



From Fr. Joe's Desk:

July 24/25, 2010

I've received some very positive feedback on the column thus far, but I'm still looking for a better name. And so we continue to answer our young parishioner's queries.

Q. What effects would you like to have on our church?

A. First of all, isn't it great that our young parishioners use the possessive in referring to St. Catherine's (our church)? I would like to have a positive effect. I want to share my enthusiasm and instill a spirit of joyfulness. My philosophy about church is: If I'm not having fun then, most likely, neither is anyone else. And worshipping God should be fun! Don't misunderstand me: worshipping God is very serious stuff, but I can show you how to do very serious stuff joyfully. Let me show you!

Q. Do you wish marriage was an option for you?

A. Yeah! That being said, I see the wisdom in a celibate clergy. However, I also see how both a celibate and married clergy can work quite well together as in the Orthodox tradition. The key word in the question is 'option'. Because celibacy is a discipline of the Roman Catholic tradition of ordained persons and not necessarily a constituent part of the priesthood, I believe that there should be room for dialogue. Historically, celibacy was not originally a mandate for ordination to the clerical state; therefore, we should talk about optional celibacy. I believe there are many people who may be called to the clerical state but not necessarily to the celibate life.

Q. Do you think of yourself as a conservative or liberal Catholic?

A. See above answer! I really dislike labels. My understanding of the meaning of the word Catholic is *universal*. Consequently, liberals, conservatives, progressives, traditionalist ... all fall under the umbrella of Catholic. I consider myself a Believer of the Christ lived out through the Roman Catholic tradition, meaning I am in union with the Bishop of the Diocese of Rochester, NY, and the Bishop of Rome.

Q. Pick which is better: Jonas Brothers or Justin Bieber?

A. Neither. Lady GaGa rocks it!

Peace,