May 18, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Saint Anastasia Parish,

The other day as I was walking Lucky, I passed by a truck belonging to a utility company doing work on West Chester Pike. The tool compartment on the side of the truck was open and I noticed a sign on the inside of the lid of the box. I thought the message on this sign was rather timely. The sign outlined the procedure to be followed when responding to a service call. It consisted of three words in large, bold print. Below each word were a few more words in smaller print. The three words were: ASSESS, ANALYZE, ACT.

The words beneath ASSESS questioned whether the person reading them had the knowledge, ability, tools etc. for the job at hand. What exactly needed to be done? Did the situation require back-up help? Beneath ANALYZE were words pertaining to how the job could/should/would be done. Figure out what would be needed before starting. How are you going to do it? There were no words under ACT. The thinking, the words, the preparation was already done. There is a business principle called the 50/40/10 Principle. Fifty percent of the time is spent determining what a particular problem was and whether or not it was worth attacking. Forty percent of the time was spent figuring out exactly what steps to take. Ten percent of the time was spent actually doing something. It’s all the same thing.

As we approach getting back into action and “opening up” I think it would serve us well to ASSESS, ANALYZE and ACT. If you are like me this process is vital because I have a tendency to see just one aspect of something. Another tendency of mine is to determine something has more value than it does, or it has no value at all. If something seems to be too good to be true, it probably is. That’s the kind of thing I fall in to. Assessment and analysis are vital. But how do we proceed? Where should we start?

We will all know what the ACT part is when we get to it, so I’m not saying anything about that. The period before is crucial. Assessment and analysis are processes by which we determine what we are going to do. The best way to do this is to pray our way through it. May our prayer not be that God makes things jump out at us to reveal themselves. May our prayer not be to have things go our way. May our prayer be for an awareness of who we are and where we fit into the larger picture. Is what we think good for everyone and not just ourselves? Pray about it. Discuss things with your family and trusted friends. Get the opinion of others. Share your fears, your questions, your hopes and dreams. As I said before: we can do this! And we have a chance to get it right. But it takes introspection and prayer, time and prayer, selflessness and prayer, prayer, and more prayer. Let’s slow ourselves down and begin now to prayerfully ASSESS and ANALYZE so we will be fortified and ready to go when it’s time to ACT.

May God continue to protect all of you and keep you in his loving embrace!

God bless us all,
Fr. Colagreco