

Happy Lord's Day!

Today is the anniversary of the day the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Crookston was dedicated. Many of you know that there was a decision back in the late 1980s/early 1990s to move away from what is often called the *old Cathedral* to the *new Cathedral* in Crookston. The old one still stands, though it is no longer owned by the Diocese of Crookston. Even from the outside, it is still a beautiful structure. Nonetheless, we have our new one and today we celebrate its dedication - we remember that the Church of God has a home in our northwestern corner of Minnesota. Praise God!

Being from Crookston, the new Cathedral is also my "home" parish. As I've said before, I didn't really grow up attending Mass at the Cathedral (or anywhere) except on holidays and for family events, but it was the primary place of worship for me after my high school conversion. It was at this Cathedral that I learned how to pray the rosary, a prayer I still pray almost every day. After I learned it, my grandfather basically forced me to lead the daily Mass crowd in the rosary on Wednesday mornings during the summer. He had a way about him, you just couldn't say no when he walked up to you two minutes before the rosary was supposed to begin and said, "You're leading it today." Ok, grandpa.

It was also at the Cathedral that I got to spend a lot of time in fellowship with the youth group. One of the most influential people in my life has been the former youth minister in Crookston, Mark Hollcraft (who is now the Executive Director of Real Presence Radio). He really helped to form a strong youth group and taught me a lot of being a man of God.

Above all, I learned a lot about worshiping God at the Cathedral in Crookston. The "rector" of the Cathedral at the time was Father Bob Schreiner, now pastor over in Red Lake Falls. (The "pastor" of any Cathedral is the bishop of the diocese, but he has to assign a priest to take charge of the spiritual care of the people. That priest is called the rector.) He is an incredible priest, a great inspiration for me, and he has a deep love of the Mass and of Eucharistic Adoration. He made those two acts of worship his priorities. His preaching during Mass always brought me to a deeper love of Jesus in the Eucharist, both in the Mass and in Adoration. The Cathedral had Mass daily and offered many hours of Eucharistic Adoration, times when people would sign up to adore Jesus in the Eucharist for an hour at a time.

These opportunities for worship, along with the fellowship and other opportunities for prayer, made the Cathedral a true home for me. Each time I go back for various diocesan liturgies or simply stop by when I'm in town, I'm reminded of the unexpected ways God the Father drew me to his Son Jesus. There may have been any number of joyful or difficult things happening in my life over the years, but I always knew I could stop by the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception for a moment or an hour with the Lord. We're so privileged to have the Lord in our midst in this diocese! On the surface, the Cathedral doesn't look like anything special - just another church - but beyond the surface, the living God can be discovered. Beautiful! And because we have this Cathedral in Crookston, we're also able to have our churches here in our towns. Jesus comes to dwell with us here in Oklee, Goodridge, and Grygla - amazing! May we never lose our awe and wonder at the ways God is at work among us. And may these churches become true homes for all who live in our towns.

May the Lord give you his peace!  
Fr. Bryan