

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

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BY REV. ROY ROBERTS

MOM used to bowl in a league on Tuesday nights. That meant dad would struggle with trying to adjust antennas to get modest reception from the Hamilton television channel so we could watch the Hamilton Red Wings play hockey. The bowling league was real Canadian bowling, five pin, not the “Bowling for Dollars” brand of ten pin. On occasions, like birthdays, we would take a stab at it. Learning how to score was a bit of a challenge, but when I made it to the senior ranks of elementary school, I had it down pat.

So, on our annual school outing to the bowling alley, I was always one of the captains because I could score for the team. I remember the first time we went to an alley where there was a choice between five and ten pin. Being accustomed to the five pin balls, the much heavier and more awkward ten pin balls seemed good only for lengthening one’s arms involuntarily. We never had anything as forgiving as bumper racks, that prevent gutter balls, nor did we have the convenience of automatic computerized scoring. The last time I was bowling was likely in 1993 with a school class in Brampton, when backs and knees were kind and supple.

Well, last week the Men of St. Francis hosted a bowling day and pizza lunch for our altar servers and junior choir. In all, about 50 of us went. It was ten pin and that meant we all had to find a ball where our fingers could fit into the holes, not an easy task, and one that was light enough so as to prevent craters being created in the beautiful hardwood of the alley. I had a rough start, but thanks to the gutter barriers, I was able to keep pace with the young’ uns. As it worked out, I got the top score in the first game. Not that it was any mean feat, nor a score that I will repeat, but when a grade three is only mere points behind you, and I was holding my breath on his last three throws, I was walking pretty relieved. Now I’m not one to lord it over anyone about my accomplishments, except for over altar servers and singers. I just wanted to make sure that they knew who had high score lest there was any doubt.

Well, to get even, they connived a plan worthy of Tanya Harding to take me out of the next game. As I was heading back to the alley, their conspiracy began to unfold. One of the little ones called me, as the other stuck out her foot and caused me to tumble flat to the ground.

Well, with my knees wracked with pain, and my pride deflated, I was ousted from round two. The good news was that even though I was carrying that elixir of life, not one drop of my Coke was spilt. What a talent!

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