

Message from the Rector

Dear People of God,

A Blessed and Happy Mother's Day to our moms and all women who love in a motherly way. God bless you always.

May 9, 1979 was a beautiful and warm Wednesday. I had anxiously and with much joy awaited Ordination Day along with my thirty classmates. Eight years of Seminary training, prayer and studies all melted into one glorious morning inside the Chapel of The Immaculate Conception on the grounds of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein. Four years at Niles College Seminary of Loyola University and an additional four more years at Mundelein Seminary moved quickly, which brought me to Ordination Day as a young 26 year old.

I am now 67 years old and the last 41 years have been an absolute blur. There is truth to the statement that life moves faster as one grows older! A picture frame sits in my office, which contains an invitation to my First Mass, which reads: "Today I am given to you by God that I might serve you and that together we might serve Him."

I have often read and prayed over these words. God has truly blessed me in all five priestly assignments: Church of the Holy Spirit in Schaumburg, Niles College Seminary of Loyola University, St. Mary of the Woods, St. Mary Parish in Evanston and now Holy Name Cathedral. Five wonderful assignments which have truly shaped who I am today through loving, generous, caring and faith-filled people along the journey.

On their wedding day, two people stand before God, family and friends and commit themselves to a life of marriage. Yet, the couple does not know what they are getting themselves into at that moment. The same was true on my Ordination Day. Amidst all the excitement, joy, hopes and fears I did not know what I was getting myself into 41 years ago. There have been many happy, joyous and fulfilling days. At the same time, there have been hard and lonely days. But through God's grace, love and presence (through all of you) Priesthood has been an opportunity to live out this deep conviction: "I tell you with my life that God is good, loving, forgiving and compassionate."

I truly thank God for the gift of Priesthood and I daily thank God for the gift of you – the loving, faith-filled and caring staff, resident priests, sisters and people of Holy Name Cathedral. We have laughed often and at times cried. The fantastic Faith Community of Holy Name Cathedral has blessed and enriched my life in ways you will never imagine as your Rector. For this, I thank you with all my heart.

However, I realize everything has changed these last two months and our world has been turned upside down with the start of COVID-19. I miss seeing all of you at our Cathedral very, very much! The liturgy and Eucharist are connected to all that we do and everything begins around the Table of the Lord. I stress to everyone churches are not closed, buildings are closed. You are the Church. We are the Body of Christ. We all miss our liturgies and we will soon have procedures to once again reopen our Cathedral doors. It will be different by way of numbers. Details are forthcoming.

Speaking of change, this Mother's Day is very difficult for me and my three siblings. Our Mother died last January 16. Mom is now home with God and singing with the angels. I miss my Mother very, very much and I will spend time this Mother's Day at St. Adalbert Cemetery. I always knew this day would come and our family was deeply blessed to have our dear Mom until God called her home at the age of 97.

I share with you my bulletin column from May 12, 2019. It was Mother's Day last year and the previous weekend (May 5, 2019) I celebrated with all of you my 40th Anniversary to the Priesthood. This column combines both the 40th Anniversary celebration and Mother's Day. I dedicated last year's column to my Mother. I do the same today. I will forever love and cherish all my wonderful and splendid memories with my Mother close to my heart.

May 12, 2019 Bulletin Column

I give thanks to God for all of you, for last weekend I celebrated my 40th Anniversary to the Priesthood! What a marvelous celebration! God has truly blessed my life through your love, kindness, affirmation, faith, friendship and

humor over the years. I have been blessed and loved in ways over the last 40 years I never imagined during my seminary days in the 1970's. There are so many to thank, which would be an impossible task in one writing. However, there is one individual who does deserve special honor and attention this day. The love and care of my family has been extraordinary over the years, but our Mother has been the glue of the Sakowicz Clan.

All vocation studies indicate the profound love and faith of a Mother is a catalyst for any priestly vocation. It would certainly be true in my journey to the priesthood. My Mother has a deep faith and trust in God which she passed on to her children more in action than by word. So on this Mother's Day I would like to offer my Mother – the greatest Mom in the world and now 96 years young – a Blessed and Happy Mother's Day! I love you, Mom, and I share my 40th Anniversary to the Priesthood with you, the entire family, HNC Faith Community and all who have touched my life.

I would like to share with you a beautiful Mother's Day reflection. Read . . . and pass it on . . .

The Angel

A child was ready to be born. The child asked God, "I know you are sending me to earth tomorrow, but how can I survive there? I am so small and helpless."

God replied, "I have chosen a special angel for you there. She will love you and take care of you."

"Your angel will also sing for you, and she will teach you how to sing, too. And you'll learn to laugh as well as smile. Your angel and I will take care of that."

"And when I want to talk to You . . .?"

"Your angel will gently place your little hands together and teach you how. That's the simplest language of all. It's called prayer."

"Who will protect me there, God?"

“Your angel is soft and gentle, but if something threatens you, there is no stronger force on earth than the power she’ll use to defend you.”

“I’ll be sad not getting to see You anymore.”

“I will always be next to you, even though you can’t see Me. And your angel will teach you the way to come back to Me if you stray.”

Then it was time to go. Excited voices could be heard from earth, anticipating the child’s arrival. In a hurry, the babe asked softly, “Oh, God, I must go now, please tell me my angel’s name!”

And God replied, “You will call your angel Mommy.”

~ Source Unknown

God’s Blessings to all women who love in a motherly way! And a Blessed and Happy Mother’s Day!

By the way, I once asked my Mother: “What is your definition of motherhood?” Mom looked at me and said, “A willingness to be inconvenienced.” All I can add is – Amen!

My mother has been an angel my entire life. Forever I will give thanks to God (along with my siblings) for our angel.

With joy and gratitude,
Fr. Greg

See next page for cartoon.

Humor from the Rector



“You know, Maude. We are about a week away from knowing everyone’s real hair color!”