

Extracted from St John Vianney May 16, 2010 Bulletin

Rambling IV by Carl Beyer

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the St. John Vianney Ushers that helped our mother church, St. Thomas Aquinas, with the First Holy Communion held at the Santa Ana Star Center. We thought we were going to assist the St. Thomas Aquinas Ushers but then found out that we were to be the only Ushers. It has always been my opinion that we have the best Ushers of any church I have ever visited. Our goal as Ushers is to greet you and make you feel welcome at St. John Vianney. I often see name tags on Ushers at other churches that say "Usher". Our name tags have our names on them because we want you to know that we are your brothers and sisters in Christ. We want you to be able to see us outside of church and feel comfortable saying "hi" and starting up a conversation. We know many of you by name and, if we do not, we welcome you to introduce yourselves to us.

I have been slow in finishing the garden, but I am getting closer. The peas are up and climbing and the radishes are getting closer to the first harvest. The beets and onions are poking through the ground. I am moving the potatoes to a different bed to try and lose the hornworms. But as we were planting the potatoes, we noticed at least four bunches growing in the old bed so we transplanted them. In hindsight, I probably transplanted the hornworms. We planted horseradish last year but did not harvest any, so this year it is up and growing and, hopefully, multiplying. The carrots from last year were dug up and we canned seventy-five pints of them. This week we will harvest the onions from last year. We are going to chop them and freeze them for later use. Our strawberry patch is white from all the blossoms which will turn into fruit. Soon we can make some strawberry jam along with some homemade strawberry shortcake. The grapes are producing their first year of fruit. We are looking forward to it. As far as I can tell, the blueberries are a bust with no sign of life. The blackberry and raspberry plants are starting fresh from what I hope is a good root system. I see fruit on the Nectarine, Peach, Apple and Cherry trees. The plum tree once again seems to be fruitless. I bought some Cherry hedge plants which I hope will get a good footing this year. Inside, our tomato and pepper plants are ready to be transplanted outside. The cucumbers planted inside have been a failure. Only two cucumber plants are left alive.

Has everyone been enjoying the rollercoaster weather? After seeing hail piling up in the backyard the other weekend, we disregarded the signs and headed up to the Jemez for a hike. We found ourselves in about four inches of snow in May. Still not discouraged, we headed down a trail to a site we wanted to visit. We soon found the trail ending in a rock face we could not get around and the river was too cold to cross. So, we backtracked and crossed the Jemez River via a tree that had fallen across the river. But once again, after hiking down river, we found we needed to go up and around a rock face. We started up the side of the hill but the snow simply made it too dangerous with the rock face drop off. So, we decided to head up the mountain a different way and take a different route back to the car. We made it back to the road but on the other side from where we parked so we had made a very large circle on our hike. I love being able to get out in the woods with the kids. There is always something really special about snow that no one else has walked in. It makes you feel like you are discovering new land that no one else has ever walked on.

Earlier last month I had my first Elk herd sighting. In the past twenty years in New Mexico during

numerous camping trips and hikes I had never seen a herd of Elk. I once ran across a single young Elk and that was quite amazing. But heading down Hwy 4 from Los Alamos we came up quickly on a herd crossing the road. I parked and jumped out for someone to take a picture of me with the Elk Herd in the background just to find everyone's cameras dead from all the pictures we took at Bandelier. I thought the sighting was very exciting. We were so close to them and there were so many of them. God sure is an amazing Creator.

With school ending and summer break starting it should officially be time to dust off the camping gear and spend time in the glorious outdoors. Time to get out and explore all the wondrous sites New Mexico has to offer. Time to gather up the scrap wood and plan those campfires with the kids and good friends. By now, hopefully, we all have cleaned off the BBQ grills and thrown some hamburgers and hotdogs on them for a family gathering. And, if you are fortunate, you have thrown some steaks and shrimp on the BBQ for those really special occasions.

Congratulations to all the kids, and the families of those kids, who in the coming weeks will be celebrating High School graduations. These graduations are the first grown up accomplishment to start a young person's life. My greatest wish is that these graduations will be only the first step of their education and that all who are able will continue on to college.

God Bless you all. Go forth and plant. Go forth and camp. Go forth and BBQ. Go forth and enjoy all the great activities God has created for you.