

Understanding the New and the Old
July 24, 2011

Put yourself in King Solomon's shoes for a moment.

If the Lord came to you in a dream one night, and said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you," what would your request be?

If you could have anything in the world...what one thing would you ask of from the Lord?

If this was me, I'm not sure what I would ask.

I suppose I could ask for riches...but I already have everything I need. I may not have everything that I want, but I feel like I have everything that I need.

I suppose I could ask for fame...but I would rather live more humbly.

I suppose I could ask for love...but I already know God loves me and all of us for that matter more than we could ever begin to imagine.

Perhaps I would ask for understanding like King Solomon.

I think I would ask for understanding so as to understand where the balance is between the NEW and the OLD that is referred to in our Gospel today.

Ultimately, Jesus is speaking about the New and the Old Testaments and bringing them together as one before one goes forth to preach the kingdom of heaven to others.

But, I think there's something more here...something deeper than simply the old law and the new law coming together.

Let's explore this, shall we?

Bringing the new and the old together...as one.

Growing up, I remember many holidays and family get-togethers where it was my aunts, uncles and cousins celebrating and having fun.

I was towards the end of my cousins...one of the youngest on both sides of my family – mom and dad's.

And I can remember just having fun with my cousins while playing outside usually.

However, as I grew up, I noticed that the family began to change slightly...my siblings and cousins were getting married and having children of their own.

Soon, I wasn't one of the youngest anymore.

What had happened was that my family changed and became something new...but still, we continued to gather every year just like we did in the past, when I was a child.

The new family joined the old ways of celebrating and having fun... and you know what...it was good.

Bringing the new and the old together...as one.

Last week, in Sunday's Sandusky Register, there was an article on the front page about the "clustering" of the 3 parishes in Sandusky – St. Mary's, Sts. Peter and Paul, and Holy Angels.

Talk about bring the new and the old together...this is a great example of how the three parishes, while remaining as three individual parishes, will need to come together under the leadership of one pastor, two associate priests, and one pastoral staff...wow!

These three parishes have had their individual identity since they were established...one as much as almost 180 years ago – the oldest in our Diocese...and that's Holy Angels, just a few blocks away! That's a long standing tradition that you just don't want to throw away... and won't be thrown away either.

Yet, all three parishes are being called to begin a new chapter and work together under the guidance of one pastor in July of 2012 while maintaining their individual identities.

Folks, I have faith and confidence that under the direction of the three current pastors and myself, this transition of clustering the old into something new and exciting will be good and continue to lead souls to the kingdom of heaven, which happens to be our ultimate goal anyway, right?

Bringing the new and the old together...as one.

My friends, you've heard Fr. Dave and I speak with you quite often by now about the New Translation of the Roman Missal that will go into effect on November 27, 2011...just 4 months from now.

What you may not have heard yet is that the Bishops have decided to give us a little taste of what this New Missal will look like and feel like.

Specifically, on September 1st, we are permitted to begin using some of the new music that is part of the New Translation.

Yes, the music and lyrics of the Mass will be one of the things changing with the New Roman Missal...and we will get to experience that beginning the 1st of September!

So, that means, we can use new music and learn new lyrics to the Gloria, Holy, Holy, Holy, and Memorial Acclamation that are sung during the Eucharistic Prayer. All of this will hopefully enrich our experience of the Mass.

And my friends please remember that even though the words of Mass may be new, the Mass itself is NOT changing. I'm confident that it will remain familiar to us and will continue to draw us closer to Jesus who wants nothing more than for us to experience his love for us in our lives...and this hasn't changed from day one.

Thus, the old Mass as we are used to it is being brought together with a new translation to become one celebration that is sure to continue to bring us to a deeper appreciation of the Holy Mass.

So, bringing together the new and the old doesn't have to be bad...it doesn't have to hurt...it doesn't have to be a terrible experience.

As long as we are focused on growing and reaching the kingdom of heaven, bringing together the new and the old will be a great way to experience God's abundant blessings in our lives.

May we pray, like King Solomon, for the gift of understanding to understand exactly this.