December 29, 2019: Feast of the Holy Family

The other day, when I walked into the rectory chapel, our seminarian Andrew John was sitting and praying. On his lap was my cat Harry, sprawled over his lap and purring away. It was clear that he was quite happy and content where he was, and so I tried not to disturb either of them. But as soon as I sat down, Harry noticed me and immediately jumped down from Andrew’s lap, came over to me, and jumped onto my lap. After he made himself comfortable he started purring all over again. I felt kind of bad and apologized to Andrew John; I did not mean for the cat to move.

Harry, of course, is like most cats: he has a mind of his own. He clearly enjoyed being with Andrew John, but Harry is really very much my cat. When I go on vacation and I am gone too long, he will start eating less. He doesn’t like it when I am not around, and though he is not on me all the time, he likes to be near me. In the morning he will come looking for me in the chapel, and he will either hang out there or come directly onto my lap. He knows very much what he wants—and what he wants is me!

God is like that too. God knows very much what he wants—and what He wants is you! Just think about what God has done for you to show you how true this is. God chose to create you. You were not an accident, nor were you just like one of the many other people God created. God creates each person uniquely and with deliberation. In the moment that God spoke your name and brought you into creation, He called you into a relationship with Him. Your relationship with God is singular and special. In all of human history no one is exactly like you, and God truly reveals in the wonder that is you.

When we think of the great things God has done throughout human/salvation history, we can so easily see it in the aggregate. We learned that Christ was conceived in the womb of Mary and in that moment our God became incarnate (Jesus being fully God and fully human). We listened to his words as He came forth to proclaim the Gospel, the Kingdom. We believe He suffered, died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. It is so easy to look at these events and not see them as a personal invitation to us. Rather, we look at them as events by which Jesus came to save all humanity. That, of course, is certainly true, but He did not come to save humanity in the aggregate, but in the particular. Jesus came to save you—personally! God created you so that you might know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world and be happy with Him in the next.

God created you because He wants a relationship with you—one that is loving and truly intimate. He is not a God who is simply out there, somewhere beyond our reach. He resides right in your soul and in your heart. In your baptism you were united as one with Christ, and so the Holy Spirit dwells in your heart. You are now a living temple of the Lord. Your God walks with you each and every day. Your God desires to communicate with you in order that you might know Him more fully and come to know yourself better.

All that God has done since the beginning of time is prepare for the relationship He desires to have with you. The question is, are you ready to have a relationship with God? Are you ready to be claimed by God as one of his own? “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Are you ready to be one of the chosen? Are you ready to embrace that royal priesthood? Are you ready to announce his praises everywhere? Are you ready to walk always in the light?

God is ready for you! God desires you! God loves you unconditionally! God only asks that you desire to embrace a relationship with Him and make it the foundation of how you live. As we prepare to enter into a new year, it is a good time to stop and look critically at our lives. It is a time to ask some important questions. What am I truly living for? What are my innermost desires? Where do I put most of my efforts? Where do I put my best effort? Where do I spend most of my time? What is usually foremost in my mind?

The answers to these and similar questions will tell you what is really most important to you—what it is you truly want in life.

God truly knows what He wants—and what He wants is you! The real question then is, do you want God as much as God wants you?

If you have any questions about anything, please do not hesitate to ask me directly, or send your questions to me at fr.brian@chelmsfordcatholic.org. Please keep me in your prayers.