

Dear Parishioners,

Each of the pilgrims on the walking pilgrimage to Assisi carried with them special intentions. We prayed for these as we walked and at Mass each day. Sometimes we walked together and sometimes we walked alone giving us time to pray and reflect. My foremost intention was for our parish, the entire Holy Rosary parish, the staff, the school, all the families, ministries, programs, ect. I prayed that God will continue to bless our parish and bring us the fruit of holiness and renewal. The type of holiness and renewal experienced by St. Francis and St. Clare in the 13th century, a commitment to Christ and the Gospel that became a credible witness to the reality of Christ's presence in the world. St. Francis had a great love and devotion for the Incarnation.

My last day in Assisi I stayed in a Franciscan house with some young Italian friars who were making a retreat. While at dinner with these young friars, me speaking in broken Italian and they in broken English, we talked about crises facing the Church in Europe and the US with a secular culture turning away from religion and the abuse scandal. I was encouraged by their zeal and love for the Church in the spirit of St. Francis. They talked about how St. Francis was a force for renewal in the 13th century so God can also raise up a force for renewal in our time. They felt that the key to renewal would be a return to prayer, a deep communion with God. They pointed out that St. Francis was first and foremost a man of prayer and contemplation before he started preaching and become a force of renewal.

As I mentioned in my homily last week I had a wonderful walking pilgrimage in Italy but it was good to come back home to Edmonds. Being away make one appreciate home and the many good and familiar thing here. This coming week is Thanksgiving, a beautiful American holiday where we can sit down as family and give thanks for the many blessing we all enjoy. With so much negativity going around let us each take this opportunity of Thanksgiving to give God thanks for all the blessings large and small we enjoy each day, too many things to even begin to list.