

## **FOR THE GOOD OF THE HOUSEHOLD**

**Bishop Joseph V. Adamec**

**March 15, 2010**

### **OF THREE THINGS**

**A Clarification:** During one of the segments of “Can We Talk” on our Sunday morning television Proclaim program, Adam Wood and I were discussing the Sacrament of Reconciliation. While giving an answer about the frequency of that Sacrament, I may have given the wrong impression relative to the frequency of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion. Here is the way that it is.

The Church expects us to take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) anytime that we are in mortal sin, but at least once in a year’s time. Of course, if we care about our own spiritual growth, that should be several times per year, whether in mortal sin or not. As for partaking of the Eucharist, we are to receive Holy Communion at least once during the Easter Season. And, of course, that, too, should be much more often, providing that we are in the state of grace.

Another matter that is easily misunderstood has to do with the directives for abstinence and fasting. **Abstinence:** On prescribed days, all who have completed their 14<sup>th</sup> year of age (that is, after midnight following their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday) are to avoid eating meat. **Fasting:** Those who have completed their 18<sup>th</sup> year of age (that is, after midnight following their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday) and have not yet begun their 60<sup>th</sup> year of age (that is, after midnight of their 59<sup>th</sup> birthday) are to fast on the days prescribed. Voluntary fasting of various sorts is healthy for both body and soul.

**Learning from the Church:** It is said that religion and politics do not mix. Perhaps, not. Nevertheless, governments could learn much from the Church. That includes our present administration in Washington, D.C. Our president is having a difficult time getting the entire congress behind him in support of a health-reform bill, which reform is badly needed. A couple of weeks ago, he met with both parties for a lengthy discussion, in hopes of making it a unified effort. However, it did not work. The process could have been better.

When we needed to save our high schools in this Diocesan Church, I met for an all-day session with a variety of groups, representing a variety of views and responsibilities within the diocesan structure. We called it a “Day of Dialogue.” It was that. I chaired the meeting, gave everyone a chance to speak as well as speaking myself, and listened to what they had to say. It was only then that we formulated a plan that most could accept, - as a result of that dialogue and not before.

We now have three Catholic high schools that are under local control and have a chance of not only surviving but also thriving. They continue to be Catholic but function more efficiently. There is a good possibility that a fourth Catholic high school with the same structure may be established in the State College area.

**Might the Pagan Gods Have Been Angry?** If you and I lived during the ancient Greek or Roman times and knew of the adversities that are taking place in so many parts of the world, we might have concluded that the gods are angry with us. Even in biblical times, Jonah jumped off the ship into the sea, Job sat in ashes, Mordecai tore his garments, and the prodigal son returned to his father. I do not hear the leaders of any of the countries or states that are thus afflicted expressing any similar concern. Of course, it would be “politically incorrect” to do so.

Certainly, God does not devise plots such as earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, floods, mudslides, snow, ice storms, and the like to get even with us. He does not have to. Some are natural occurrences that result from the way the world was created. Sometimes, however, we are the cause through our abuse of God’s created world. Nevertheless, the Lord allows the consequences, expecting us to notice and take stock of the situation. Even Noah knew enough to take heed and build himself a boat.