

June 2024 / Issue 6

Everything you did not want to know. Not sorry.

CarlosMichael360

“Tacos y Frijoles!”

Published monthly by Carlos Michael Padilla.

www.carlosmichael.com

Table of Contents

“Tacos y Frijoles!”

3	Sunday, June 9, 2024
8	Wednesday, June 12, 2024
8	Saturday, June 15, 2024
8	Wednesday, June 19, 2024
9	Thursday, June 20, 2024
9	Friday, June 21, 2024
10	Saturday, June 22, 2024
11	Sunday, June 23, 2024
13	Wednesday, June 26, 2024
13	Saturday, June 29, 2024
15	Sunday, June 30, 2024

SU 060924 631 AM

Peace be with you!

Here we are nine days into the new month, and I have only now just begun my first entry. Makes sense when you consider how challenging the first nine days have been.

Gary left Saturday morning [moved to Utah]. After sending him off and making last-minute preparations, my son Matthew and I were in the car heading to St. Thomas More Catholic Church (Tulsa) for the June **First Saturday Devotion**. I expected with this being our last FSD together that Fr. Leo would hear confessions and celebrate Mass. Sadly, he was unavailable, however, **Fr. Daniel Gormley**, Associate Pastor at St. Anne's, Broken Arrow filled in for Fr. Leo, as he did in April. We are grateful that he did.

Sunday morning, Matthew and I attended Mass at St. Thomas More. I sang with the choir while Matthew sat in the pew next to Joni. I am glad that Joni sat next to him and that he did not sit alone. After Mass, we spent time with the community in the coffee room. At one point I looked up and watched Matthew serve himself some fruit and a donut while smiling. It was nice to see him [*in that moment*] at peace.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday ... three days I wish we could get back with a different outcome. The events that occurred were a difficult, heart wrenching experience. I saw Matthew fall into a mental disorder of the mind in a way I would never want to see him experience again. Not for myself, but for him. No person should have such an experience.

As was the case in 2021, when, after a month of moving to Oklahoma, Matthew began to hear a voice. A woman's voice. He said this occurred after attending Sunday Mass with me at St. Thomas More. He said, "*She or 'it' followed us home.*"

During the 2021 event, Matthew began to surround himself with crosses. I am ashamed to admit that I did not respond well to this first event. Not in the way that I did this second time around. The main reason for the way I responded in 2021 was because I did not understand what was going on. Hearing voices? Surrounding himself with crosses? Saying, which was the final straw, that the voice wanted him to hurt himself? That is when I drew the line and sought outside professional assistance.

Since Matt was already seeing a therapist, after contacting this individual and explaining what was taking place, he advised me to take Matt to **Laureate Psychiatric Clinic**. I did as I was advised, however, Laureate could not help Matthew. No beds were available. The Laureate representative suggested that we [Joshua and me] take Matt to a facility in Oklahoma City.

I remember thinking to myself, "*Are you nuts!?*" [No pun intended]. *Take him to Oklahoma City? We don't live in Oklahoma City!*"

Naturally, I was visibly upset, but remained courteous and respectful to the Laureate representative. I did not want to risk upsetting her and receiving no type of assistance for Matthew. This was a situation where my stress level was off the chart. Mainly because I was concerned for Matthew.

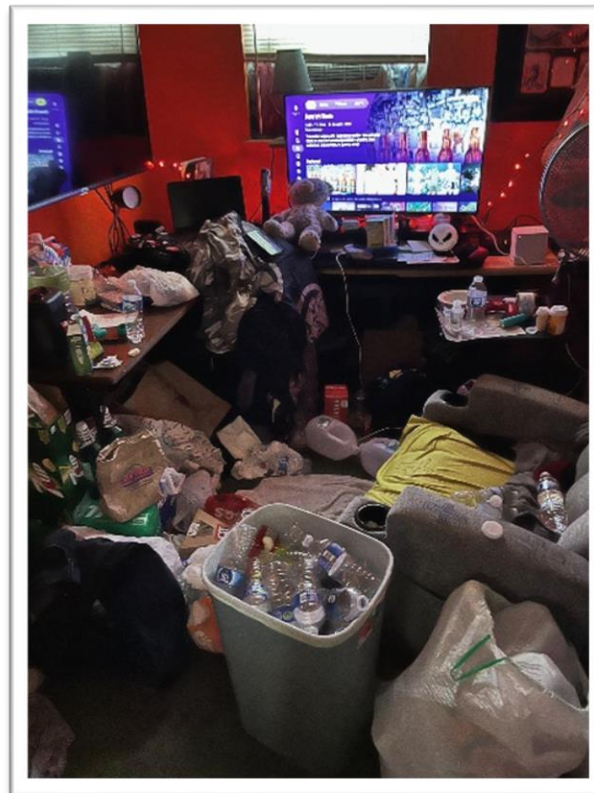
Finally, my youngest son [Joshua] said, "*Dad, let's call **Parkside** and see what they say!*" Parkside was the other local facility that the representative from Laureate had recommended. After speaking with a Parkside representative who consulted with the attending physician based on what we described was taking place with Matthew, Parkside advised us to bring Matthew in for an evaluation. Matthew was 29 years old at the time this even occurred. Long story short, Matthew received the help he needed from Parkside. He was put on medication, **Risperidone** being one of

the medications. The voice stopped and Matt was back to being himself.

Fast forward to six months to a year ago. At that time Matthew decided that he no longer required his medication and stopped taking it. Because he is an adult, there was not much I could do to force him to take the medication. However, I made it clear to Matthew that he should not stop taking his medication without first consulting with his doctor. Matthew did not agree. That made me wonder who he was speaking with at this time on the timeline.

About a week to a week and half prior to Monday, June 3, 2024, I noticed some peculiarities with Matthew. He was no longer watching movies or playing games on his PlayStation 5. He began to withdraw and kept his room dark. He mentioned that “it” was back. He then started watching religious movies and listening to Christian music, mainly because “Jesus” according to Matthew, instructed him to do. At that point, Matthew began to draw crosses on himself, his clothing and the furniture. Of course, I became concerned.

The situation escalated Monday morning, June 3rd. According to Matthew, the voices were becoming louder. It was clear that whatever was going on with my son, in his mind, was represented [his mind I mean] by the condition of his bedroom [see image].



According to Matthew, he had not slept for three days. The bad voice would not let him sleep. That is not good. Lack of sleep is not good for any of us.

In addition to all of that, Matthew began to baptize himself. According to Matthew, Jesus had told him that he needed to baptize himself and induce vomiting to protect himself and expel the darkness that he was convinced was within him. At this point, as was the case in 2021, I knew that I was going to have to get Matthew some help.

This was far beyond my ability to help him [as his father] without professional assistance.

At 6:00 AM Monday morning, I knocked on Joshua’s door, informed him of the situation with his brother and asked for his help with Matthew. With all the commotion, I forgot that it was Monday and Josh was supposed to be at work.

Josh was kind enough to call into work so he could assist me with his brother. After contacting and speaking with his supervisor, Josh sent a text to Michael, my eldest son, informing him of the situation. Joshua then suggested that I send a follow-up text message to

Michael so that he would be aware of the severity of the situation. Michael responded stating that he would be by around 11:00 AM.

At the time of Michael's arrival, Matthew had locked himself in the bathroom. For the next 4 to 5 hours, he proceeded to run the bath water and baptize himself as instructed by Jesus. In his mind, Matthew really believed that he was speaking with Jesus and that this was what he was supposed to do. It wasn't until he began his attempts to induce vomiting that the decision was made to take Matt to Parkside. I called Parkside while Michael was in the restroom with Matthew and explained the situation. Parkside recommended that we bring Matt in for an evaluation.

When the boys [Michael and Joshua] explained to Matthew that he had two choices: go voluntarily to Parkside with us, or we call another agency that would send strangers to the house to remove Matthew from the home to get him the care he needed, which would have been involuntary, he decided on the Parkside option.

However, Matthew stated that he could not leave the house unless he is wearing all white clothing because that is what Jesus had told him. So, off we went, searching the house for any piece of white clothing we could locate. Once outside, Matthew would not enter Michael's vehicle until both the seat and floor were covered by something white. At that point I ran into the house and located both a white sheet and towel, the sheet for the car seat and the towel for the floor. It was only after that when Matthew entered the vehicle.

Joshua rode with me. Matthew rode with Michael. Michael stopped at McDonald's enroute to Parkside to get Matthew something to eat. All Matt wanted was some fruit. Joshua and I arrived ahead of Michael and Matt at Parkside.

When we arrived at Parkside, we got Matthew checked in. It was at that time that I was informed that due to a policy change, Parkside would not be able to provide Matthew with a bed or care because he was now over the age of thirty years old. However, they said that they could evaluate him and based upon that assessment, provide a referral.

Now the wait was on.

We arrived at Parkside sometime after or before 4:00 PM. Matthew did not get called back for the assessment until sometime after 8:00 PM. Michael had already left due to another obligation. I could be off on the timing. So much was going on at the time.

Following the assessment, it was determined by the attending physician, according to the intake representative, that

Matthew should NOT go home. However, because Parkside could not admit Matthew, we were presented with two options: 1) Sit and wait for a bed at another facility, or 2) Take Matthew to the ER. "The ER?" I thought to myself.

Taking Matthew to the emergency room did not make any sense to me, however, at the time, I was willing to do whatever was necessary to get him



the help he needed, and more importantly some sleep.

After discussing the situation with Joshua, and the Parkside Intake Representative who conducted the evaluation who had informed me that after calling around no beds were available elsewhere and that we could possibly have a long wait, I opted, at her recommendation to take Matt to the ER. By this time, he was falling asleep in the chair he was sitting in. I was concerned about his comfort.

I let the woman at Parkside know my decision. When she asked which emergency room, I was taking him to, I said, "*St. John's, Broken Arrow since that is where I recently took him (twice) because of his kidney stone incident.*" The Parkside representative gave me Matthew's paperwork and informed me that she would call St. John's ER, Broken Arrow to give them a heads up that we were on our way. We then left for St. John's.

Sometimes all you can do is retreat to your quiet place to see where God has been in all the chaos [*for He is present*] and to be grateful to Him for His love, mercy, and presence. Having both sons present to assist their brother throughout this experience meant everything to me. But even more importantly, knowing the presence of God was touching the fabric of the chaos put my heart and mind at peace. Thinking of God's presence causes me to consider the following Scripture passage: "*Be still and know that I am God!*" – Psalm 46:10. He truly is God, indeed! Amen.



W 061224 957 AM

Peace be with you!

Today is Wednesday. It has been a week yesterday that Matt was sent to Laureate from Ascension St. John's Broken Arrow. Last Tuesday afternoon was the last time I spoke with Matthew. My prayer is that he will be well enough soon to at least talk with me by telephone.

SA 061524 923 AM

Peace be with you!

Life has been so busy these last few weeks since the month of May ended (of which I am grateful), I scarcely have had a moment to keep up with the June journal. I suspect life will soon quiet down and I will be able to resume this monthly project which I dearly enjoy—journaling and documenting.

I spoke with Matthew Friday afternoon. I could not get over how well he sounded on the phone in contrast to Wednesday afternoon. He sounded much like his old self on Friday—positive, upbeat, a smile in his voice. He even told me that he loves me. That set my heart on fire in a joyful way. I am so profoundly grateful to God on behalf of my son and to the many loving souls in my Church family and beyond who have been praying for Matthew. I cannot help but believe those prayers are being answered.

I will be leaving shortly for Leda's house. We, along with other members of the St. Thomas More choir have been invited by Dave and Joye Hawkins to view their new home and ranch. I intend to have a good time in the company of my dear friends.

I was happy to receive Teresa's response to my text on Friday morning. She recently lost her son Jeffrey who passed in his sleep. He was 40 years old. He had such a beautiful funeral. The Mass

and burial took place at St. Therese Catholic Church in Collinsville on Thursday morning. I was happy to see a contingent of St. Thomas More family present to honor Teresa, her son, and family during that difficult time. She is such a special member of the St. Thomas More family.

W 061924 646 AM

Peace be with you!

Here I am four days past the halfway mark for the month and am only on page 10 of this month's publication. I suppose that validates why I am exhausted, I have put more time into personal endeavors than expected. That's okay, all part of God's will. At least, that is how I prefer to look at it because then that makes it good!

MATTHEW: No word from Matthew since last Friday. I have been keeping my phone close to the hip and not on silent, except when at Church or a meeting and only when I remember to put it back on silent.

Still no word from Matt's doctor. Also, my voicemail messages to Kelsey Allen have gone unanswered as well. My gut feeling tells me to trust in the Lord and the process. Matthew will be home soon. At worst, I can try calling him again. I wish none of this had occurred.

MIDDLE BEDROOM: I am thinking maybe I should move one of the two desks in the middle bedroom into the living room and leave one desk and computer in this room (the middle bedroom), or just a desk with no computer. I will have to think more about this.

GUAM: I learned through a recent text that my sister and her daughter will be living in Guam for a while. My niece is in service. That most likely is where he reassignment from Montana will be. That means my sister will be the second member of the family to travel internationally. My

goddaughter, Geanine, is the first, having spent time in Europe because of work. Does not look as if Mark and I will make that trip to Montana after all.

FOOD PANTRY: I hope I came through for the food pantry gals (Pamela, Millie, and Joni) at St. Thomas More. They asked if I could order a canvas print of Fr. Leo and Fr. Briones and write a short tribute message on a wall placard in gratitude for what both priests contributed to the food pantry mission. I ordered the canvas print from *Easy Canvas Print* and the two wall placards from *Office Sign Company*.

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARDS: I need to hurry and decide if I wish to proceed with the Good Neighbor Awards this year. I would like to host a fundraiser this year but hand out one (1) award, this time honoring Fr. Jose Maria Briones, pastor at St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Tulsa. I am amazed by his love for God, Church, and community. He cares very much about the parish community, and it shows. That deserves to be recognized.

BOOK: Several good friends have been asking me to write a follow-up or rewrite of my first book, *Baltimore Monday: A Celebration of Life Beyond Sexual Abuse*. I can't believe it has been almost 20 years (2006) since I wrote that book. I suppose my friends are right. I believe the time is right for that. I feel it in my heart. I will do that. Well, I better get on with today's tasks. God had blessed the day, and I am feeling great. Have a blessed day. Love God with all your everything and be a great neighbor because great is always better than good. **-CM**

TH 062024 717 AM
Peace be with you!

Happy Birthday to my goddaughter and eldest niece, Geanine. I just learned today that she will

be living in Michigan for the next five years. She is near the Canadian border. How exciting. I am so proud of her.

I thank my Lord, St. Benedict Catholic Church (Broken Arrow), and Fr. Alessandro for the opportunity to confess my sins Wednesday evening. If only a certain individual would understand how important this Sacrament is to me and my desire to remain faithful to Church teaching.

I will not complain. It is my cross to carry and to the Father, I say, *"Use this Father where it will serve the greater good."*

I have not heard from my friend Teresa. I pray that everything is okay. I cannot begin to imagine the grief she is experiencing. She lost her son Jeffrey, who passed away in his sleep at age 40. I wish I had been able to know and form a friendship with him.

F 062124 529 AM
Peace be with you!

UPDATE! I attended Thursday's "Becoming A Disciple" meeting at St. Thomas More and saw my friend Teresa. She, of course, is still grieving the loss of her son Jeffrey, but she also appeared to be in good spirits and for that I am grateful to God. On a side note, Joni did a great job facilitating the meeting. I truly enjoyed spending the evening with members of my Church family. Thank you for your faith, love, and friendship. Today has been another busy day in the service of the Lord. While mowing the lawns, I was blessed through my neighbor who hammered out the noise coming from the lawnmower. Not long after that Josh brought me something to drink and offered to mow the back. I thanked him but mentioned that I wanted to complete the mowing to get my steps in. Steps to date: 12,829.

After taking a shower, I ran an errand to **Catholic Book & Gifts Store** located on Yale Avenue. I purchase a beautiful white beaded Rosary, Scapulars, and items related to St. Benedict.

I spent the remainder of the day praying, attending to small tasks that needed to be completed, reflecting, and just being grateful for this moment in God's never-ending love for us despite our brokenness. Thank you, Father. **—CM**



SA 062224 639 AM
Peace be with you!

How far, it seems that I have come since receiving that *invitation* to return to the Lord through *His Mother and His Church* in 2017. How much has changed? How much have I changed? What has become important? What has become unimportant? All the new people I have met because of saying, “Yes” to that invitation—too many to name.

I never would have imagined that I would be living and experiencing God's love, once more, in this way, through His Church in the way that I have since 2017. Not when I consider how I was living life to that point. If that is not a testimony to the power of God's love [for an undeserving sinner], then I do not know what is.

Has it been a cake walk? Not by any stretch of the imagination, let me tell you. Then again, it isn't supposed to be. It is called “the cross” for a reason. Love does hurt—and it should, otherwise I am not certain that it is true love; unconditional love, the love where one is willing to lay down one's life for their neighbor.

That does not necessarily mean a physical death insomuch as it means that one is willing to sacrifice what is important to them for the good of others. Now that I think back on that; think back on my life, I can see where that has been true for me all along. I willingly, sometimes reluctantly, in the end, was ready to sacrifice my happiness for the good of others. Although, admittedly, left up to me, I always seemed to mess things up. For my sake, I am fortunate to know that God was always close by, never too far away, always present. I think I have known that my entire life—that He was always present [in my life].

While it is true that God does not abide by sin, He sometimes allows us to stumble or fall for the greater good. Knowing this makes my move to Oklahoma in 2002 [15 years before my reversion in 2017], more meaningful, applicable, in accordance with God's will.

How else would I be where I am had that not been the case?

When I moved to Oklahoma in 2002, I was 41 years old. I had a 38” waist and was a smoker [since 1976]. I had every intention of living out my life in a same sex attracted relationship with a divorced Presbyterian who is 17 years my senior. I was finally going to put an end to that lifelong war between myself and the ghosts of my past.

The problem with all of that is the “I” part. How does that one saying go, “There is no ‘I’ in team!”

In my case, none of this had anything to do with me and EVERYTHING TO DO WITH GOD!

Please don't get me wrong. Making the decision to act on my same sex attraction was my fault, not God's. As is the case with all of us, I have *free will*.

Albeit, reluctantly for a variety of reasons including God, I acted on that attraction with hesitancy, but only because I thought, as was the case in my life, that the situation would end after a year or two and I would be right back in California licking my wounds, picking myself up and finding another way, hopefully God's way.

In fact, that is what I told my mother. A few days before leaving, mother and I met for lunch at **Millie's Restaurant & Bakery** [403 S. Citrus Avenue, Covina, CA 91723]. Mom begged me not to move. We were very close, like friends, at that time. I told mom not to be concerned because, as has been the case in my life to that point, nothing ever worked out and I would most likely return in a year or two.

That was twenty-two years ago! Mom is gone (2018), along with dad (2021), and my eldest brother Frank (2013), as well as three friends: Terry, Todd, and Jerry and several relatives.

It is amazing how much occurs in the span of twenty years. That really does put life into perspective. What we mistakenly believe to be a long life lived is, in relative comparison to the bigger picture, a short life. A blip on the map. A blink of an eye. A snap of a finger. Here today. Gone tomorrow.

It is time that I make the most of each day gifted to me with gratitude to the Father Creator who loves me. **-CM**



SU 062324 728 AM

Peace be with you!

I did not take long [this morning] as I was getting ready for Mass for me to realize that I need to lose weight [for all the right reasons] and take better care of myself.

First on the list is watching HOW I eat, WHAT I eat, and how MUCH I eat.

When I lost weight in 2022, getting down to 214 lbs., I did it by using the *how, what, much* method and exercising [walking] in the garage. I would pull the car into the driveway, bring the garage door down cracking

it just a bit to allow sunlight and air to enter the garage, and would walk as if I were on a track while praying the Rosary or listening to music.

For breakfast I would eat a fruit, usually a banana or orange with some healthy nuts and coffee with no creamer.

I cut way back on the carbs and sugars, primarily but stayed away from sweets. Although I did not reach my goal of getting down to 200, I came close, but NOT close enough.

My daily prayer for myself, although I do not like asking for anything for myself without asking for my neighbors first, will be ask for the grace to pray well, love God more, faith well, lose weight [specifically, whatever amount I need to lose to get me to a 38" waist], and eat well. The rest I will leave to the Father. Keep me in your prayers. **-CM.**



Two Fist Running Horse, By Carlos Michael Padilla, 2007, Carlos Michael Communications Media.

W 062624 626 AM

Peace be with you!

I think I finally managed to get this newsletter journal into a semblance of balance and order. Prayerfully, with all humility, in cooperation with God's grace and mercy, I will be able to do the same with my life. I truly desire to repent, change, and grow in, through, and with God in accordance with His will so that I may spend my time on earth loving, knowing, and serving Him through my neighbors, and spending eternity with Him in heaven. That truly is important to me.

Here is an update on Matthew. I posted a brief mention of this on Facebook Tuesday afternoon.

I received a telephone call Tuesday afternoon from a representative of the *Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health*. I failed to write her name down. She informed me that Matthew will be released on Thursday or Friday of this week. That is great news. Glory to God! She is going to phone back to let me know the day and time that I can pick him up. She also informed me that we will need to follow up with *Family & Children's Services* and that he will have approximately a two-week supply of medication.

I realize this is not going to be easy by any stretch of the imagination, but working together with family, listening to the wisdom of others with far more experience than myself, and with prayer, I believe that God will bless Matthew through our efforts in cooperation with His grace.

Through the grace of God, though I am underserving, the desk space I sought to least through Regus has been completed. The office address will be Executive Tower, **7136 S. Yale Ave., Suite 300, Tulsa**. I intended originally to select a space downtown. However, after seizing upon a situation that occurred over the weekend, and speaking with the Regus representative (Kristy), I

was able by the grace of God to change locations. As much as I enjoy being downtown, I thought it would be easier to select a location that is closer to the house and would not require visitors to find and pay for parking, including myself. An appointment was set for today to meet with the Regus representative at the location (Kayla) to tour the facility. I look forward with great joy to see where we go from here. Side note: I would not be where I am if not for the Lord, Mark, Gary, and Matthew. I am truly humbled and grateful.



SA 062924 716 AM

Peace be with you!

I have been so busy that I cannot seem to settle down long enough to "catch my breath" and figure out where I am.

I was on the "classmates.com" website this morning and noticed that I did not respond to a message from my boyhood friend (Stephen Solomon) that was sent in 2008. That was 16 years ago! Shame on me. I did send Steve a response. I also apologized for not responding in 2008. I hope he is still around, sees the message, reads it, and responds. Stephen is the friend I attempted to run away with because of a story we read in a book, which I have a copy of, that ended with us returning home (thank God!).

--

Matthew (middle son) is home. He spent three weeks at the **Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health**,

following a psychosis (Schizophrenia) episode he experienced on June 3rd. He is still recovering from the event and is still experiencing the aftereffects of the event. I will continue to care for him to the best of my ability, making his care my priority. When I mentioned to a friend that Matthew is still insistent on wearing white, the response was, "Is he still on that kick!?" With charity, I said in response, "He is sick! He is sick."

Matthew continues to believe that his "right hand" is Abraham—the Father of Israel from the Old Testament. He speaks to that hand as if he is talking to Abraham in the flesh. He stated that he continues to hear "the voices" but the pills seem to be helping with that.

I sometimes wish people would stop giving me advice or telling me what I need to do for Matt and myself. I would appreciate it if they would just roll up their sleeves and help without any thought to themselves. I am tired. I am very tired. However, for the love of my son and neighbor, I will continue to "fight the good fight" seeking only their ultimate good.



Contrition, what is it? According to Google, contrition is deeply felt remorse, penitence. Christianity detestation of past sins and a resolve to make amends, either from love of God (perfect contrition) or from hope of heaven (imperfect contrition).

I am currently in a state of contrition, mourning if you will. Why? For I have sinned against my God

(whom I dearly love) and for He and He alone, am I contrite. Yes, I want to go to Heaven. I want to be with God forever. I want to love Him forever, but more than Heaven itself, it is God whom I love, and desire and it is for that reason, for Him, that I am contrite for my recent sins. I pray that through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which I will avail myself to this afternoon, I will be restored in His grace and try again.

Merciful Jesus, Son of the Living God. Have mercy on me, a sinner!

--

I have an appointment Monday morning, 10:00 AM with Kristy Rice to tour the third floor of the Kennedy Building (Downtown). Before or after the tour, I will select the desk space I would like to occupy and finalize the one-year contract with Regus. This space and parking is only made possible due to the generosity of Gary Christensen, of whom I am deeply indebted and grateful.

--

I feel as though I am in a fog. I feel lost. I don't know what I am supposed to be working on. I need to work on the July 7th St. Thomas More newsletter and bulletin inserts. I also need to meet with "Deacon Ken," the new deacon who was recently assigned by Bishop Konderla from St. Benedict's in Broken Arrow to St. Thomas More, Tulsa. He will be assisting the English-speaking community. Deacon Ken has some ideas about the newsletter that he would like to share as well as seeking answers on submission of material for the Newsletter and Bulletin, who provides the graphics, etc. I will respond to his email today and get something scheduled.

--

I guess I will stop here. I intend to go outside and mow the lawns. It helps me to think, plus I always enjoy loving God through His creation. Until next time.



SU 063024 716 AM
Peace be with you!

Today is the last day of the month. Today is also Fr. Leo's last Mass as the Associate Pastor at St. Thomas More. The transition is complete. He officially takes the reign as Associate Pastor at Pius X at midnight, Monday, July 1st. My love and prayers go with him. I know he will do a lot of good for the Church.

--

Just an observation: I noticed my son's closet light was off, after I left it on for him. I wonder if something was said to him or if he decided to turn it off himself?

--

Regarding the image above, as warm and humid as it has been, how nice would it be to be in that Christmas setting right now?

--

This will most likely be the shortest CM360 to be published. Here we are at the end of the month, and I am only on page 15. That should demonstrate how challenging this month of June has been right from the beginning. Many mistakes have been made. Stupid sins committed. Tears have been shed. Anxiety attempted to take hold while fear attempted to thwart me from the path to God.

Ugh!

Okay, that felt good putting that out there. My next step will be to avail myself to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Holy Eucharist, Adoration, fasting, and prayer. Not only do I desire to love God with all my everything, I also want to be obedient to His word, be a joyful servant, and, when possible, continue to enjoy this beautiful life He has blessed this undeserving, broken, sinful servant with.

O, how I do love my God!

--

There is a part of me that wants to be angry at the world and with certain individuals, but I also know in my heart that what the world needs now is love, not anger.

Sin, injustice, poverty, war, unnecessary suffering, not respecting life, abuse of any kind, these are just but a few of what tugs at my heart strings. I can choose to sit on my behind and complain but do nothing, or, I can do something beginning with prayer, I choose the latter.

Let me close this edition by thanking God for the opportunities presented to me during this month to know, love, and serve by knowing, loving, and serving my neighbors. It is a wonderful life indeed!

