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June 25, 2020

Dear Parishioners;

I wanted to update you about a few pieces of art that are in the works for the parish. We have the "Glass Art" that is being prepared for the Grotto and we have the stained glass window honouring St. Theresa and we need to make some decisions about the next stained glass window once St. Theresa is in place. (I spoke with the artists about some etched glass for the side foyer windows. He could etch the CWL and KofC logos and mottos and have them in place while we wait for the stained glass windows, but I would like to consult with the groups before going ahead.)

For the grotto; we knew that we wanted to create a space where people would feel invited to come and rest a while. We also wanted to provide an experience where the person would feel that their prayers would be heard and so that the person would leave with a renewed sense of hope. Is that asking too much? It sure sounds like a lot.

We of course wanted to make it a shrine dedicated to Mary, but we wanted more than just a statue, and we wanted to be able to make it vandal proof, or at least as much as possible.

And it turned out that a sister of a parishioner works in the medium called Glass Art where she uses colored glass to create a mosaic. The benefit of this medium is that it lays flat and it can be protected with a sheet of Plexiglas. We will install motion sensor lighting and we will coat the rock of the Grotto with a sealant that won't allow paint or other materials to stick to it so it will allow for easy clean up.

Now, Pope Francis promoted a Marian devotion that was new to a lot of us but that has really been able to inspire hope and that devotion is "Mary, the Untier of Knots". As life usually goes, I just googled this

devotion and it is known as both Untier and Udoer of Knots. So we'll have to get that right. But the point is still the same. The work that we have commissioned is an artistic rendition of the famous Icon.

Now on to the next stained glass window. I am sure that we all agree that once the St. Theresa window is finished and installed, a window on the south side must be next, to help cut down the sun if for no other reason. And I am sure that you would agree that the two windows at the front and on either side of the sanctuary should be windows that pertain to the life of Jesus. The preliminary plans are to have a scene depicting the empty tomb in the window next to the tabernacle. The scene of the empty tomb assures us of the Risen Christ who is present in the Eucharist that we keep safe in the tabernacle. So that makes sense.

And the window opposite at the front, is going to be a window that depicts the Holy Family around the time of Jesus' birth. That way we are able to honor Mary and Joseph as well in the one window. Just so you know, the scene of the empty tomb will also have Mary as the central figure, as the one who is not surprised that the tomb is empty and that Jesus has fulfilled His promises.

Which brings us to the two back windows. The parish is so good at providing for the needs of the least of our sisters and brothers that having a window that depicts the call to service would fit right into the church setting. The process hasn't gotten far enough for me to be able to say exactly what will be in that window, but a scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan gives you an idea of what I mean for that window.

Which brings me to the south west window, at the back of the church on the right side. When I first arrived in the parish and we knew that there was going to be a major renovation, I was sent to a liturgy workshop put on by the National Office of Liturgy about sacred spaces. I had hoped that they would be able to provide us with some insights about how to proceed with our renovations but, of course, they didn't.

The workshop wasn't on how to *create* sacred spaces but on how to *bless* them. I don't need a workshop for that, I just need the book that tells you how to do it.

But one suggestion that I did get from that workshop was the need to make the setting inviting to people from all nations. But that was all they said. I left the workshop wondering how we could do that short of pinning up flags from around the world. And then I thought we could have the universality of the church reflected in one of the stained glass windows. So the plan has been to have a window that celebrates saints from the different parts of the world. Good idea right? We would pick seven saints who tell the story that the Catholic church has, as Jesus asked, gone out to the whole world making disciples of all the nations.

So why am I telling you all this? The artists and I had begun to design the Holy Family window but considering recent events, it seems to me that the sooner we are able to honor the Universality of our Church the better. I know that the Holy Family has a place of honor ahead of all of us, but we really are a parish that has been blessed with a wide representation of the Church and we should honor that fact as directly as we can. And putting our energy into the "Global Window" now rather than later, would honor the Holy Family who work to protect us all.

I haven't got the designed worked out completely, but the window would celebrate seven different saints. You have to pick a biblical number to start with and that would fit well with in the window and that would work with stained glass. So it seems to me that seven saints would be a good sized group. One saint who would be sure to be included in the window is Kateri Tekakwitha who was an Algonquin–Mohawk laywoman who is know as the Lily of the Mohawks.

Kateri Tekakwitha is an obvious choice as she represents a huge part of the church as a First Nations, Indigenous woman who was born in the US and served God in New France which is now called Canada.

But how do we go about picking the other six saints? We would do well to look at saints from Africa, Asia and India to start of course. So if you have any suggestions I would love to hear them. Not only should the window celebrate our racial diversity, it should be a balance of women and men, old and young.

Now, the news from back home has not been good. My mom is holding her own but my sister Sheilagh has taken a turn for the worse. Last week her chemotherapy was halted as the cancer has spread unabated and they are making plans for a bed in hospice.

Every time I communicate with Sheilagh, I let her know how often I am asked about her and how often I am assured of your prayers for Sheilagh and her two girls. Sheilagh was diagnosed with stage four abdominal cancer last June and so we have been praying for a miracle since then.

The fact is, we Catholics are people of miracles. Catholics always pray for the big one because we know who we are talking to. Praying for the big miracle is also what prepares us for whatever may come. So once we are sure that we have made our hopes known to the Lord, we are better able to recognize the daily compensating graces that God provides, especially when God knows that what is best for the ones we love, is to return home.

My sister Sheilagh has enjoy an abundance of blessings everyday of this difficult journey and she has been grateful for every act of grace and kindness, from God and all those who have shared her journey and especially in the smallest of ways. She has fought the good fight and will continue to until the dawn of her next life. I know I can trust in your prayers for Mom and the family and Sheilagh's two girls for the next while and I know your prayers will help us with the weight of this cross.

May God be gracious to us and bless us, now and forever.

Pat Monette/Pastor