By Pat Haggerty

I have a confession to make. I have to be honest about something. There is a certain saying that I avoid---or at least gulp before saying it. I get a lump in my throat and a pause in my thinking. It is this one: "let go and let God." Sometimes, when I am in our Parish Gift Shop, I even circumvent the area where I know there are little knick knacks bearing this slogan.

Why do I avoid this mantra? I think it's because it is so hard to live by. I want to live by it; I seriously try. However, it is perhaps one of the most difficult principles I confront as a Catholic-Christian. It means having total abandon to the ways of the Lord. It means throwing oneself into the arms of God and letting our hearts melt into His. It means living in total trust of God's ways and how we react to them.

This is the ultimate lesson of a follower of Christ. Think of all the times in the gospels when Jesus has asked for trust: trust that the five loaves and fishes will adequately feed the crowd; trust that Peter will be able to step out of the boat and walk on water; trust that He will raise Lazarus from the dead. The list could go on and on. Sometimes, Jesus' followers exemplified trust without His even asking for it: like the centurion who asked for the healing of his servant. He proclaimed, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed (Mt. 8:8)."

These words have particular impact as we pray them during the celebration of the Mass. Perhaps as we say them each Sunday (or more often, if possible), we can reinforce our feeling of trust in the Lord. We can think about the centurion and his blind trust in the Lord's power and goodness. We are not looking for a physical healing of a servant but rather of a spiritual healing of our souls. These beautiful words can have new meaning, as we place them in the context of our daily lives of trust and letting go.

We can also reflect on the beginning of Psalm 25, as we say:

"To thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul, O my God, in thee I trust,
Let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me.

Yea, let none that wait for thee be put to shame;
Let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
Make me to know thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths."

I want to tell you something else. I have now decided to go back to the Parish Gift Shop and purchase something with the slogan: "Let go, and let God." That will be my next and biggest step!