

May 25, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters of St. John the Evangelist in Christ,

“I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:27).

I am writing this note to you on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. I am humbled at the news from our Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito that I have been assigned to be the administrator of your wonderful and vibrant parish. I am very grateful to Bishop Barbarito for the confidence he has expressed in me.

Saying farewell to St. Joan of Arc, where I have been serving as a Parochial Vicar for the past four years, will be very difficult. At the same time, I am looking forward with joyful anticipation to serving you at St. John of the Evangelist, beginning July 1st. I would like to thank Fr. Michael O’Flaherty, your Pastor for the past 23 years, for his kind assistance and guidance during this time of transition.

I began this letter with the beautiful words that our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the disciples on the night of the Last Supper. In the Lukan version of the Last Supper account, Jesus spoke those words after the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist to remind the disciples that their ministry and vocation will always be at the service of the Eucharist and of the People of God gathered for the Eucharist.

To introduce myself, I should let you know a little bit about me. I was born on October 1st, 1976, in Bien-Hoa, in what until a few months earlier had been South Vietnam. I am the youngest of my parents’ ten children. In the past two years, God had called both of my parents to their eternal home, with my father dying last October. Two of my brothers and sisters are deceased. I have four brothers and three sisters living, all of whom are married. I have twenty-three nieces and nephews and twenty-four grandnieces and grandnephews. They live in Vietnam, Canada, Dallas Texas, New Orleans, Louisiana, and Florida.

I came to the United States in 1998 and lived first at Domus Dei Clerical Society of Apostolic Life in New Orleans, Louisiana. I moved to Florida in September 2001, and I attended Lynn University, just ten minutes away from our parish. During that time, I was discerning a vocation to the ministerial priesthood, and in 2002 I became a seminarian for the Diocese of Palm Beach. I entered St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, from which I received a BS in Philosophy in 2006. I continued my seminary studies at St. Vincent De Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, and I graduated with a Master of Divinity in 2011. Bishop Barbarito ordained me to the diaconate on May 7, 2011.

My first assignment as a priest was as Parochial Vicar at St. Juliana Catholic Church and School in West Palm Beach from 2011 to 2016. Since 2016 I have served at St. Joan of Arc as a Parochial Vicar, only a few miles away from St. John’s. It has been a great joy to accompany God’s people on their spiritual journey while serving at St. Joan of Arc, something I have done with enthusiasm and love. Over the last couple of years, I have been able to do graduate studies at the Catholic University of America, where I will take my last exams on June 30 and will graduate with an M.S. in Ecclesial Administration and Management.

I am very eager to meet all of you. We can work together and help each other come closer to God and build up His kingdom in this corner of the world. As we move forward together, let’s remember the words of Jesus to His disciples and each one of us, “Do not be afraid, just have faith” (Mark 5:36). We are living through a time of great uncertainty about the future. There are a lot of things to worry about, many things that may bring us down or make us weary, but I invite us all to hold on the words of the Lord. Let’s not be afraid, and let’s keep the faith. In the Gospel for the Ascension, Jesus promises us that he will be with us always, “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Knowing that he is with us, we can fulfill the mission he commends to us, free of fear.

I look forward to many years of ministry with you. I look forward to serving you, along with the dedicated staff of the Parish. As I begin to serve what will now be “our” parish community, I promise you my love, prayers, and the constant invitation to be kind and holy. I ask for your prayers, and I hope to earn your love, support, and trust.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Rev. Dominic Toan Tran