

## PASTOR'S COLUMN

### *A Big Weekend for the Youth of our Parish*

May 4-5 is a big weekend for the youth of St. Francis Parish. For those who ask, "Where are our youth," be at church this weekend and see the young people out in full force.

**First Eucharist.** Quite a few times in my priesthood, as I am giving a communion host to an adult carrying a small child, the child will say, "I want one of those." My reply is, "One day." Sometime the child will reach out to try to grab the host. The adult is often embarrassed. This Saturday, May 4 at 10 am, our St. Francis 2<sup>nd</sup> graders will receive Jesus in communion for the first time. The children are super-excited. Their teachers have been preparing them for a long time; so have their parents and families. I understand that the First Eucharist Mass will be standing room only. Please pray for our young people as they receive Jesus sacramentally on Saturday; pray that their enthusiasm for the sacrament will become a lifelong enthusiasm for the Eucharist and the Mass.

**Scouts.** Twenty-one Cub Scouts will receive religious emblem awards for their study of the Catholic faith at the 10 am mass on Sunday, May 5. The awards include "Guardian Angel Pins" for 1<sup>st</sup> graders, "Light of Christ" awards for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders, and "Parvuli Dei" awards for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Congratulations, Scouts.

**Altar Servers.** After the 10 am mass on Sunday, May 5, thirty-one St. Francis Altar Servers will be honored for their faithful service during the past year, including three graduating high school seniors who have given outstanding service at St. Francis for many years: Bailey Andras, Patrick Boquet and Spencer Tillman. Thanks to our Altar Servers and their Families for their commitment to serving the Church. We are blessed by the witness that our young people are giving us.

**CYO.** The Summer CYO Schedule is almost complete. CYO members will serve the 6 pm Mass on the first Sunday of each month during the summer; after mass, there will be a meeting and social/service event in St. Joseph Hall. Other summer service projects are in the works. In addition, there are plans for a Movie Night, afternoon of Bowling, and a Day at the Gulfport Water Park. Help spread the word to 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders that our CYO is rolling. Contact our Youth Minister, Mrs. Charlotte Philips, for more info and to join the fun: 504-427-0949.

**Welcome Sunday.** Since this is the first weekend of a new month, it is Welcome Sunday. Refreshments will be served after all weekend masses, and trust me, our young people will find the refreshment tables!

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me" (Matthew 19:14). Be at St. Francis Church this coming weekend and see Jesus' desire being fulfilled.

God bless,  
Fr. Joe