

Pastor's Final Remarks – June 11, 2011
Mass of Dedication at the Vigil Mass of Pentecost

Your Eminence, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Your Excellencies, Auxiliary Bishops Louis DeSimone and Daniel Thomas, my brother priests, deacons and religious, reverend clergy of other faiths, Pennsylvania and Buckingham Township civil dignitaries, my dear parishioners, family and friends:

The grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! “I rejoiced when I heard them say, ‘Let us go up to the house of the Lord. And now we have set foot within your gates, O Jerusalem, built with compact unity!’” (Psalm 122) These words of King David reflect accurately our sentiments this evening. David goes on to sing of how all go up according to God’s decree to give Him thanks. I offer for you this thought because in the place of worship of which David spoke there were set up judgment seats. While I cannot speak for those seats, I can tell you our seats and pews have real, padded kneelers! Just in case if some of you parishioners might wondering what are those grey things on the floor in front of you. I am reminded of my dearly beloved mother, of happy memory, on an occasion such as this, she could be heard saying, “So get your feet off of the furniture! That’s not a trampoline and this is not a gym!” Maybe just as appropriate after we dirtied the furniture or broke something, “You see this is why we can’t have anything good around here!”

To almighty God the Father, through His Son our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be praise, glory and honor now and

forever. On behalf of Father Quinn, Deacons Robert Gohde and Robert Ianelli, the entire parish I thank you Your Eminence, Cardinal Rigali, for your trust in us, your encouragement and support to make this day a reality. I also acknowledge with gratitude Cardinal Bevilacqua for having the vision to found our parish in July of 2000; Father Joseph Quindlen, our founding pastor and Father McDermott, our first Assistant Pastor. While the list of names is endless and to name particular individuals would keep us here all night with regard to all those who made this day possible, I am so grateful to all the members of the parish who over the years have been a part of the living stones of this wonderful Catholic Faith community.

- Those who have made today's celebration possible, it was a huge, collaborative effort on the part of so many: our ever faithful and hardworking office staff, the ministries and services associated with the liturgy, the ushers, the combined choirs and musicians directed by Paula Furman, all those involved with the reception under the direction of Tony and Judy Quattrone;
- I am grateful to all those associated and who with the Architects at KCBA, Adams Bickel and Associates Construction Company, Gilmore and Associates Engineering, as well as all those associated with Buckingham Township.
- I especially am grateful to all the artisans who worked in association with Anthony Visco, Liturgical Art Consultant.
- Special credit goes to all those parishioners who have stayed so loyal and faithful to our parish community, never becoming too discouraged;
- Those who have served on the various liturgical committees, services and ministries, especially the members of the Set Up and Take Down Committee;

- All the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Building Committee, both Campaign Committees, all the Sub-committees for this celebration;
- Those who have given of their time, talent and treasure;
- We remember in a special way, those souls of the faithful departed who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith, who lived in patient anticipation for this day and who we now have the sure and certain hope of their intercession for us, from the best view in the church.

Robert Frost wrote an intriguing poem in 1923, entitled, “*Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening.*” It is a poem that Sister Mary Alma, a Sister of Saint Joseph, required of me and my classmates to commit to memory, in the third grade. I would imagine that we along with so many others of the baby boomer generation were required to memorize it as well, as a part of our English Language Skills training for elementary school. Many of you may recall it:

Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening

*Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.*

*My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.*

*He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.*

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.*

The poem recounts the thoughts of a tired, inquisitive traveler on a horse drawn sleigh who pauses to rest for just a moment on the darkest evening of the year and to take note of the beauty of the snow following upon the ground in the lovely, dark and deep woods. The poem expresses the ever present interplay and challenge between a world offering perfect quiet and solitude, which exists side by side with the realization that there is another world, a world of people and social obligations. From a religious perspective we may liken this challenge to our call to holiness or conversion, this is our pilgrimage in faith here on earth. The challenges we face with regard to contemplation and action, the challenge posed to us as a parish community this very day of building upon and proclaiming our foundation in faith, as we stir into flame the gift of God!

While the traveler in the poem stopped on that cold December 21st, the winter solstice, just shortly after the celebration of our Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12th, and just shortly before the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, so now we gather in another context and season of the year, on a warm day in June, just 50 days past the celebration of Easter and just prior to the summer solstice, longest day of the year, June 21st.

As travelers in our journey in faith, we stop and pause on our path, for just a moment in our history, to gaze upon the beauty of this church, so lovely adorned, so dark in the sense of great potential beauty yet to be finished, commissioned, designed and built. It is so deep in the richness of God's ever abundant grace to be

poured out to each one of us as we come to worship here. Remember though, it is but a moment in our history. In the near future I will be sharing with you the artistic designs for various appointments like the stations of the cross, the side shrines, the baptistery and chapel, to name but a few, not to mention the parish ministry center and eventually lower end of our property. Some of these projects are already commissioned; others await donors and opportunities to be commissioned. There are still many memorial opportunities of which you will hear about in the near future. And so I echo and take poetic license with regard to the final thoughts of the inquisitive traveler, “This church is lovely dark and deep, but we have miles to go before we sleep, and miles to go before we sleep.”

May those miles be filled with God’s graces and blessings along the path we travel. And in taking literary license once again in the words of the Traditional Gaelic Blessing:

May the road rise up to meet us;

May the wind be always at our backs;

May the sun shine warm upon our faces;

The rains fall soft upon our fields and until we meet again,

(which by the way is next Saturday at 5:00pm, then on Sunday 8, 9:30 and 11 am)

May God hold us in the palm of His hand.

God bless you all and enjoy the rest of the evening as we move on to the tents for refreshments and dinner. Following the blessing and dismissal, you will have an opportunity to meet His Eminence, Cardinal Rigali at the entrance to the tents at the opposite end of the property. As we exit the church behind Cardinal

Rigali, the congregation will all follow in procession to the tents, led by the Knights of Columbus and flag bearers. There you will be able to get some hor'deuvres and refreshment as you go to your places for the buffet dinner.

I will now lead us in Grace Before Meal:

Bless us o Lord and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord. Amen.