

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Edmonton Diocesan Council
15th Annual Essay Contest
2010 WINNERS

Category: Grade 11-12 Essay
Amy Brager, 2nd Place

How Does My Priest Inspire Me to Meet Jesus?

I have had several different priests at my church over my life time. The current priest I have defiantly inspires me to meet Jesus and explore my Catholic faith.

A great thing about Father Eduardo (my priest) is that his sermons are entertaining. In fact he manages to make the whole mass fairly entertaining. In his sermons he adds stories that relate to that day's mass that not only help to explain his point but are often amusing as well. He defiantly keeps a person's attention with them. I have a tendency of spacing out at the best of times and masses can be a little dull. His style of doing sermons keeps me focused on the mass and keeps me thinking about the messages that are in the mass. The stories help the mass to stick better in my head than a simple speech would. Father Eduardo also has Deacon Doug do the sermons once in a while which provides a nice change to the mass since Deacon Doug also does good sermons.

Throughout the rest of mass Father Eduardo also tries to keep things interesting. He often brings additional music into the mass by singing parts of it. We often do a song version of Our Father prayer during mass. Also Father Eduardo plays guitar and sings some parts of the Christmas and Easter masses. He adds other amusing comments into mass at appropriate times as well.

To keep the message of following Jesus at school Father Eduardo participates in school events. First of all he plays basketball when the teachers and students have their annual face off match. A priest playing basketball is just cool (even if he is on the teacher's team). This really gets kids thinking that may be church is not as lame as they thought it was. He of course also does our school masses which are just as entertaining and insightful as regular masses. For the sermons of school masses Father Eduardo relates the readings to thing teenagers are more interested and understand better. This helps the students think about how God and Jesus affect our lives more easily and lets us see ways to meet Jesus in our daily lives. Of course some people won't listen any way but for those students who are open minded Father Eduardo's sermons are explanatory and inspiring.

I think the main way Father Eduardo inspires me to meet Jesus is because he's so easy going and happy. His attitude inspires people that things are possible. I have noticed while I am altar serving that he does not fuss over the little things. You can tell he cares but he does not worry too much. Speaking both as someone who's had priest that are pickier about how things are done and as someone who does not cope too well with a lot of pressure I can say this is definitely a good attitude to have. When a priest makes things seem too complicated for people to manage them, many get discouraged and stop trying. This keeps them from being more connected to their faith. I know from experience that when the altar servers have too many small specifics to think about it becomes very stressful and they often quit. I sure wanted to for a while because I was always so nervous about mass. This has changed for me partly because I've had more experience but also partly because Father Eduardo does not make me as worried about screwing up. When I was not as stressed I became more willing to try. I think that this applies to pretty much everyone in most situations, which is why with his easy going manner, you can manage anything, attitude is so important to inspire people to meet Jesus.

With his interesting masses, ways of working to connect with teenagers and most of all, his easy going attitude, Father Eduardo inspires me to meet Jesus.