t believe it’s going to be that long!) the formation of youngsters to serve at the Altar has always been a great devotion of mine and I must say that it can be most rewarding, especially when the youngsters grow up to be close to the mystery of the Mass and the Holy Eucharist. Now in the last twenty-five years or so we also have the young ladies serving. Anywhere I have been, I always put them under the protection of Our Lady (hence the blue and white attire) and pray that their love for the Mass and the Church will only become more enhanced. Perhaps a mighty prayer warrior, or a vital person in society in administration, or in various careers (why not a future President of the United States even, who will give a very Catholic Christian Witness). Perhaps even a consecrated religious Sister or a devoted wife and Godly mother of a Catholic family we just never know what will happen in the lives of the young ones we invest and set aside for this very special work in the Parish. We welcome our young boys who for long centuries, assisted the Priest at the Altar, perhaps helping discernment towards a Priestly vocation or the various careers which can be enhanced by a deep commitment to the Church’s mission to the world in many ways. We dress the lads in the same way as they have always been for centuries, plain old black and white, just as we clergy wear (some parishes used to wear red, but I like to keep to the older tradition). God knows who we may be receiving among these youngsters and what they will become. To serve Mass is to eclipse the privileges of the Angels who sing and worship, but cannot physically serve at the Altar and directly assist in the Divine Worship. Angels are certainly present, but as they have no bodies, they cannot hold a cruet of wine or ring a bell to announce the consecration at Mass. Our young servers can and we always emphasize to them this great privilege. Congratulations to our brand-new servers and a special thank you to their good Parents who bring them and encourage them. And a very special thank you also to our training crew: Jim Crisafi, David and Debbie Milecki, who handle our Junior servers. Deacon Pete Downing and I deal with the older ones, teaching them how to serve for the greater more complex liturgies. We should have some older youngsters advance to “Senior Acolyte” during the summer as they are entering High School. Enjoying the balmy weather with you as we move towards the Pentecost climax of our fifty days of Easter. See you in a few days. Peace and all good things.

Your Pastor and servant: Father Pat Papalia