A LEAP OF FAITH

Many have expressed great enthusiasm and interest in our leap of faith for building the St. Joseph Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Chapel.

The Lord put this holy endeavor or project on my heart. I am following the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When I first arrived at St. Mary’s the Lord strongly urged me to do a Corpus Christi Procession in downtown East Dubuque. I argued with the Lord telling Him, “Lord it doesn’t make sense - its too early, they will not understand this. Several lifetime parishioners have never seen one… it is Father’s Day weekend with a pancake breakfast in East Dubuque, the Halvorson’s are having a Mass up in the school for an anniversary and that will be much of the community, I don’t have a Deacon or a Processional Canopy. Lord, no one will come, etc.….” After a few days and a few weeks left for preparation, I told the Lord “Okay, I will do it.”

Would you believe it? 85 people processed with the Lord for Corpus Christi in 2006. The Lord gave me a deacon immediately, who just happened to stop by the rectory without any prompting. I was also given, at no cost, a Eucharist Canopy for procession. We went up and down Montgomery Avenue. We marched by the strip bars and then back into the Church. The Lord taught me in the beginning, as a priest, to trust in His Providence, especially when its come to the Power of the Eucharist.

The Lord is pushing for this chapel. He urged me to get this together within a year. So I started. Many things have come into place without much effort on my part. We have an architect and project manager at no cost to our parish. Others have stopped by the rectory to assist. In fact, a few days ago one gentleman said he would do the excavation and top soil as a gift. The Lord has provided for the interior with minimal costs. Already a few weeks into our fundraising efforts and we have over a $132,000.00. (This is not including the pledges.)

In today’s secular world so many countless souls have neglected and even rejected the gift of the Eucharist. The Agony Jesus suffered in the Garden was knowing that in The Eucharist He would be rejected by so many and appreciated by so few. The Catholic Church has always taught The Holy Eucharist IS the source, center and summit of our glorious Faith. If we make Him the center of our parish through Perpetual Adoration, He will bless our parish and community in countless ways; both present and future. BUT we are called to live by FAITH. We are all called to Trust in the Lord. He wants this chapel and He will provide for its being built and maintenance in the future, regardless of who is pastor. God is with us now and He will be with us in the future. We have only one life to show Him our love and exercise the virtue of Faith. All of us are taking a leap of faith with this project.

Fr. Edmund McCaffrey, who gave our parish mission about 4 years ago, told me a story about projects and faith. He said that several lay people, priests and Cardinal Carberry of St. Louis had a meeting about a certain project. (I think sometime in the 1970’s). Most of those present, including the Cardinal, didn’t think it could be done. Fr. John A. Hardon, who is Servant of God, spoke up and said, “CARDINAL where is your Faith?” The Cardinal agreed it was weak. He changed his mind solely based on faith. The project was a success. If we live constantly on the natural level without faith in Almighty God and His power very little is accomplished for the Lord.

We don’t know the future. I would like to be here at St. Mary’s Parish for many years. The Lord may grant my desire He may not. But do you realize that in the last 5 years with just one-hour of adoration, Monday through Saturday, many blessings have occurred? We have eliminated our parish debt, replaced our old parking lot, built a new bell tower, replaced the soffit around the Church, improved our sanctuary significantly, increased school enrollment by 20% and have seen the strip bars in our community close down. Wait and see what will happen when Jesus is adored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I can’t wait to see. It will be incredible! Almighty God will bless all of us abundantly for taking this leap of faith.

Servant of our Eucharistic Lord and King,

Fr. Parker