



Orthoscopy

Newsletter #1

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Jesus Asked:

“What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man replied to him, “Master, I want to see.”
(Mark 10:51)

We often have a lot of questions we would like to ask Jesus, but in the gospels we can also reflect on a lot of the questions that Jesus asks of others, and indirectly of us. We had the above gospel passage at daily Mass the other morning as I was struggling to figure out how I was actually going to execute this newsletter that I had promised to deliver. And I said, “Master I want to see, as well!” Admitting our own lack of vision, our own blind spots, and then asking Jesus for help is a good start for all of us. With “Clearing our vision to see what we ought to do” as the goal and proposed subtitle of Orthoscopy, it seemed a fitting verse to begin this newsletter, and probably include in the book.

If Jesus was standing in front of you today and asked: *“What do you want me to do for you?”*, what would you say in reply? And your response might be different tomorrow. It’s good to take some quiet time in prayer, try to picture yourself in the presence of the Lord, and meditate on this very simple question.

How good is your visibility today? Sometimes our situation is sunny and bright and we can see clearly what is ultimately good for us; for our eternal life and for that of our loved ones. We know what to ask for. But other times we are caught up in a stifling fog; our everyday problems and cares overwhelm us and we need some short-term relief to get through the day. We don’t even know what to ask and pray for. It is in these times that Jesus offers us the comfort of His Spirit when we turn to Him in hope, and He knows what we need. As we hear St. Paul tell us: *“For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance. In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.”* (Romans 8:24-26) We hope for what we cannot see.

What’s New?

It’s been a crazy first month of retirement; more of a vacation so far. I’m further behind now than I was a month ago. It is nice sleeping in until 6:30 and going to 8:00 Mass, instead of getting up at 4:30 every weekday to attend Mass before work; I’m getting a lot more rest. But I do need to get a little more discipline in my life to be more productive.

We spent 10 beautiful days down in Florida and had to an opportunity to visit the new town of Ave Maria and the new university. It’s truly an amazing complex that has grown out of nowhere. We had a chance to visit and attend Mass at the spectacular new oratory, enjoy lunch at the student union, and tour the library and the prep school.

When we got home it was time to get the house and yard ready for our annual Memorial Day weekend chicken BBQ. Gorgeous weather (72 degrees and sunny), 24 chickens, and over 70 friends and family, made for a delightful time.

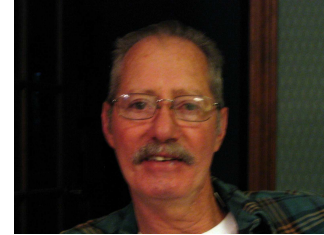
This last month also saw a temporary change in my appearance. I have had a beard continuously since about November of 1973, a couple months after we were married. Obviously, the kids had never seen me without it, and during their teen years they began to bug me to shave it off so they could see what I really looked like. I presented them with some very difficult academic challenges as they went off to college as motivation, and finally my youngest daughter, Andi, came through with a 4.0, all-A, report card for her winter semester at college to meet her challenge. So while we were in Florida, I shaved off my beard; I wanted to do it before spending too much time in the sun and getting a tan line. I kept it off until the chicken BBQ when most of the family was back in town. I got mixed reactions on which way people preferred. But Jenni has the only vote that counts, and so now it is slowly growing back. I'm glad, too, because I don't have the patience to spend that much time shaving every day, even though I am retired.



Ave Maria Oratory



Uncle Bill's Motorized Grill



Shorn at Last

Homilies and Bulletin Articles

There are no new bulletin articles to view at the website. I only had a few new questions come in, and I've been slacking off a little bit this last month. I'll probably try to get the few questions cleared up and then take a brief hiatus for the summer. There are four new homilies that I have posted, however. I'm working to link to them directly from the newsletter, but for now you will have to visit www.orthoscopy.net/Recent_Homilies.

- **The Teacher's Spirit**
- **Does God have a Beard?**
- **Brought Together by a Meal**
- **Rock Solid Conscience**

Status of the Book

As I've already mentioned, this has been a whirlwind first month of retirement. Oh, and did I mention that I need to build some discipline and structure into my new life? Sitting down and working on the book and this newsletter has been a major challenge for me. I essentially stopped working on the book about six months ago when we made the decision to retire. I put it on hold until I knew I would have more time. But now I find it hard to overcome the inertia. While we were in Florida, I spent time re-reading some of the books that helped inspire me to embark on this project in the first place, and I spent some time reviewing what I had already written to regain my momentum. I feel a little guilty for not accomplishing anything concrete, but I am at peace as I move forward. Reviewing what I had already written gave me peace because it reminded me that it was God's hand at work; I was only punching the keys on the keyboard. If this project is to finish successfully, it will only be because He wants it to happen that way. I need to put it in God's hands and then hope for what I cannot see! I think I hear the Holy Spirit groaning already.