

From Pontiff to Pew (continued):

Christians, like everyone else, are involved in building the city of man, striving towards the end of all things and the encounter with God, and reminding those with whom they share the adventure of progress, science and life of this ultimate purpose.

Earthly progress must certainly be clearly distinguished from the development of the Kingdom of Christ; however, the Council affirms that “to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God. ... All the good fruits of our nature and enterprise, we will find them again, but freed of stain, burnished and transfigured” (no. 39).

Finally, let us recall that in order to become authentic human progress – that is, progress for the whole person and for all people – technical and scientific progress must be inspired and guided by charity. Only in this way can it always be placed in the service of human dignity and promote the living conditions of all, especially the most disadvantaged.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Second Vatican Council invites us to share the bread of knowledge and know-how, so that every person and every people may develop their potential, and together, with God’s help, we may build a better future.

From the Pastor’s Desk

Today, Thursday, I am writing to you from Ocean City, MD where I take my yearly fall vacation. To be honest, this year has been one of the worst in 7 years. From the time that I arrived it has been overcast, unseasonably cold, and there have been gale force winds every day which has even prevented me from sitting on my balcony to hear the sounds of the ocean (something that I look forward to every year). The good news is that it has been time away, time for recreation and renewal. I have had some good prayer time as well as some phenomenal seafood (something that one cannot usually find in our Allegheny mountains {whose other aspects are undeniably beautiful}). Even though this has not been the time that I had hoped for it has been a blessing just the same.

Unfortunately, this week I need to address a rather serious issue. For the past several weeks our weekend attendance has been significantly lower, and correspondingly, our collection has also suffered. To be blatantly honest, if our collection for September remains as low as it has for the next three months, I literally do not know how we will make it financially (and I mean paying basic bills). Our spending has remained the same; however, we will have trouble with some basic expenses if the giving trends remain the same. You know full well how much I detest speaking about money, yet it cannot be denied that basic expenses have gone up and collection has decreased recently. Just as your cost of living has increased as individuals and as families, so our cost of existing has increased as a parish. Rather than belabor the point, I would like to ask that you continue to prayerfully consider your charitable giving. Only you can account before God what the right amount for you to give is. Thank you for your thoughtful and prayerful attention to this serious matter.