

ALLELUIA AWARD RECOGNIZES THE MANY CONTRIBUTIONS OF FATHER MARTY DOBRZYNSKI



Thank You. Heartfelt thanks to the Board of Directors and Rita and everyone here. Each year when we gather as a Region we suggest and review candidates for the McManus Award and this Alleluia Award. As many of my region compatriots can tell you I'm not usually shy when it comes to putting my candidate forward. I have often looked upon those who have been honored, especially those I know well, with the same sentiment that St. Paul relates to the Corinthians: "if one member is honored, all the members rejoice together;" all the members are honored. I can truly think of more than a dozen other people who deserve this distinction this evening. So, as I am humbly honored, please be honored yourselves, there are so many of you who deserve it and many of you who will deserve it in the future.

It has really been my high privilege to work with, dream with and serve with the many who have been esteemed with this recognition and those honored with our most prestigious – McManus Award. Yet, I really feel blessed by the wisdom of those whom I have worked with regularly in Region VII who put up with my resolute behavior at times and the many others, over the years, who have I have collaborated with – and perhaps whom I irritated as well.

Your first year out of the seminary can be difficult as you try to settle into a whole other kind of lifestyle in a parish. An older, wiser priest advised me: "Show up for everything, showing up is half the battle. If you don't show up for things you don't know what is going on or what should be going on." He was right. Soon much more than I expected, or really wanted, came my way. But I continued "showing up."

When Rita phoned me to tell me this news, I was speechless, which my compatriots in Region VII can tell you is a rare condition. In fact, anyone who served on the Board during the time I did can tell you it's an exceptional moment. I was truly perplexed, I asked: For what reason did I deserve such an honor? She said something like, "Marty, you have been there for the Federation without hesitation to do, and support, the work of the FDLC, and your diocese, in so many ways." I just thought, well, I showed up.

So, especially to those who are binding themselves to this great liturgy endeavor, if someone advises you to "go to everything, to show up" beware of the outcome. It will lead to more work, more worry, more headaches, more grey hairs, and more joy than what is expected or deserved.

