

Father,

The story I mentioned this morning might give you a different epiphany than the one you shared in last week's bulletin.

So I will try to sketch it here for you as memory serves.

When Bishop Zubik was first ordained a priest, he was assigned to a parish where the parochial vicar was to begin a two-week vacation the day that Father Zubik arrived.

On the second day, however, the pastor died, essentially leaving Father Zubik alone to handle the pastoral and administrative duties - as well as everything else from the bingo game to the bake sale.

This quickly overwhelmed him, since he didn't know the parish or the people, and had never served as a priest before.

One day, he apparently felt he had to get out of there, and told his secretary he was leaving for a while.

He wound up at a McDonald's restaurant during off hours and found a quiet corner in which to eat, read and try to get his mind back.

Then he heard someone say, "Excuse me, Father. Do you have a minute?"

He looked up to see a young lady with her five-year old daughter standing next to him.

After they were invited to sit down, the woman proceeded to launch into a litany of heavy personal issues for about an hour.

He then returned to his parish, and a few years later was transferred to a different location.

One day, he received a letter from this woman thanking him for his attention that day at McDonald's.

She said that he had saved two lives that day because she had planned to leave the restaurant, go home, kill her daughter and then commit suicide.

But the time he spent with her caused her to change her mind, and she said that she and her child were now fine and doing well.

I think that the epiphany here is that if Father Zubik had decided to "complete the mission" at the parish that day, and straighten out the bingo game and everything else, two people would have died.

The reason he was at the right place at the right time was probably because he realized that as a Christian, he is not only entitled to peace, but is commanded to let the peace of Christ control his heart.

And since you have stated previously that you tend to be a workaholic, I think this lesson could be more relevant to you than the one you recently received.

And I believe that the following quotation further supports this epiphany:

"Here on earth it is impossible to perform a more meritorious act than visiting Jesus often in the Holy Eucharist."

St. Teresa of Avila, Doctor of the Church and Mystic

May God bless you,

Joe Carducci