

St. Francis de Sales Parish

All glory comes from daring to begin.

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BY REV. ROY ROBERTS

HALLOWE'EN can be a very scary time, but not nearly as scary as being away on a seminar with 150 priests, but that is for another *Meanderings* someday.

As you may or may not know, the Church has been on a decade's long revision of its prayers. Another edition of the Sacramentary is in the works. This book is the Red volume that contains all the prayers and instructions for celebrating Mass. There is an organization called ICEL which stands for International Commission on English in the Liturgy. The Vatican has mandated that all English-speaking countries have to be using the same words. Of course, this has been a near-impossible task in that English is still an evolving language and one expression here can mean something quite different in Newfoundland, let alone around the globe.

No matter, it is coming down the pipes for better or for worse. There is also a desire from the Vatican to have all the texts parallel the Latin texts in grammar, word count, subordinate clauses and the like.

These seminars over the last two years have been designed to prepare us for these changes and to explain the philosophy behind the exercise. The best news is that it has taken so long to implement, and it might still be a couple of years away.

Part of the new mandate will be to try to restore some sense of reverence into our liturgy. I must confess that the pendulum has swung so far to the casual, that we have lost touch with just how sacred our liturgy is.

At table conversations, we regaled each other with horror stories of people chewing gum in the Church, and receiving communion while 'chawing' away. Or the proliferation of gentlemen wearing hats in the sacred space. Or the number of Tim Hortons' coffees that get consumed in the sacred space, and cookies and snacks left strewn on the floor.

And of course, everyone's lament was the Mass exodus or stampede out before the procession has even left the sanctuary. There is a big difference between a relaxed reverence and a blatant disregard for the holy ground on which we stand. So maybe some of the changes will help re-shape us in our attitudes and awareness of sacred space.

We need to be reminded that reverence is an attitude and an appreciation of being in the Lord's presence. Even priests were leaving early from our liturgies. So much to learn!

-SR