

Easter Week 2020

Dear Parishioners of St. Columbkille and St. Joseph the Worker:

A joyful Easter to you all! The victory of life over death in Jesus Christ resonates with the arrival of spring and so much that is new around us. "So whoever is in Christ is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, new things have come!" (II Cor 5:17).

That new includes having daily a new hopefulness as we respond to the changes brought to our lives by this pandemic. God holds us securely in the same love that brought Jesus to resurrection!

Another new aspect to life involves how our parishes are to be pastored in the coming months. Archbishop Jackels informed Fr. David, Fr. Paul and myself that come July 14<sup>th</sup>, Fr. Paul will become the pastor and sole priest assigned to St. Joseph the Worker. Fr. David and I will continue as co-pastors of St. Columbkille parish, and as Rector and Director of Spiritual Formation for St. Pius X seminary.

This new arrangement reflects the Archbishop's original vision for these parishes after Fr. Anderson's term as pastor. Proximity to the seminary (a walk across the parking lot) made St. Columbkille the parish to link to it. Changes in priest-availability and Fr. Paul's happy arrival from Ghana brought about the shared pastoring arrangement we have enjoyed these last 2 years.

In that time, a number of things have become clear to us.

- Both St. Joseph the Worker and St. Columbkille are dynamic parishes with great potential that part-time pastoring inhibits unnecessarily.
- The seminary that Archbishop Jackels made clear was to be Fr. David's and my first responsibility, also suffers for trying to properly pastor two parishes.
- Fr. Paul, who has been a pastor, has built schools, and been the vicar-general (basically his Bishop's right-hand) for his diocese in Ghana, is very well qualified to pastor St. Joseph's. He has been providing leadership visibly in his preaching and presence, and behind the scenes in the staff, and leadership councils and committees of the parish.

When the Archbishop asked our input on how the current arrangement of sharing both parishes and the seminary was going, we had to tell him the truth. For all that we enjoyed about sharing in the lives of these two parishes, the disadvantages to all far outweighed the benefits to you and to the seminary.

These have been incredibly rich years for us priests! Everywhere we turned there were opportunities to shepherd, and often simply "unleash" what came forth from you as dedicated disciples of Jesus who embraced our mission to "Carry the Good News to the ends of the earth!" On behalf of Fr. David, Fr. Paul, and myself, to those in these wonderful parishes with whom we will no longer have that regular contact that goes with being a pastor, please know how sincerely we will miss that!

Please know as well of our deep and enduring gratitude for all you have given us of knowing Jesus Christ, and His love for us, through these years of walking with you in the way of discipleship. Keep us in your prayers. You certainly will continue to be in ours as this next "new"—in His service—unfolds for us all.

Yours in Christ Risen!

*Fr. Tom*

*Fr. David*

*Fr. Paul*