

# From the Pastor



We are sending kids back to school, and teachers are going back to work. Two funny school stories I recently heard:

The teacher asked, "Why don't you brush your teeth? I can see what you had for breakfast this morning. The boy answered: Well, what did I have for breakfast?" Teacher, "Eggs." Boy, "You're wrong! THAT WAS YESTERDAY!"

A girl student to a boy student, "Too bad you flunked the test. How far were you from the right answers?" Boy, "TWO SEATS."

There is a story about St. Paul the Apostle in which after his conversion he went through some schooling. The story reminds me of what learning is all about. You may recall that story from the New Testament, Acts 9.19-31.

This is a passage about Saul going back to school. Just like many of us or our kids, grandkids, or people we love. Saul was given a gift of faith in Christ, but his journey to becoming the Apostle Paul took some time. Saul was already highly educated. Growing up in Tarsis (in Roman Province) he learned about Greek philosophy, pagan religions. When he was old enough, he studied at the feet of famous Rabbi Gamaliel. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin and card carrying member of the Pharisee Party. He was a member of the Sandhedrin in Jerusalem. But after Jesus threw him away from his antichristian path He sent him back to school and taught him some things.

I want us to go back to school as well and see what and how God wants to teach us. First of all it has to be a time spent alone with God. At first St. Paul spent some time in Damascus with other Christians where he had a tremendous season of personal spiritual growth. Much of that time he spent in prayer, study and meditation. He transformed from his bitterness, hatred and fear into a tender hearted Apostle Paul.

After Paul graduated from the University of Solitude, he then took an advanced course at the University of Suffering (see: Acts 9.22-25) enduring many trials in his various missionary trips throughout the Roman Empire.

Suffering is never pleasant or nice, but it is necessary. They say the measure of true character is what it takes for you to quit. The longer we put off going to school, the harder it is and the less likely we will ever go.

St. Paul never gave up. He got schooled many times, and took each lesson seriously.

God looks down from heaven and sees us as a diamond in the rough. Sometimes he is knocking off our rough edges. To go back to school we must admit we don't have all the answers, and that we have room for improvement.

Our kids are going back to school, but let's never forget to let God take us all, young and older, back to the school of life as well. I wish all the students and teachers a blessed new school year 2018/2019.

*+ Father Roger*