

## **OF SEVERAL THINGS**

For me, it has not been a boring summer. What is amazing to me (and, it should not be) is how God speaks through the every-day happenings of our life.

After participating in several ordinations and installations of bishops, which assures the continuity of the Church, I traveled to the Republic of Slovakia and the land that gave my parents birth. I had decided that, at my age, I was not going there anymore. However, I was asked to preside at the marriage of my cousin's daughter's son. (That's called a "cousin twice removed," in legal terminology.) And, so, I felt somewhat obligated to go. Nevertheless, it is important to be in touch with one's roots every now and then. Remembering our spiritual roots is something that we do every time that we participate at the celebration of Mass.

Aside from the fact that the bride and groom were 20 minutes late coming to church for their own wedding, it was a nice affair. Needless to say, the mother of the groom, from whose home the wedding procession to the church was to take place, was not amused. Neither was the pastor.

At the reception, the traditional plate was smashed on the ground prior to entering the reception hall. The number of broken pieces is supposed to indicate how many children the bride will have. (Of course, they never do.) Then, while those gathered around kick the pieces in every direction, the bride attempts to sweep them up. Some of us encouraged the groom to do the sweeping. But, again, the mother of the groom was not amused. Tradition is tradition, and it is important even if we do not always understand it. And, after all, she was paying for the wedding.

At another wedding reception, which we witnessed in our hotel, the traditional plate was broken by the father of the bride. In this case, it was the groom that swept up the pieces. Obviously, it was the bride's father that was paying for this wedding!

I attended the first day of the Cambria City Ethnic Fest. The way that the Faithful of the former parishes have come together as the new Resurrection Parish was visibly and concretely reflected at the Fest. Others involved were Saint Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, as well as the Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church. I even met someone from Christ the Saviour Orthodox Cathedral, who came to help. The Lord is at work and He is at work in us!

September 11 marked the eighth anniversary of the terrorist attack on the United States. The terrorists used four commercial planes for the assault. Only one did not hit its target. Thanks to the passengers of United Flight 93, it was prevented from continuing on to Washington, D.C. They are heroes. I often think what it might have been like if that plane had come down over Johnstown or any one of the other communities in its path. Instead, it crashed into an empty field at Shanksville within our Diocese. No one on the ground was hurt, and no buildings were destroyed. How could that be a coincidence? This anniversary is a reminder to be ever grateful to the Lord our God for the blessings that we in these Allegheny Mountains enjoy.

The passing on to the Lord of one of our distinguished and well-known priests, that of Monsignor George B. Flinn, prompts us to reflect on our community of believers that is the Diocesan Church and on the faithful priests that serve it. But, that is covered elsewhere in this issue.