

What's in a name?

A couple of weeks ago, I asked employees of the Catholic Center and The Catholic Review to submit their ideas for what this column should be called with the promise of a personal cash prize (\$100) for the chosen entry. I was both grateful and surprised at the enthusiastic response this “contest” evoked.

The choice was not easy. With nearly 300 suggested titles submitted, the mind-stretching task I had hoped to avoid was quickly turning into a major challenge to choose between my Irish heritage (“The Emerald Voice,” “Irish Eyes are Smiling upon the Archdiocese,” “An Irishman’s Philosophy,” “Emerald Quill”) and my role as Archbishop (“The Shepherd’s View,” “A Shepherd’s Quill/Diary/Voice,” “Updating the Flock,”). One could argue that “Shepherd’s Pie for the Soul” would have been the safe choice, but I feared it would be viewed a cop out.

Others appealed to my role of service with our Military (“A Ten Hut,” “At Ease,” “Salute,” “Officer on Deck”) while others were willing to bestow on me greater authority than that which I possess (“The Mitre Touch,” “A Message from Above,” “The Premier Voice,” “Divine Write”).

While the vast majority of the entries made paring down the list a real challenge, there were a few that didn’t exactly succeed in capturing the tone and the goal of this column: “Sacramental Whine,” “Gold, not Blarney,” “Pondering the Riddles of God,” “O’Brien’s Snippets of Inspiration,” “Until the Rapture,” “Edwin’s Edict,” “Archbishop Avenue.”

Ultimately, as you can see, I turned to the suggestion of Jennifer Williams, “Thoughts on our Church.”

It is the Church of which I will be writing: its unity, holiness, universality, and its apostolic call at every level. Well aware of these identifying marks of our Catholic Church throughout the world, I have been inspired to no end to see these same marks lived out, enthusiastically and effectively, in so many of the parishes and institutions within the Archdiocese of Baltimore. I look forward to sharing with you my thoughts on our Church, in hopeful prayer that they will be of help in enriching

our love and devotion to her.