

Dear Friends,

You would never believe what I did on Father's Day. Wait. Maybe I shouldn't tell you. Oh, what the heck! I might as well tell you despite how inconceivable it may sound for someone my age. After a fabulous lunch for my father, my brother and I dared to play a couple of games on the Wii! See! I knew you wouldn't believe it! Yet, that is precisely what we did!

One evening the week prior, I stopped by to visit my parents and during the course of my visit, they asked me if I wanted to try out the Wii. You see, my mother astonishingly won a Wii gaming console as a door prize at a dinner she attended. Still shocked by her luck, she called me to tell me about it and wasn't sure whether or not to keep it or to sell it. I encouraged her to do whatever she wished, but also let her know that it wasn't just for kids; that many folks found the games to be quite fun.

Well, she ultimately decided to keep it for now, and my father set it up a couple of weeks back. When I went over to visit, they had already played it a couple of times. Being a Wii novice, I opted to try bowling and tennis as an initiation into the world of Wii. I have to admit, my venture into this virtual world was quite enjoyable! In fact, I discovered that I am far better at Wii Bowling than I am at real bowling!

My attempt at Wii Tennis, on the other hand, left something to be desired. I might have to stick to real tennis (which I have not played in several years). Besides, I am not sure if my "Wii Mii (my virtual character in the video game)" was cursing when he missed the ball or if it was just an expression of frustration! It is said that video games influence behavior. I'd hate to give bad example if it was cursing.

In any event, it was much more entertaining than I thought it was going to be - so much so, that I somehow convinced my brother to join me in a few rounds of Wii bowling. I could tell that he had a blast too!

Now I know why so many praise the Wii as a way to get people off their couches and into some activity. If you ever see my elbow in a cast, you'll know what happened!!! It can be rather exerting and it reminded me of something I have been putting off for a while - exercise! I always seem to have an excuse for not putting my best intentions into practice.

Our Gospel this weekend urges us to stop making excuses. Like the man who made excuses for not following Jesus, we are prompted to stop making excuses for not attending Mass or working on our spiritual life. Jesus reminds us that if we put our hands to the plow, we must stop looking back, else we find ourselves veering off track. This means that if we say we are going to follow the Lord, we must do it without regret. We have got to keep our focus and not revert back to prior concerns. We've got to look ahead and leave behind the things that bog us down. If we allow ourselves, we can always find an excuse not to do something. Jesus is inviting us not to succumb to this tendency. He wants us to give ourselves to him totally and to persevere in that commitment. With His help, we will not waver! God bless!

Fr. Paul