

# St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

*St. Francis de Sales*



## Meanderings...

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### Falling Up The Stairs!

I think it is a fair assessment to admit that there are a whole slew of things that the powers that be could never prepare us for as priests. From the moment the oil was dripping from the newly consecrated hands, there was a popular held misconception that you would know everything that there is to know about being a priest.

There are varying degrees of preparedness. Theologically and Scripturally, certainly we had adequate preparation to meet the basic needs of parish ministry. Considering the fact that true Scripture scholars and theologians spend their whole lives immersed in the world of academics, and still admit to only scratching the surface involved in the mysteries of the Word of God, for all intents and purposes, we have enough to get by.

Liturgically, well that's another story. Even after my studies at Notre Dame, I feel even more desperate in my lack of knowledge. Over the years, as the mistakes pile up and the blunders mount, so too, does the wisdom, at least one hopes, but very little in seminary formation can prepare you for a really big fall from grace. For the first time as a priest, I have fallen. Now this is not a confession, I mean I literally fell, mounting the steps at the altar, carrying the hosts back to the Tabernacle. As I moved up the steps, my alb got caught under my feet and started to pull me down. It is not the first time that the garment has created a bit of a balance issue, but as I tried to compensate, the situation became exacerbated, and no prowess with balance or dance was going to save the situation. As I stepped forward to catch myself, the gown got more entangled and time began to move in slow motion.

It was inevitable that I had an appointment with the ground, and as I tripped over the upper step, my hands went out to brace me, and the ciborium filled with hosts went flying. It was all over with a thud. I'm not sure if it registered on the Richter scale (earthquake in Ajax!). People rushed up wondering what happened - heart attack? Seizure? Death? I insisted that I was fine and that it was not illness, or fatality, but merely clumsiness. I was a little perturbed when someone inquired if I broke my hip. I didn't think I was there yet. I never did learn how to walk in long gowns. As the people rallied (no one laughed except me) and collected the strewn hosts, all I kept thinking (except for the loss of my pride) was Jesus falls the fourth time...

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