

FROM FR. MIKE

April 6, 2025

I have some important and surprising news. I have been asked by Cardinal Cupich through our new Bishop, John Siemianowski, to take on a new pastorate. On July 1st this year, I will become the pastor of Our Lady of Ransom Parish in Niles, which is not too far away. While I had another year left on my term here as pastor, that parish needs a pastor, and they thought I would be a good fit for it so I was asked to take it. I just found out before writing this article, so it is as much a surprise for me as it is for you.

What now? St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish will be getting a new pastor (or administrator) on July 1st, but I am not sure yet who that will be. I know everyone wants this merger to be as successful as it can, and a seasoned priest is being sent and may already have been announced by the time you read this. I and the staff are meeting and will make sure the transition goes as smoothly as possible. I know you will be as welcoming to the new priest as you were to me.

On a person note, I want to thank all of you for a wonderful eight years being on site here, time really flies doesn't it? It will be sad to leave but I have learned to accept that God's will is revealed through our lives and superiors, the promise of obedience helps to clarify the Lord's will. While the merger was certainly hard for everyone and there is still so much to be done, the Lord has blessed us all. There will be graces offered in this next phase of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish with a new leader with fresh perspectives, ideas, and gifts.

On a reflective note, as much as things may change, they also stay the same. I was thinking about when I first came to this parish and the first homily I gave in this church on July 1st, 2017. I asked you to pray for me and introduce yourselves so that I could gradually learn your names (I know many of you!). I also shared what I thought was the essential purpose of a good parish which I think is as relevant now as it was before the merge:

Our Lord tells us that to be His disciple we must love Him even more than our family and friends. We have to put Him first, only then do we have life! If we put Christ first, then everything else falls into its proper place.

At a previous parish assignment, the temporary principle noted of the school there: "You've got three different school mission statements and they're all a bit flowery." He was a WWII buff and so gave a suggestion: "We need to be like the Allies in WWII with something simple like *"Get to Berlin."*

The basic mission we have as Catholics could be phrased in different ways: "be a saint, follow Christ fully, grow in holiness, get to heaven." These are all getting at the point the Lord is making. The value of parish ministries or activities could be gauged by asking questions like "how will this help the people to know and live their Catholic faith? Will this decision help them to grow in holiness and follow Jesus?"

Our Lord Himself put it this way "*Whoever loses his life for My sake...will find it.*"

The mission hasn't changed in eight years...or two thousand years. Please pray for me and your new priest and be assured of my love and prayers for you.

With gratitude for all of you and the Lord,

Fr. Mike