

St. Joseph

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 African Apostolate

Rev. Jean M. Lemay
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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Five years ago, I learned that there's never a dull moment at the Cathedral! Even during the summer, this place is active. And that's a wonderful thing.

This week, we welcomed four Felician Sisters here for their annual directed retreat. The Sisters stayed at Saint Hedwig Convent and came to the rectory for their conferences and Mass in the "Sisters' Chapel." As you may remember, there was a group of four Felician Sisters here for the same reason in June.

I can't remember how long I've had the privilege to lead the retreat for the Sisters, but every year, I feel enriched by their reflection and insights. My older brother and I were taught by the Felician Sisters in elementary school (he, for two years; I, for eight), and so there's a special place in my heart for the Congregation. Little did I realize upon graduation that they would still be contributing to my spiritual formation—and yet, they are! I love doing these retreats because, as much as I feel I'm offering something back to the Congregation, it's also a chance for me to share again in the treasury of spiritual insight that they offer.

A topic that needs to be addressed is the recent *motu proprio* of the Holy Father concerning the restoration of the Tridentine Mass. Although priests could always celebrate this Mass with the permission of the local Bishop, the Holy Father has extended the right to celebrate this form of the Mass to any priest in any church throughout the world. The Holy Father speaks beautifully about his desire to respond to those who have left the Church or who have not retained a deep spiritual attachment to the former rite.

Let me make this clear. The Holy Father is not attempting to turn back the clock or reverse the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. Rather, for the sake of unity and reverence, he is restoring an incorporating a rite that was never abrogated. He has also made it clear that the Tridentine Mass is an *extraordinary*, not the *ordinary* form of the Mass which *may* be used. There is no mandate that demands its use, nor may it be celebrated more than once in any given day—although it may be celebrated daily.

The prescription of the Holy Father notes that we may not introduce this until the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross on September 14. I'm grateful for that since, if it is to be reinstated here, we need time to train the servers and admittedly, I'm going to have to brush up on my Latin, since another requirement of the *motu proprio* notes that the priest has to know what he's saying. That's always helpful, don't you think?

The long and the short of it is that as of September 14, we have the permission to celebrate the former rite, although we are not under compunction to do so. I'll be in consultation with the pastoral council and a variety of people from the parish (and you can certainly dash me an e-mail with your thoughts at rectornh145@verizon.net). In the meantime, I'll try to do a little catechesis in the bulletin so that our decisions aren't based simply on emotion, but rather on fact and spiritual need.

As we begin to look at the celebration of our 125th anniversary as the Cathedral church, we're hoping for many events to engage and excite our parishioners and the members of the larger diocesan community. I'm always open to ideas, so don't be afraid to share some possibilities with me. It's going to be *our* celebration, so let's prepare it together!

Until next week...God bless!

Fr. Joe