

# St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

*St. Francis de Sales*



## Meanderings... | Parish Bulletin – January 31 & February 1, 2009

BY REV. ROY ROBERTS

### Eucharist, an action word

**THE** longer I'm ordained and the more I reflect on what it is we do each week, the more I realize that we are barely scraping the surface of the mystery of the Eucharist.

It seems that somewhere in our history, we have so monumentalized the Eucharist that it has become a stand-alone grossly independent, be all and end all entity. Now not to diminish the importance and profound gift that Eucharist is, but in rendering it a noun, we become blind to the greater implications that it involved.

Slowly as we scratch that surface of mystery, we are coming to realize that Eucharist is more of a verb. It is an activity more than a thing – a way of being more than something to receive. American liturgist Aidan Kavanagh's musings on the inability of the Eucharist to be authentically celebrated in North America has haunted me of late.

In the same vein of revelatory thought that 'God is plural', and "Eucharist is verb" comes the epiphany that 'Church is community', and only Community or 'body of Christ' can ever celebrate Eucharist authentically.

I remember when my future sister-in-law was to come for our first family celebration, that no matter how hard anyone tried, the family dynamic was different. Now, years later, and mostly because my nieces and nephews are so great, she has become an integral part of our family and the gathering around the table is richer because we know her and she knows us.

Absolutely vital to our celebration of the Eucharist is our ability to come together and get to know one another. That is precisely why last week's 'International Family Potluck' is so important, because people get involved and people get to know each other. In that way, we are no longer an abstract concept of a parish community, we become a familiar Eucharistic assembly.

What happens in that foyer as we gather to interact is so intimately connected to the actual celebration that quite literally, we cannot have one without the other. It just doesn't make sense. Eucharist for Eucharist sake is not the desire of Christ. The gift given is so that we may learn unity and love which both demand community.

So Aidan Kavanagh is right that our celebrations are diminished by our pursuit of our own agendas and individual practices at Mass.

- SR