

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

St. Francis de Sales



Meanderings...

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BY REV. ROY ROBERTS

Thanksgiving by the Numbers!

THE size of our dining room table was a big deal. As with most large ticket items in our home, they were paid for with the pooling of money, with each contributor feeling like they should have a say in the final purchase. The dining room table was no exception. The style of material was mostly universal. What the 'discussions' involved was just how big it should be, and how many leaves could be put into it to expand its length.

Now at the time, there was the six of us, mom, dad, Roy, and the three after-thoughts. Since two were already priests, the necessity of expanding for their children was remote. My youngest brother, the one exiled to Oshawa, although with a spouse, was not in the market for children. Now the second youngest was engaged, and so like Obi-Wan Kenobi, he was our only hope. By all mathematical models six of us, plus two spouses, plus an estimated two children meant that a 10-seater should suffice. Begrudgingly I gave in, only because my parents had veto power and moving up in the price range seemed unnecessary.

Well lo and behold, five children later, and an uncle who was a constant family participant, there was never enough room at the table. We needed to sit the youngin's at their own table which defeated the original purpose of getting a larger table in the first place. Well, years go on and at every meal around that table, the conversation would inevitably turn to the inadequacy of that table.

This will be the fifth Thanksgiving since my dad died, and with the recent death of my uncle, the numbers around the table are dwindling to a manageable size. Now we are a dozen crammed around that family table with the children reaching teen and pre-teen ages, and broadening shoulders. It is a bit easier setting all the plates and cutlery. With their hardy appetites there is never enough room for the serving dishes and plates of food and baskets of bread and buns. It is a physical manifestation of the family bond itself.

And even though the elbows may be rubbing and the knees knocking, and the feet touching, and anyone needing to get up for some reason or other is a tremendous chore, no one really minds. There are fewer and fewer references to the antics of granddad, or the humming of Uncle Paul, but they are there with us.

Yes, this controversial table has been the source of many a feast and much love and family life. Despite its small size it has served us well because there is much for which we give thanks.

- *FR*