

## Why I Am Catholic – Building on our Rich Faith

This month marks the two year anniversary of this section of our Bulletin Notes. Each week reflection is given and information provided about an important aspect of the faith. Of what it means to be Catholic. This column seeks to present the rich heritage of our faith while also asking that we never take it for granted.

This section in particular is part of my teaching role as pastor. To pass on and preserve the faith. It also seeks to address the church's concern about the casual attitudes of our time on sacred and important things. Foundational and necessary beliefs are under attack by some and devalued by others. The absolute irrefutable truth of God is being discarded as a thing of the past. Even by some in our churches.

To defend our faith we must know our faith. The first way we safeguard it is by living the faith through the conduct of our lives, attitudes, deeds, and actions. Then by our words and our efforts to teach, explain, and offer moral advice and correction. All of that is rooted in our practice of the faith and our life of prayer.

We cannot have one foot in heavenly things and one foot in worldly things. And we cannot live for momentary pleasures and eternal rewards. Christ constantly warns against this. We are called to live in the world, but to not be of the world. To resist temptations that only lead to trouble; to avoid things that take our eyes off of Christ.

"Watch carefully then how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise, making the most of the opportunity... try to understand what is the will of the Lord." (Eph 5:15-17) St. Paul is speaking cautiously to members of the Church. Some have started drifting spiritually. Others have become very casual and "spiritually lazy." Some also have fallen back into living very worldly lives and coming to church infrequently.

Christ's strongest admonition/warning is against the lukewarm: "So because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:16) We must be vigilant and build ourselves spiritually now.

"I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, listens to my words, and acts on them. That one is like a person building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock' when the flood came, the river burst against the house but could not shake it because it had been well built." (Lk 7:47-48)

The goal of this section is to inform, to inspire, to challenge, and to help each of us have a strong spiritual house in our hearts and souls. We must do the maintenance! As the question goes; "Is your spiritual house in order?" Can it withstand the floods of life? Spiritual termites? Spiritual neglect?

My hope is that this section "Why I am Catholic" has inspired you to reflect on your faith. If you would like to share, please send a note or e-mail. What about our faith is special to you. We will include it in a future bulletin with your permission.