

FROM FR. MIKE

May 25, 2025

Transition updates: This weekend in Wichita, Deacon Grant Huslig, our Tolton Teaching Parish seminarian, will become Fr. Grant Huslig! We have been blessed to have Grant with us over these past four years. He taught the children in RE, gave reflections and talks to parents, and as a deacon gave prayerful and inspiring homilies on the Word of God. Fr. Grant will come back to St. Elizabeth of the Trinity on June 8th and will offer the 11:00 a.m. Mass with 1st blessings afterward, the Sacred Chrism still fresh in his hands from ordination! We will have a reception for him after that Mass. Also on June 8, Sandy Czyz, the retiring school secretary, will have a reception after the 9:00 a.m. Mass in the Auditorium, so a busy and meaningful weekend.

It's hard to believe that we are almost in June with the summer before us. That means Fr. Deo will be here soon as an Associate Pastor on June 1st and then replacing me on July 1st. He is very excited to come here. For those wondering, he successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at Loyola University this month, so he will have all the more focus and energy to get to know all of you. There are still some points of clarification in terms of his term and then reception/installation that I will try to get clear before I leave.

As my upcoming sabbatical seems more real, I reflected a bit on the Lord's gifts to us, especially some of His last words to the disciples we heard this Sunday: ***Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you.***

I'm a big fan of the *Lord of the Rings* and of the little hobbit heroes on their great adventure. They get to rest and get recharged at numerous points throughout the story. The prototype of these ideal rest points is Rivendell, the house of Elrond, an almost angel-like figure of wisdom and goodness. This is how his house in the valley is described:

"Elrond's house was perfect, whether you liked food or sleep or storytelling or singing, or just sitting and thinking best, or a pleasant mixture of them all. Evil things did not come into that valley."

The hobbit's time in Rivendell wasn't heaven, but a restful, peaceful place that refreshed them for their mission and enabled them to go forward with confidence and courage to resist the enemy! That's what the Lord wants for us, we need Rivendell-like times, spaces that provide us with love, fellowship, rest, and strength for our pilgrimage to heaven.

How do we refresh ourselves in ways that are truly good for us physically, emotionally, and spiritually? One dad recently told me that he needs his "PEP" to keep going well in the face of life's crosses, his prayer, exercise, and positivity. Everyone needs their own plan of life that keeps us more consistent on the journey.

Part of my sabbatical will include a silent retreat which I'm excited to take. I may make it with the Trappists in New Melleray, IA, like Fr. McCarthy does. Priests are required to take a retreat every year, I would encourage you, as your time allows, to take time for a retreat, even for a day. There are so many good places that have daily Mass, spiritual directors, and natural beauty that raises our minds and hearts to the good Lord.

Jesus wants us to receive more of His peace, the peace of a good conscience, and the peace that this loud world can't give.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Mike