

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH + YORKVILLE

August 18, 2024

Newsletter no. 231

Dear parishioners and friends,

This isn't really a newsletter; it's just a letter, although a very special one. This coming Thursday, August 22nd, I am leaving St. Joseph's Church after sixteen years to begin a new ministry at St. Frances Cabrini Church on Roosevelt Island. As many of you know, I was approached by Bishop Edmund Whelan, who is responsible for making assignments in the Archdiocese of New York, at the end of May and informed that Father Gerald Murray would be named pastor of St. Joseph's. Father Murray's term as pastor of the Church of the Holy Family on East 47th Street was coming to an end, and the archdiocese had decided that he would move to St. Joseph's and serve as pastor there. Bishop Whelan suggested that I should stay on at St. Joseph's to aid in the transition from one pastor to another, but neither Father Murray nor I felt that that was a good idea. I want to emphasize that it was not solely Father Murray who objected to this plan; I did as well. It is not customary, nor is it a wise arrangement, for a previous pastor to stay on once a new pastor has been appointed.

When it became clear to me that the transition from one pastor to another had been decided and was not going to be reconsidered, I told Bishop Whelan that I didn't want to retire from the priestly ministry but that I wanted to continue serving in the archdiocese, despite the fact that I was well past the retirement age of 75. I expressed an interest in serving in a poor parish in Upper Manhattan or The Bronx or, if not there, then on Roosevelt Island, where there has been no priest in residence for nearly a decade. Bishop Whelan consulted with the pastor of St. John Nepomucene Church on East 66th Street, Father Stefan Chanas, who is responsible for the priestly ministry on Roosevelt Island, and Father Chanas agreed that it would be a big help to him and the other priests at St. John Nepomucene if I were assigned to St. Frances Cabrini.

And so, as I write this, I am packing my things to make my move to Roosevelt Island. I'm sure that virtually everyone who reads this has had the experience of moving from one place to another, probably several times, and of deciding what to save and what to throw away or give away. I've moved a number of times in my life, so it's not foreign to me, but over the course of my sixteen years here—the longest I've ever stayed anywhere—I've accumulated much more than I realized, especially in terms of books. It's hard for a booklover to say goodbye to a single book, never mind dozens of them!

I have said many times, and have been proud to say it, that I have a long and very close connection with St. Joseph's. I started school here in 1951, when my family lived on the corner of 84th and York, and it was while living there that I first thought (at the age of five or six) of becoming a priest. We moved out of Yorkville in early 1952, and then my mother and I moved back to the neighborhood in 1962. Although she was a parishioner of St. Monica's, she frequently attended the German Mass at St. Joseph's. After my seminary studies and my ordination to the priesthood in 1973, I was often asked to celebrate the German Mass myself. Over the course of the years I came to know three of the pastors of St. Joseph's—Monsignor Harry Byrne, Father Gerard DiSenso, and Monsignor Lawrence Connaughton, each of whom I admired greatly. Then, in 2008, to my surprise, Cardinal Egan appointed me pastor. The sixteen years that followed have been without question the happiest of my life. For that happiness I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my parishioners, to the parish staff, and to the children of St. Joseph's School and their parents and principal and teachers. My pastorate has not been perfect, I know, but in your generosity you received what was good and looked to the Lord to make up for my missteps and mistakes.

Thank you.

Father Boniface

Mass intentions for the period from August 17th to 25th

Saturday-Sunday, August 17th-18th

4:00 pm:	Joseph Durso (D)
8:00 am:	St. Joseph's Parishioners
10:00 am:	Dorothea Mehl (D)
12:00 noon:	Caroline Powers (L), Birthday
2:00 pm (Hungarian):	Michael Levai (D)
6:00 pm:	Vera and Leonard Kreppel (D)

Monday, August 19th

7:00 am:	Rose Turner (D)
12:15 pm:	Roy DeFilippis (D)

Tuesday, August 20th

7:00 am:	Robert Covais (D)
12:15 pm:	James J. Cashin (D)

Wednesday, August 21st

7:00 am:	Grace Mojdeh Sobhani (L)
12:15 pm:	Helen Milne (D)

Thursday, August 22nd

7:00 am:	Lisa Gallianza (D)
12:15 pm:	Christina Argonisch (L)

Friday, August 23rd

7:00 am:	
12:15 pm:	Christina Argonisch (L)

Saturday, August 24th

8:00 am:	
12:15 pm:	
4:00 pm:	Sean Kane (D)

Sunday, August 25th

8:00 am:	St. Joseph's Parishioners
10:00 am:	Stephen Perry (D)
12:00 noon:	Stan Sitarski (D)
2:00 pm (Hungarian):	Gabriella Davidovac (D)
6:00 pm:	In Thanksgiving to God