

Our new cruncher

One of the newest additions to our office is a commercial, big volume paper shredder. It is our third shredder in the last few months. Previously, we purchased some low volume, ordinary paper shredders. We found out that they were not able to take care of the volume of work. We even had to remove staples before we could crunch in them. Both went to an early grave as their motors burned out after several jamming experiences.

Our new commercial paper shredder is a delight. It can handle large volumes and even can chew up staples. It is also very hungry and does not suffer from gastric bypass. I love to hear its hunger pains as I feed it all kinds of edible materials. It has an insatiable appetite for junk mail. It also delights in advertizing faxes.

One of its great delights is to see me coming with a handful of fodder to feed its hungry tummy. It always seems to be hungry and it emits a satisfied sigh of relief when I have fed it. It is really like a baby in that it is willing to enjoy its comfort food at any time of the day or night.

The machine has a wonderful capacity to digest its edible contents into tiny snowflake like pieces. It also loves to receive colorful materials that it can digest and add to its expansive stomach.

Recently, the machine reminded me that it can also suffer from indigestion if it is not fed the right diet in appropriate increments. I received in the mail a piece of junk mail. Glancing at its address, I immediately put it aside to feed the machine. I went to the machine with the unopened piece of junk mail and started to feed it. Immediately, I heard the machine splutter and cough as something seemed to get stuck in its throat. It stopped. A Heimlich maneuver did not dislodge it. Finally, we discover the culprit that almost choked the machine. It was a dime coin that had been attached to the inside of the unopened envelope.

So, now I have learned a valuable lesson. I will take a little more time to open even the junk mail letters just to see if there might be a sample or coin worth keeping. Then, my hungry machine will be able to digest the rest without any difficulty.

Experts are trying to make us become a paperless society so there will be less clutter in our lives and landfills. Still, being creatures of habit, we find it hard to let go of a tangible pieces of paper that soothe our insecurity and stroke our comfort zones. In our moments of guilt emanating from our accumulating thirst, we often hire organizers who will come and help us get rid of our unnecessary clutter. In spite of some withdrawal symptoms, we reluctantly oblige and accede to their wishes and advice.

We are embracing the season of Advent in preparation for the simplicity and miracle of Christmas. During this time, our parishes offer opportunities for reconciliation. All parishes provide opportunities for people to divest themselves from some of the junk in their lives. Parishes give people an opportunity to get the house of their hearts and relationships in order and to de-clutter them.

The church has provided Catholics with a wonderful opportunity to use its God given sin cruncher to crush into indistinguishable pieces the baggage, the struggles, the failures, the disappointments, the omissions, and the accumulated junk in our lives so that we might have a fresh start, a new beginning.

I just noticed that today's mail arrived. As I look at the pile on my desk, I begin to look forward to compartmentalizing it and/or disposing it. I can also hear my new, big volume paper shredder, salivating as it anticipates its next meal.

It's feeding time again and I must comply. After all, I must take good care of my new-found friend because I hope he will be around for a long time and will continue to digest its food. I look forward to its distinctive and satisfied sound as it keep pulverizing its ever-ready supply of food.