

Fr. Jason's Wishful Thinking... The Attack of the Asian Beetles and Cemetery News

For those of you who attend Mass at St. Joseph every weekend, or even occasionally, you may notice that twice a year we have some uninvited guests that make their presence known... the "Asian beetle". They look like ladybugs, but these little critters bite! For years, they grew familiar with some cracks and crevices over the Northwest transept of the church (over St. Jude and St. Theresa) where we recently installed a stained glass window. That narrow opening way up there was the source of much blindness on Saturday evenings... when the sun would shine brightly through it to the frustration of many church-goers. So last year, Mr. Sam Corso made two stained glass panels and we installed them in each transept window. While the sun still shines through the glass, the addition of the Krinklglass panels two years ago, and the additional of the stained glass windows has helped to keep people happy during the Saturday vigil Mass. It also helps to keep the church cooler during the summer months.

However, the Asian beetles were surprised a few weeks ago to see a small Sicilian man scaling a ladder on the outside of the church and looking at them face to face outside of the window. Over the last eight years, I have noticed water leaks in both of the transepts, and we finally pinpointed the problem... those two windows way up there were never caulked when the church was built 12 years ago. So the little Sicilian man (who wishes to remain nameless... but it is NOT me... I have a fear of heights!) climbed up to the first window last year to caulk it, thus fixing our water leak problem when we had a wind-driven rain. It stayed wet for a long time and we couldn't get a lift on the other side of the church, so the little Sicilian man got up there on two ladders with the help of his Sicilian dad to get the second window caulked! So now, the Asian beetles don't know what to do, because their normal entry and escape has been permanently closed, leaving thousands of them dead in the window. So if you see them in church, it's because of the fact that they don't know where to go... or how to get out! We keep vacuuming them up, hoping to keep their population under control and eliminating them. We have employed the use of a robot vacuum cleaner to help us in the endeavor. Meanwhile, we can talk about the attack of the Asian beetles!

I am pleased to update you on a few things this week. As you read a few weeks ago, we have an ambitious construction year ahead of us. We have some HVAC work to do at St. Stephen, as well as working on the back parking lot to get it fully paved with concrete. We need some good weather to get this job done, as well as getting the new concrete slab poured at St. Joseph for the bus. That will also allow me to get the St. Vincent de Paul pantry finished, because right now, it is a big mud hole to get in there! We need some good weather without rain!

Yesterday (Thursday) we made some good progress at Head of Island in the cemetery. We employed a few men to concrete between several graves in the old section of the cemetery and along one part of the fence to eliminate some of the tight spots that were hard to weed-eat and cut. I dropped off preliminary plans for the new chapel to Mr. Danny Kais at Sigma Engineering so we can get architectural renderings to present to the Diocese in the near future. I am actively working on a small campaign to get the chapel built, and after we get some proper drawings and quotes, I will put together a four-page insert that has the cost of everything and I will solicit donations for it, just as we did for the bus two years ago. I think that everyone will be pleased with the replacement chapel for Head of Island, which will be 1/3 of the size of the old one, built on a concrete slab on a hill in the middle of the cemetery, and feature some beautiful art. I want to thank the Guitreau family, the St. Joseph Ladies Altar Society, and the St. Stephen Parish Council for supporting our efforts to secure stained glass windows in honor of our cluster patrons: St. Joseph, St. Stephen, and St. Vincent Ferrer which will be featured behind the sanctuary of the new chapel. There will be several other pieces of art in the chapel, but