

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR



Dear Parishioners,

I recently received word that Fr. Innocent will be leaving St. James in June. Fr. Innocent is seeking to become a member of the Diocese of Rockville Centre. Part of that process is for the priest candidate to have two pastoral experiences prior to being accepted as a candidate for "incardination," that is, acceptance into our diocese.

We are grateful for Fr. Innocent's presence as a parochial vicar here at St. James. We pray that he will be given a second assignment, which will welcome his talents while challenging him to grow in his ability to serve the church on Long Island.

Please keep him in your prayers in the weeks ahead. The new assignments are scheduled to go into effect on Wednesday, June 23, 2021.

I have been assured that another priest will be assigned to St. James to serve as our new associate at the same time. In fact, I have been in touch with several priests who are up for new assignments as parish associates, Parochial Vicars as they are properly called.

These changes are always a challenge for parishes. It is difficult to say good-bye to priests to whom you have become fond. I am sure that our new associate will receive a warm welcome from you after we have had the opportunity to say an appropriate farewell to Fr. Innocent.

I have had the wonderful privilege of celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with the youngsters in Level Eight in our Faith Formation Program over these past two weeks. Given the pandemic the Bishops have requested the pastor or one of the parish associates celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation this year for the safety of all concerned. I shared with the Confirmation Candidates that they were only two years old when I first arrived here eleven years ago. I remember some of them clearly at that age. It's so nice to see that they are maturing into the young men and women that they are becoming.

Starting this weekend and over the next three weekends, Fr. Innocent, Fr. Francis and I will be celebrating six First Holy Communion Masses with the children in Level Two who have completed their preparation for this Sacrament.

My prayer for them is that they will have the opportunity to come to Mass each Sunday to receive Jesus, time and time again in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. That will bind them closer to Christ and His Church.

Fr. John