



Bits and pieces



(continued) . .

“When earthly time intersects with eternal time, AND the Tallmadge Circle Fest!”

(what do these have in common?)

and . . .

Celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

and . . .

Blessing of the “new” Pavilion (along with Coffee and Donuts)

“HATS OFF” to the Tallmadge Chamber of Commerce and the City of Tallmadge for another WONDERFUL Circle Fest! ALL involved are to be commended since it is an event that I do believe not only the residents of Tallmadge, but folks from

around the area, look forward to each and every year. I, along with so many of you, get to be with “thousands” of my closest friends in an area that throughout the year, just does not look as if it can hold that many people, tents, food vendors, entertainers, etc., BUT IT DOES! And of course, there is the highlight of the wonderful fire works display . . . which, all I need to do is look out my front door to see and experience these (since they are shot off right across the street). Unfortunately, it becomes a TRAUMATIC event for Ziggy . . . not ever a good experience for her, nor most dogs/pets . . . but, she is recovered now!

As I traveled to the Circle with Linda Herold this year (and in the past), I was reminded of how much this simple, but fun/annual event means to so many . . . just by the sheer number of people . . . but also by the HUNDREDS of chairs that were in place around the circle (some, from early morning so that folks could claim their favorite spot) and, already at slightly before/after 6:00 PM, MANY people sitting in those chairs, on those blankets, enjoying food, company and one another and simply WAITING for the nearly 3 HOURS before the Parade of Lights begins, followed by the Fireworks! Yes, reminded of how much this means to so many . . . and frankly, AMAZED! Amazed that that kind of “meaning” translates into serious efforts to stake out a place . . . and then WAIT patiently . . . for hours . . . for the highlight of such an event to unfold and take place.

That certainly is what so many are willing to give of “earthly time” to an “earthly event” . . .

Which then, for me, BEGS the question: are we willing to give that kind of “earthly time” to intersect and meet God in “eternal time”? Truthfully, I find that the answer to that question seems to be “no” for many.

The MOST perfect prayer . . . the MOST significant event when, in fact, “earthly time intersects with eternal time” IS the celebration of EUCHARIST . . . beyond a doubt . . . part of our Tradition and Faith and Belief . . . you and I, each time we gather for the celebration of Eucharist . . . that TIME we give God is when our gift of “earthly time” (which is limited) intersects with God’s “eternal time” . . . it is AWESOME! A pure act of love on the part of God . . . a literal miracle each time this happens . . .

How many of us, if we had to, would get to Church EARLY so we could “save our space” for the event to take place . . . like so many do for Circle Fest? How many of us, if we chose to, would get to our places in Church 3 HOURS before, so we could settle in (with God); spend some time enjoying God’s company? How many of who have taken up their positions around the Circle . . . and waited for the Parade of Lights/Fire Works, would leave before the Parade is over because it was just “too long”, to our liking or opinion . . . How many of us would walk away from time with the Lord in the celebration of Eucharist, again, because it is just “too long” (translated, “too much time given to the Lord in one sitting”)?

I think these are some significant questions to continually reflect upon . . . since, after all, we spend “lots of earthly time” on many things . . . work, school,

chores, sleep, TV, entertainment . . . and none of those necessarily intersect with “eternal time” . . . at least, NEVER in the same way the celebration of Eucharist does?

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“Is there anyone sick among you? He should ask for the presbyters of the church. They in turn are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name [of the Lord]. This prayer uttered in faith will reclaim the one who is ill.” – *James 5:14-15*

And so, the early Church came to understand that Christ’s mission of reaching out to the sick and suffering to bring healing and comfort to them was to continue through the sacraments of the Church, in particular, through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

At the ALL of the Masses the weekend of September 9th/10th, we will, once again, offer this Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, a weekend closest to the Church’s celebration of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, a Feast that reminds us of the contradiction of this sacred symbol in our Christian faith: a human tool of suffering and death that was divinely transformed, becoming a symbol of sacrificial love, hope, and the promise of new and eternal life.

So, just who are candidates for this Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick? The Church tells us that, “The sacrament of anointing is the proper sacrament for those Christians whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age.” – *art. 97*, but it also states that:

- “A sick person may be anointed before surgery . . .” *art. 9*
- “Elderly people may be anointed if they become notably weakened even though no serious illness is present.” *art. 10*
- “Sick children may be anointed if they have sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by this sacrament.” *art. 11*
- “Those who are judged to have a serious mental illness and who would be strengthened by the sacrament may be anointed.” *art. 52*

Why celebrate this at the weekend liturgies? [There are] “two complementary aspects of the sacrament: through the sacrament of anointing the Church supports the sick in their struggle against illness and continues Christ’s messianic work of healing. All who are united in the common bond of baptism and a common faith are joined together in the body of Christ since what happens to one member affects all.” – *art. 98*

Additionally, “the sacrament of the anointing of the sick should be celebrated with members of the family and other representatives of the Christian community whenever this is possible. Then the sacrament is seen for what it is – a part of the prayer of the Church and an encounter with the Lord. The sign of the sacrament will be further enhanced by avoiding undue haste in prayer and action.” – *art. 99*

Isn’t this the “last rites”? No. In fact, the Church discourages “delaying the reception of the sacrament” in order that “the celebration takes place while the sick person is capable of active participation.” – *art. 99*

The celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick the weekend of 9/10 September will be a great opportunity to reach out to those who are candidates for this sacrament and perhaps bring them to Church, so that, among members of the body of Christ, they might not only experience the power of this sacrament, but the power of the Christian community gathered together in prayer.

At all of the Masses the weekend of September 9th/10th, there will be front pews for those who are physically impaired and wish to sit closer, and specifically for those who will be seeking to be anointed during Mass. For any who wish to be anointed but may be sitting elsewhere and are unable to come forward, once all who have come forward to be anointed are anointed, the Priest/Presider will go to them to anoint them before concluding this particular ritual.

For those who wish to celebrate the sacrament of penance prior to being anointed, you are encouraged to do so during the normal scheduled times.

In the words of Saint Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, “If one member suffers, all members suffer with it;” – 1 Corinthians 12:26 (part.)

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“HATS OFF” (too) to GARRETT FLEMING and the many volunteers who assisted Garret in completing the Pavilion (located on the North end of the property, next to the Church building).

If you have NOT yet seen it . . . it is a great addition to our Parish grounds . . .

And, deserving of a bit of a celebration and of course a BLESSING . . .

So, on SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH (following the 9:00 and 11:00 AM Masses), there will be Coffee and Donuts UNDER THE PAVILION. And, for any who join others after the 11:00 AM Mass, we will also have an opportunity to thank and recognize Garrett Fleming and at least some of the volunteers as well as Bless the new Pavilion . . . hope to see you there.

Sincerely yours in ChristFr. Mike