

Pentecost Sunday 2013

Dear Parishioners of St. John the Baptist and Sacred Heart Churches,

As most of you know, on February 6 of this year, I underwent surgery for a total replacement of my left knee. After my dismissal from the hospital, I went to a rehabilitation care facility for therapy and returned to the parish on February 19 and resumed saying Mass on February 20. On March 7, I went to Dr. Paul Melaragno's (my orthopedic surgeon) office for my post-op check-up and x-rays. Everything appeared to be fine. I continued physical therapy until April 5 and again everything seemed to be fine with my knee. The recovery/healing process was not as smooth as with the replacement of my right knee in 2007, but all seemed to be well.

About two weeks ago, I began to feel some movement in my left knee as if something were loose. About a week later, while I was getting up off a stool, my left knee gave way in great pain. The next day, May 9, I visited Dr. Melaragno's office for an x-ray and exam and there was something askew on the x-ray. The Doctor ordered an MRI which I took on May 10th. The initial results were inclusive but the definitive results which Dr. Melaragno received on May 14, showed there was a hole or tear in the tissue and tendons around the knee and that surgery was necessary to repair the damage and prevent further damage. He wanted to do surgery this past Friday, May 17, but I got him to postpone the surgery to this Wednesday, May 22, forgoing my attending a reception that evening at the Embassy of Italy in Washington honoring SJB parishioner and congressman, the Honorable Patrick J. Tiberi.

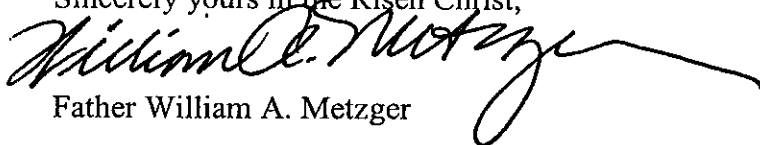
Although the repair surgery is not as invasive as the knee replacement surgery, the rehabilitation/therapy, which calls for immobilization of the knee, is. Dr. Melaragno does not want me celebrating Mass or other duties for 4-6 weeks which puts me at just about a week or two before the time that clergy reassignments typically take place. As of this date, I have not received any official news from the Bishop about my new assignment.

I will celebrate all the Masses this weekend. I will be working with the Vicar for Priests to find coverage for the 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. John's and the 11:00 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart on Sunday mornings. However, due to the average attendance of 20 to 30 people (there were 23 last evening 5/18) at the Saturday Vigil Mass at 5:00 p.m. at St. John's, I can not in good conscience ask another priest to add the burden of celebrating an extra Mass on a weekend, when there is no justifiable need for this Mass except for the convenience of a few who could attend another weekend Mass in the parishes.

Beginning Saturday, May 25, there will be no Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday until further notice.

I thank you for your understanding and support in this matter. I ask for your prayers for a good and timely recovery.

Sincerely yours in the Risen Christ,



Father William A. Metzger