

A Word From Our New Pastor

Laborers for the Harvest

"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest (Luke 10:2)."

Reading and praying with this scripture calls to mind the truth of Christ's call for us to serve others in His name. The harvest is always a biblical analogy for the opportunity to share with all people the Gospel message of the Kingdom of Heaven. Wherever we go there are opportunities to share the Gospel and tell the Good News about Jesus Christ and how He has come to save us and set us free. However, the number of people who dedicate their lives solely to this task are few.

When we look at the Church as a whole we can identify the priests, religious sisters and brothers as well as lay leaders who toil to proclaim Christ to others. I look at the ranks of the priests in the State of Minnesota and see that in our 6 dioceses very few priests were ordained in 2019 compared to the numbers of those priests who died or retired. On one hand the decrease in priests in active ministry might be a cause to be alarmed and panic or this time in our history can be an opportunity for Catholics to embrace their faith at a deeper level through a life of prayer and service. The fruit of this time as in any time in the history of Christianity is that we need to call upon the Master of the Harvest who is God the Father and pray for the Holy Spirit to enter into the hearts of men, women and children so that they would respond generously to the call to serve as messengers of the Gospel. Please join me in praying for an increase of vocations to priesthood, religious life, holy marriage, and the generous single life.

New Priest

It is a Joy to be assigned as the new parish priest here at Most Holy Redeemer, St. Patrick and St. Canice. As your new priest I am excited to serve others in our area in the name of Jesus Christ. Here is a little background on your new priest Fr. Tom Niehaus (pronounced knee-house). I was born in Ivanhoe, Minnesota. I am the youngest son of Melvin (d) & Veronica (Saftig) Niehaus and have three brothers Fr. Jonathan (d), David and Fr. Mark as well as two sisters Sr. M. Deanne and Rebecca. The family was very active in Saints Peter and Paul parish in Ivanhoe, MN and in the Schoenstatt Marian Movement. I graduated from Lincoln HI High School – Ivanhoe, MN in 1996; Minnesota State University, Mankato in 2000 with a BS in Social Studies Secondary Education/Geography; and South Dakota State University, Brookings in 2002 with a MS in Geography. Following secular studies I entered priestly formation for the Diocese of Winona, Minnesota in 2002. I completed Pre-Theology seminary studies at Immaculate Heart of Seminary – Winona, MN 2004; and was a seminary student at the Pontifical North American College in Rome from 2004 to 2010 graduating from the Pontifical Gregorian University with an Sacred Theology degree in 2007; and graduating from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas with a License in Canon Law in 2010. I was ordained to the diaconate, on October 4, 2007 at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by then Archbishop John Patrick Foley (d) and to the priesthood on June 28, 2008 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Winona, MN by Bishop Bernard Joseph Harrington. I have served as a priest at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart & St. Casimir Parish and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Newman Center, Winona, MN 2008-2011; St. Casimir-Wells, MN, Our Lady of Mount Carmel-Easton, MN and St. John the Baptist-Minnesota Lake, MN 2011-2015; St. Columbanus-Blooming Prairie, MN , Sacred Heart-Hayfield, MN and St. John Baptist de la Salle-Dodge Center, MN 2015-2019. I am associated with the Companions of Christ and am living in community in Le Center with two other Companions of Christ priests at St. Mary's Parish. I have also served as a spiritual director for various retreats for priests, seminarians, religious sisters and laity. I enjoy running, biking, swimming, kayaking, bonfires, Minnesota Vikings and Twins games and exploring new territory locally and around the world. I look forward to meeting you and getting to know each of you in the coming months.

United in the love of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Tom Niehaus