

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

St. Francis de Sales



Meanderings...

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An Evening of Strikes, Spares, And No Missus

ELEMENTARY school on the Holland Marsh was not the most exciting venue. It was out in the middle of that swamp they call the vegetable capital of Ontario. There were a couple of houses across the road, but then nothing for a long haul.

Our field trips usually consisted of Martyrs' Shrine and St. Marie among the Hurons. In the upper grades, there would be a skating party every year. Grade 5s and up would walk the 3 miles to the arena for an hour of skating and then an hour walk back.

Grade 7s and 8s also had a bowling outing, to the five-pin Mecca of bowling in Bradford. It was met with the usual amount of excitement, pandemonium and chaos - fifty young people all arranging shoe sizes, teams, lanes and someone who knew how to score at each alley. I don't remember anyone who was proficient or who had even bowled at any time other than the annual school trip.

It was with that same sense of excitement that the Men of St. Francis invaded the five-pin lanes in Ajax. There was the chaos around the shoe counter, the selecting of teams, and the bravado of challenges, taunts, jibes, and ridicule that made it even pure penance. It had been a long time since I had been five-pin bowling. Other than with the altar servers and ten pins, it has been over 15 years since I plied the boards. Now as the arrangements were being emailed back and forth, and confirmations of who could go, certain contingents made derogatory allusions to people's ages as precursors to outcomes and scores.

Unfortunately for some, our lanes didn't have any gutter bumpers. To drive home that fact, whoever threw a ball in the gutter had to don the over-grown baby's bonnet, until the next candidate also found the gutter. Everyone had their turn with the bonnet. Pizza was ordered in, and between games, we fasted, I mean feasted on the meagre serving of one piece of pizza, but as they kept reminding me, it is the company, not the fare. Note to self, next time, eat dinner before arriving.

Well, it was a great night out, something we should all do more of, take time away and just commune, whether it is bowling, or mini-put, or walking or cards. It too is part of what it means to be Eucharistic. All in all, it was a fun evening of strikes, spares, and no missus.

- *FR*