

Am-Pol Eagle

Thursday May 17, 2007

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

My own personal Journey in Faith and Grace has come to a screeching halt. I have hit my all time low and let me explain why.

At the beginning, I was following the story with interest, but because it did not directly affect me, it was just something interesting to follow, but as the journey came closer to home, it became a much more personal issue.

The Central Buffalo Vicariate was particularly interesting. From the time I was born and baptized, went to grammar school, and was confirmed, I went to Most Holy Redeemer on Genesee Street. After that, for no particular reason, I began attending Mass at Holy Name of Jesus on Bailey Avenue. And if you are in the least bit familiar with the cluster I mentioned, you probably know where this is going.

Yes, both of those parishes were targeted to close in the diocese's plans. And hearing that news made me take a moment to reflect on the past and realize that both churches that I had attended during my lifetime were soon going to close. And no one was going

to do much about it,

That situation leads me to the lowest of low points that I have experienced in this journey so far. I was driving past Holy Name of Jesus Church, and out on the grass where the sign used to announce the times of the Masses and future events, now are the words "FOR SALE." I personally, was devastated. The church that I attended for a good number of years, had become a piece of real estate. What a sad moment!

I have decided for myself, that church and religion have become a business. The building that held so many special services and devotions was now, just a piece of property on the real estate market. The merged parish certainly doesn't want to be stuck with that huge building on Bailey Avenue. The sooner they can get rid of it, the better! And I really cannot blame them, because the diocese sort of dumped on them too. Making them responsible, for the disposition of the buildings after the merger was a very difficult task to accomplish.

But the real sadness of this whole thing, is that churches are actually closing. It is not just words, but the doors are really being closed and locked up! And locked up forever! Put all your opinions, and

plans, and bickering aside, and just take a look at what the structure of the church has done to its faithful. Religion has closed my church. The planners have closed my church.

There are a ton of papers and proposals and counter-proposals, but the bottom line of it all is that, you have closed my church. How can any diocese or committee be proud of that"?

What really has our religion come to? God is pretty much lost in all of this, and lucky for Him! There's the fighting before the announcement; there's the fighting after the announcement. There's waiting for the decree; there's filing the appeal. They want us closed; we want to stay open. We want to pray; they say we can pray somewhere else. This tug of war has weakened all of us.

The Maker must be so disappointed!

Parishioners attend their last Masses, tears filling their eyes and the rest of the community wonders "why." Many wonder why can't they just move along and merge into the new parish and quit their complaining and weeping? I ask "why not?"

***Barb Brader
Cheektowaga***