

The Pastor would like to say something.

Since this is the First Sunday of Advent, the beginning of our new liturgical year and therefore the beginning of our journey together for this year at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, I can't let the opportunity pass to find some way to communicate with you. Although I can't be with you this Sunday, as your pastor I want you to hear my voice. As your pastor, I want you to hear the voice of our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, through my voice as, hopefully, you normally would. So, while this isn't a homily at Mass, and while I can't speak to you face to face, I thought I might at least give you a little reflection along with a little news, as I have reflected on this Sunday's readings.

The Fall of this man.

For those who haven't heard, or who have only heard a little, on November 9, I took two stairs thinking them one. My patellar tendon did not agree with this move, and so it broke from its traditional mooring on my kneecap. This ruptured the usual movement of my leg, since, as we know, every part of the body is important, and required surgery to repair on November 17. Before and since that surgery, I have been sitting in a chair with my leg up and various forms of ice and medication to control swelling, to dull pain, and to promote healing. But tendons heal slowly.

Oh, I'm not only in the chair. I have crutches and I need to get up frequently to keep the blood flowing and to promote healing. But I also have a brace locked straight. This is a very good way to understand the importance of a bending knee, and not only for praying! But I am really not moving very far or very fast. So, please don't worry about me too much. I'm on the mend.

Make no provision.

But what's a person to do with St. Paul's parting shot for this Sunday? "Make no provision for the desires of the flesh." I understand that he is especially talking about inordinate desires like the ones he mentions: lust, jealousy, inordinate appetites and the like. But what about my flesh, which has suddenly made demands of me which seem to keep me almost entirely from the work to which I have been assigned (except for the deskwork, where, by the way, I have been making excellent headway!) What am I to do with a body that now demands almost all of my attention because of one little broken part?

It's incarnational.

Imagine being the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, the Divine Son, and contemplating what we commemorate during this season. Here is the Word, through whom the Father created all things, taking upon himself human nature. Human nature, which takes nine months of gestation to go from a helpless conceptus to an almost equally helpless newborn. Who, though fully possessing the Divine Nature, must wait around thirty years before manifesting his first sign at the wedding of Cana. All the while, the wiring and structure of his human nature are

only developing so that in a short three years he will be able to carry the weight of the world to his glory.

Healing.

So, what am I to do? Like the Son of Man, I must be obedient. To my doctors, to the bishop who told me to listen to my doctors, and even to this mule my body who commands me with braying pain. I call it healing, but that may not be the most important activity I do during this time. I am confident, as always, of what St. Paul says in Romans, "We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." (8:28) I am confident that God has some plan for this time. (Even if I am not confident that this fall was according to my plan, or even necessarily to his, but more likely the result of my own haste and inattentiveness.) I call it healing. I call it sitting around. I call it waiting. I call it Advent.

11.27.16