

As I write my weekly column, there is a massive winter storm of epic proportions tearing its way through the Midwest and quickly headed for the Northeast. Blizzard conditions will be experienced from Chicago to New York State. On its heels is another storm developing in the south which will bring wintry weather to the Mid-Atlantic region this weekend. Why am I writing about the wintry weather to our north? Because we are experiencing some incredibly mild Mid-December weather. As a matter of fact, our daytime high temperatures will hover around 80 degrees for the next seven days. If there was ever a great reason why so many choose to winter in Southwest Florida, this would be a prime example.



How do you like the new missal covers we have introduced? These clear covers will protect the missals so at the end of next November they will not be mutilated. In addition, I worked with our missal vendor and was able to obtain the covers at no cost to

the parish. We feel the covers will present a much cleaner appearance in the pews as we move through the liturgical year. Thanks to Tucker Coon and his crew for assembling the missals for use.

I received a call several weeks ago from the daughter of one of our long time parishioners. She expressed to me that she and her siblings wanted to do something to honor their parents this Christmas rather than purchasing them something that they really didn't need or want. She asked if there was anything I could suggest to satisfy their request. She further explained that her parents deeply love St. John the Evangelist parish. I explained to her that we were purchasing a much needed Nativity Scene for the Altar and that they might consider making a gift towards this. After conferring with her brothers and sisters, she contacted me and explained that we would be receiving four separate gifts from each of the kids towards the purchase of the Nativity in honor of their parents. I have to say that this was a brilliant idea and a magnificent way for the children to honor their parents. I am confident that all in our parish will appreciate the beautiful new Nativity to be introduced this Christmas.

We have been issuing a parish calendar for as long as I can remember. It has always been a generic calendar with some type of religious art for each particular month. For 2010, we are going to incorporate something different. We have countless ministries within our parish. We thought it would be a great idea to include photos of the volunteers participating in these ministries for our calendar. If you are the representative of one of our parish ministries, have not yet been contacted and would like to have your picture included in our calendar, please organize your ministry members and meet in the Parish Life Center prior to 12:00 noon on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately we are working under very tight deadlines with respect to the printing of our calendar.

We have just over one month remaining to reach our goal in the 2009 Catholic Faith Appeal. We are currently less than \$90,000 shy of reaching our goal. Our parishioners are truly doing everything possible in order to allow us to meet with success. If we reach our goal I will be ecstatic although I am a realist and know that the odds are stacked against us. As I have said for the last couple of weeks, if any of our parishioners have the wherewithal to make a year end gift towards the CFA, it will assist us greatly. Thanks you again to everyone that has given so generously to bring us closer to our goal.

Have you driven by the church after dark or attended an evening meeting this past week? Our maintenance staff has installed thousands of lights around the Royal Palm trees at the entrance on 111<sup>th</sup> avenue. In addition, they have illuminated the courtyard and the entrance to the Parish Life Center. How were we able to illuminate the massive trees in front of our campus, you may be asking. We did some maintenance work on the lights in the ceiling of the church a little over a week ago and had access to the lift over the weekend. Many thanks are in order to Bob Clark and Ray Abele for their persistence in installing the nearly 15,000 lights.

The following is a reminder that bishop Dewane will be speaking at Faith & Ale this coming Wednesday:

Faith & Ale is a once a month gathering of men from across the diocese. They gather for food, drink and camaraderie, followed by an inspirational speaker and ample time for questions and answers. One such very inspirational speaker will be joining us in the ballroom on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. **The Most Reverend Frank J. Dewane, Bishop of the Diocese of Venice** will be the featured speaker at the next meeting. All men are invited – the saints, the sinners and everyone in between. If you are interested in the implications of our faith and morality on our daily lives, families and society, please join us! The mission statement of Faith & Ale is as follows: Faith & Ale strives to encourage, exhort and equip men to be spiritual leaders in their homes, workplaces and parishes. Please see the insert in this bulletin for further details.

In His work together,  
Scott Schlossberg, MBA  
General Manager