

FEATURE

Father Bush ends 30-year pastorate

A young Frederick Bush was walking home one day from Rochester's Blessed Sacrament School when he realized he'd left a piece of clothing behind. Little did he know, as he started back to school, that his walk toward the priesthood was beginning.

Upon returning to his classroom, Frederick was asked by his teacher if he wouldn't mind accompanying a fellow student to an upcoming entrance exam at St. Andrew's Seminary. Sure enough, Frederick enrolled at the seminary.

Now, the man known as Father Frederick Bush is looking forward to his 50th anniversary in the priesthood and 75th birthday in June.

"I owe my vocation to a pair of brown pants," Father Bush remarked.

Father Bush is set to retire from Holy Spirit Parish next month, ending a 30-year pastorate at the Penfield church. He will move to St. Mark's Parish in Greece, where he'll provide sacramental support.

"I've been very happy here. It's the friendliness of the people," Father Bush said of Holy Spirit's 1,300-family parish.



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Father Bush grew up in Blessed Sacrament Parish and attended St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries. He was ordained June 2, 1951, at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Bishop James E. Kearney.

He served as assistant pastor at St. Patrick's, Elmira (1951-54); St. John the Evangelist, Greece (1954-61); and Holy Cross, Rochester (1961-65). He was spiritual director of St. Bernard's Seminary (1965-67), then assistant at St. Mary's, Rochester (1967-71).

Father Bush came to Holy Spirit only six years after the parish was founded. He

noted that the parish center in his name, which opened in 1990, has been the site for such community programs as Alcoholics Anonymous, Scouting, Kiwanis, voting, and an adult day care in conjunction with St. Ann's Community.

Father Bush has also been active on the diocesan scene, serving on the Priests' Council, the Clergy Relief Board, and as regional coordinator for northeast Monroe County.

"I've been very happy with the priesthood," he commented.

He hopes that more young men of today will find happiness in a priestly vocation. Many of his peers from childhood, he noted, went on to religious life.

"If you were on the altar in eighth grade, you were a candidate for the seminary," he said.

A celebration for Father Bush is set for Sunday, June 3 — 50 years to the day after the first Mass he celebrated, and four days before he turns 75. Festivities will include a 2 p.m. Mass at Holy Spirit, a reception in the church hall from 3:30-5:30 p.m. and dinner at Arena's Party House.

— Mike Latona



Photo provided

Busy itinerary suits Fr. Fraats

Father Ralph Fraats has certainly gotten around during his 41 years as a priest, and that hasn't changed in retirement.

Father Fraats, 67, retired in January as a Rochester diocesan priest. He now makes his winter home at St. James Cathedral in Orlando, Fla.

"I couldn't believe that it was close to 90 degrees," he remarked about the weather change when he arrived in Florida.

Father Fraats' official summer residence is in New Hartford, near his childhood home of Utica. However, with a trip to Rome and a couple of overseas cruises planned for later this year, Father Fraats may be hard to pin down in the foreseeable future.

"No moss on the feet," he stated. Father Fraats studied at Niagara University and St. Vincent Major Seminary in Latrobe, Pa. He received his master's of divinity from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

He was ordained May 28, 1960, at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington. He served as a Washington archdiocesan priest for 10 years before coming to Rochester in late 1970 to serve as assistant at Holy Rosary Church.

He was incardinated into the Diocese of Rochester in 1973, near the end of his two-year term as associate pastor at St. Anne Parish, Rochester. He went on to become associate pastor at St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls (1973-74); St. Lawrence, Greece (1974-76); St. John, Clyde/St. Patrick, Savannah (1976-79); St. Philip Neri, Rochester (1979-80); and Holy Family, Auburn (1980-82).

Father Fraats' only pastorate was at St. John the Evangelist, Newark Valley/St. Francis, Catonk from 1982-86. He became chaplain at Mercy Health and Rehabilitation Center in Auburn (1986-87), and parochial vicar at Auburn's St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Church as well as chaplain for Auburn Hospital Ministries/Cayuga Nursing Home (1987-88).

He moved to St. Thomas the Apostle in Irondequoit in 1989, where he happily remained as parochial vicar until his retirement.

"The people were most cooperative," said Father Fraats, who also served as temporary administrator at St. George's Lithuanian Church in Rochester from 1991-92.

Fluent in seven languages, Father Fraats noted that he is one of only two diocesan priests who has faculties to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in the Eastern Rite. He has also served as chaplain for the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Knights of Columbus.

In May 2000, Father Fraats celebrated his 40th anniversary in the priesthood with a gala event at St. Thomas the Apostle.

— Mike Latona

Fr. Gordinier leaving 'marvelous' village

In the late 1960s, while serving at St. Mary's Church in Waterloo, Father William Gordinier got an inkling of the parish setting he would come to favor.

"My time in Waterloo really spoiled me. I realized how wonderful life is in a village," Father Gordinier said.

For the last 19 years he's been spoiling himself, so to speak, in another village: as pastor of St. Mary's in Geneseo. Father Gordinier will retire from that parish next month.

"The variety there is amazing. It's just a marvelous part of the world — the people,

the scenery. For a small town, it's got everything. It's got Wal-Mart and Wegmans, and that's a good start," the 68-year-old priest quipped.

Father Gordinier was born in Rochester and grew up in Holy Rosary Parish. He attended St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries and was ordained May 31, 1958, at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Bishop James E. Kearney.

Father Gordinier served as assistant at St. Margaret Mary, Irondequoit (1958-65); Sacred Heart Cathedral (1965-68); St. Mary's, Waterloo (1968-70); and Guardian Angels, Henrietta (1970-72). He was co-pastor of St. Joseph's, Penfield, from 1972-76.

His first sole pastorate came in 1976 at St. Patrick's, Cato; St. Thomas, Red Creek; and St. Jude's, Fair Haven. He served those three communities until 1982, when he began his lengthy stay in Geneseo.

Father Gordinier said he's enjoyed serving in this college town which, he noted, places a high emphasis on preserving the arts. "You hardly meet anybody on the



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

street you don't know," he remarked.

Father Gordinier's next stop will be Church of the Assumption, located in the village (naturally) of Fairport. There, he will provide sacramental assistance. He also plans to continue his weekly duty in the diocesan Tribunal, where he has assisted for 25 years "in one capacity or another," he said.

"I think it's important, getting people squared away with their marriage situation," he commented. "The people want to practice their faith and maybe want to get back to the sacraments, and if we can do something about it, fine."

Father Gordinier has served the past 14 years as regional coordinator for Livingston County, and has also celebrated numerous Masses at SUNY College at Geneseo. He's a two-time member of the diocesan Priests' Council; former chaplain of the Rochester Fire Department; and former diocesan director for the Junior Legion of Mary.

His retirement celebration will take place Sunday, June 24 with a 10 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's, followed by a public reception in the church hall from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and a 5 p.m. dinner in the SUNY Geneseo Union building. Contact St. Mary's Church at 716/243-1100 for dinner tickets.

— Mike Latona

THANK YOU

Father Frederick W. Bush

For 30 years of devoted service to the people of Holy Spirit Parish.

We will miss you!
May God bless you with many more healthy, happy years and may you be fulfilled in your retirement



Gratefully,
Staff & Parishioners

Congratulations Father Gordinier!

IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you
May the wind be always at your back...
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
May the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Best Wishes on your retirement and...
We thank you for 19 wonderful years of service to
St. Mary's, Geneseo
We Love You
Staff and Parishioners

Western Livingston Planning Group
Wishes All The Best To
Fr. William J. Gordinier
We love You

St. Mary's, Geneseo
St. Patrick's, Mt. Morris
Holy Angels, Nunda
St. Thomas Aquinas, Leicester
St. Lucy's, Retsof
The Newman Catholic Community
at SUNY Geneseo
The Catholic Communities at Groveland
and Livingston Correctional Facilities