

Farewell from the Pastor

Thank you all for the numerous heartfelt expressions of affection, appreciation, and best wishes that I have received in the last few weeks. They have been truly encouraging to me in this difficult time of transition. I'd like to share with you a few recent moments that have stuck in my mind as emblematic.

The first came when I was distributing Communion this past week. As I would provide each person with the Blessed Sacrament, I could recall all the important moments that I shared with so many individuals and families. What a privilege it is to have been so connected to you all as a Pastor, a friend, and as a parish. Thank you. The second came from a young person when I asked during the children's homily: "Why do you think I have to move?" His answer was, "So that you can teach about Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Mass to others now that you have done it here." Well, that's not how I first thought about it, but I do now! The final thought comes from the spirit of friendship that we all shared at the farewell dinner last week (and will be shared at the cookout, too). As a parish evening of celebration, conversation, and farewell, somehow it helped to add a positive angle to the changes to come.

Eight years in a parish as a first time Pastor with lots of changes made a deep impression on me formatively as a priest and, more importantly, personally within my relationships with you. I can only say that I am deeply grateful to the Lord for allowing me to come here and live this phase of my life. This is a time of great transition on many levels for me, for many of you, and for St. Athanasius Parish as a whole. The Lord knows His plan even when we do not, and He will show the way forward regardless of the challenges that pop up to obscure it. Let us all move forward (even collaboratively) confident in that plan while at the same time renewing our dedication to live it.

May God bless you.