

From The Pastor -- June 7, 2009

It was ten years ago this month that Bishop Sullivan assigned me as St. Nicholas' Pastor. Father Noto officially retired and I reported hardly knowing anyone. That has changed!

These have been ten happy years for me. You and I have been building up the Kingdom of Love, Justice and Peace, living the Spirituality of Stewardship. We are but humble servants who have done only what the Master directed us to do.

The Parish Summary of We Walk of Faith, so recently affirmed by Bishop Di Lorenzo in person the past May displays our spirit, our generosity, our many gifts from the Giver of all good gifts. The Spirit has blessed our ministries and our leadership.

Our participation in the Diocesan Planning effort as Local Planning Area 3 has projected us into the challenge of the next 3+ years. We have committed ourselves to cluster with five other parishes by sharing our parish programs and benefiting from those programs of our sister parishes. Lay leadership and lay ministry will be partners with pastors and deacon.

It has always pleased me when parishioners have introduced me to visitors and to their out of state family members with: this is our priest, or this is our pastor, or, I would like to introduce you to my priest. I am honored to be your pastor and friend. I am experiencing the wonderful spiritual growth of these ten years when I see children whom I baptized, now preparing for First Communion, preparing for Confirmation, continuing as altar servers even as they graduate from high school and prepare for college.

I am rejoicing with young couples who have been in the choir or folk group making appointments to prepare for their marriage. I am elated when young parents whom I have taught in Christian Formation bring their children for baptism. This is part of the "hundredfold" promised by the Lord to his own.

I continue as your pastor until June of 2010. I will be 70 years old in May of that year and 44 years as a priest. I will be eligible for retirement. Ten of those years have been with you through thick and thin.

Together we have this year to celebrate the life cycles and the seasons of our faith. The year 2010 will be the tenth year of the millennium. Shall we draw on our biblical tradition and proclaim the 10th year as a Jubilee Year at St. Nicholas? Together, we are the church of the 21st century and who will celebrate our 50th anniversary as a parish in 2013.

Our Lord stated: You are my friends. Without me you can do nothing. Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN!