

Good morning and welcome to our First Saturday Mass for the Saginaw Division of the World Apostolate of Fatima. I want to thank Deacon Roger and the Parish here at Holy Family for their continued generosity in providing us a centrally located site ... in this, the most beautiful church in the Diocese of Saginaw. Also, I'd like to thank my brother priest ... for assisting with confessions and also for joining me at the altar. You may notice the absence of two of our more regular priests. They are either on vacation or on retreat. I want to encourage you to pray for them, as well as for all priests ... and our bishop ... and diocese.

Earlier this week, the Holy Father published his prayer intentions for the month of May. One of which was: "That Mary, Star of Evangelization, may guide the Church in proclaiming Christ to all nations."

Now, today is the Feast of Ss. Philip and James.

Earlier in St. John's Gospel, we hear the call of Philip by Our Lord, who simply says to him, "Follow Me." Philip was from the same village as Andrew and Peter, and in John's Gospel we hear of Philip almost immediately bringing Nathaniel to Christ.

In yesterday's Gospel, we also met Philip, when prior to feeding the 5,000 - Jesus tests Philip when He asks him where they might find food. Philip's thoughts go to the cost, whereas Andrew shows up with meager rations ... yet great hope.

In today's Gospel reading, we are back at the Last Supper, and as Jesus speaks to the Apostles in a farewell discourse. He is interrupted by St. Thomas who asks where Jesus is going ... and by Philip who asks Jesus to show them God the Father.

The vignettes from St. John's Gospel that speak of Philip give us, perhaps, a bit of understanding on how we might evangelize.

You see, St. Philip didn't go off to a seminary before he started to bring people to Jesus. Rather, Jesus told him, "Follow Me," and only one verse later we hear that Philip is telling Nathaniel to "Come and see."

Philip's response to Jesus' testing of him before the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 shows us that God's way is not our way. Knowing the answer is one thing, but knowing that with God all things are possible ... can often be quite another thing.

And finally, even the Apostles were not 100% on all the things that Jesus was teaching them - but through Faith, and the power of the Holy Spirit, these 12 simple men spread the Gospel all over the world.

Tying the Holy Father's prayer intention for May in with the Feast of these two Apostles gives us the opportunity to realize that Mary is the Star of Evangelization. Through Her powerful intercession, we can bring others to Christ ... as St. Louis de Montfort said - "to Jesus through Mary."

Our monthly First Saturday Masses are opportunities for us to bring people to Jesus through the message of Fatima, and through our devotion to His Blessed Mother. A great deal of what we can do, of course, is through example.

But as in the case of St. Philip, a simple invitation can go a long, long way.

Not only an invitation to our regular First Saturday Masses here in Saginaw, but also an invitation to our annual Rosary Triduum in two weeks; as well as our Rosary Novena in October.

Let us pray for Our Lady's help in spreading the Word ... and know that, by our devotion to Her message and our efforts at repentance and reparation ... we can help to bring about the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart.