

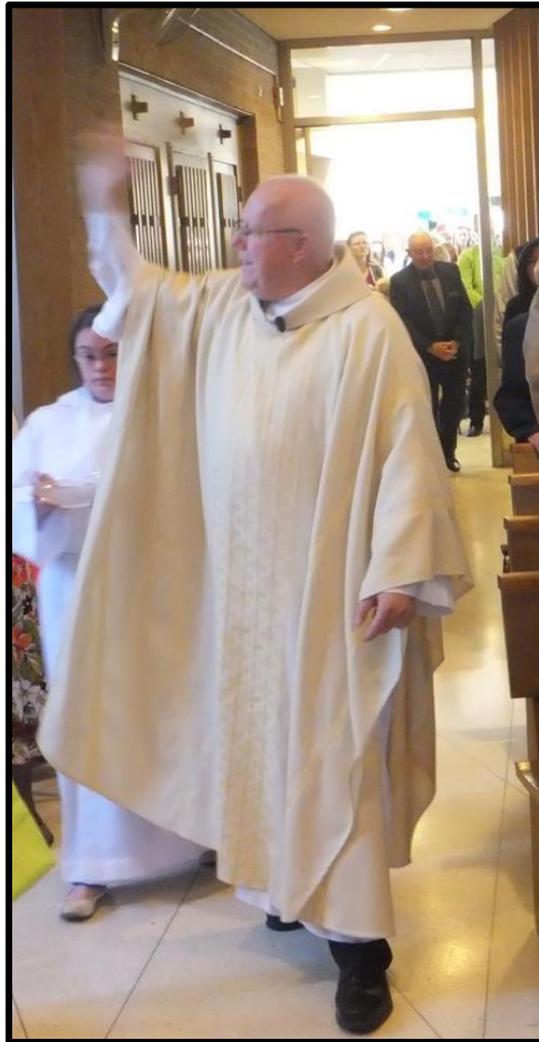
THE COMMENTARY



May, 2015

Farewell Fr. Jim Issue

FR. JIM MEADE
CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH
“PASTOR, LEADER, MENTOR, FRIEND”



CORPUS CHRISTI PASTOR, 2002 – 2015

THOUGHTS . . .

By JAKE GIULIANO

Where to begin? I have known Father Jim since I was in kindergarten which makes our friendship 12 years long and still running. When I was asked to write this letter I was ecstatic because I love Father Jim and I am grateful for everything he has done, however; I never had a chance to tell him how special he is to me and the Giuliano Family.

Where would I be today in my faith without Father Jim? Earlier I referred to Father Jim as a friend but he is family. He made everything at Corpus Christi that much more enjoyable so that I love my faith. He has set an example for me that no one else could. He has showed me that sometimes we mess up but God always forgives us and God is always there for me.

Father Jim knows I have messed up more times than I care to admit but Father Jim always forgave me and had nothing but love to offer. He would always strike a conversation with me whenever he could because he knows I love to talk. It usually begins with a statement from Father Jim along the lines of "Excuse me... do I know you?" (*Typical of Fr. Jim's humor*)

Father Jim has been there through all my sacraments except for baptism - not only as a priest but as a friend, a mentor, but most importantly as family. He knew me when I was probably barely 4 foot tall and he knows me even better now at 6 foot tall. He has been there through my more brilliant moments, and my not so brilliant moments. And, let me tell you, it was mostly filled with the not so brilliant moments. Father Jim is and always will be my Family!

MORE THOUGHTS . . .

By SOPHIA CARRIZALES

As a seven year old I didn't know much about the Catholic faith considering I was just about ready to make my first confession. However, I knew there was one person I could ask questions without being embarrassed, Father Jim. I would ask him questions, some complicated and some simple, like what does heaven look like or why do you kiss the altar when you begin Mass. Every once in a while I would "stump" Father Jim. I asked the difference between the Roman rite and the Byzantine rite of the Church. While he knew the answer he had to figure a way to bring it down to the level of an eight-year-old. Father Jim has always taken the time to answer all of my many questions.

Father Jim has been an outstanding priest to our parish. One of the qualities I admire most about Father Jim is his ability to make everyone feel welcome, including the kids. He has helped me understand my Catholic faith more by showing he truly lives the Faith.

Father Jim has always been there not just for me but for the whole community. I am praying for happiness and all that the future holds for you. Lots of love!!!



EASTER 2015

Since humor and song parodies are more my style – and in deference to Father Jim’s Good Shepherd Homily on 4/26/15 – and in reference to his part time job as bartender at Sunset Inn when he was helping his mom after his father’s death – I’ll challenge you to read/sing this poem to the tune of “Show Me the Way To Go Home”. I know Father Jim would approve. 😊

Mary Grace Houchens

Show Us the Way to Go Home

Growing up in Sedamsville he was led and bred and fed.

The first born son of eight Irish Meades left little more to dread.

Wherever he would roam – riverside or to Price Hill –

He could always hear his mother Rose yell –

“James William Meade, you had better come home!”

After four years at Elder, Jim was St. Gregory prone -
but his father got sick and when he died his Mom was on her own.

He prayed what should he do? Stay there to serve the Lord?

And soon his answer couldn’t be ignored -

He knew that he had to go home!

In the year of ‘81 he was ordained and became a priest.

Then he taught God’s word from church to church for twenty years at least.

And when he came to us in the year two thousand two

it wasn’t too long before we knew

Corpus Christi would be his Home!

Throughout these thirteen years he’s become a part of our hearts.

He’s worked beside us in each task and served us from the start.

His lessons are from ‘The Book’ and in his spoken word.

His actions are what we observe - as

He shows us the way to God’s Home!

mgH – 2015

“Images of Father Jim”

Author – Anonymous

I am a typical parishioner at Corpus Christi Parish – I am not part of the leadership – I am no different than the hundreds of parishioners who surround me at Mass. “My” images are “our” images of our dear Father Jim...

“I look up from my hospital bed to see Father Jim walking through the door...”

“I go to Mass only occasionally, but Father Jim always says hello and welcomes me by name...”

“I am a new server and Father Jim tells me, You’ll be great! After I’m done, he always tell me, good job...”

“I am an usher. The first thing Father Jim does after Mass is thank me for being there...”

“I am a member of the Parish Staff – Father Jim thanks us in front of the entire community...”

“My Mother had been in a nursing home for 10 years and no longer belonged to a parish when she died. Fr. Jim graciously presided at her funeral and consoled our family...”

“I am a parishioner, and Father Jim seeks my opinion...”

Yes, I am a typical – ordinary – parishioner at Corpus Christi who has experienced the Grace and the Leadership of Father Jim Meade...

I bid him farewell... I wish him peace and all contentment in his much deserved retirement.

VISION, EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

BY DEACON LARRY

Father Jim inherited a vibrant, historically Franciscan, parish. It was a welcoming community rich in history, filled with the Spirit and graced with a peaceful charm. It was also a parish with aging facilities without a plan to upgrade or improve its infrastructure. Over the span of his thirteen years, Father Jim changed that.

He applied a vision and empowered staff and community to the task of upgrading the facilities and making them accessible to all parishioners. The “Undercroft,” re-named “Francis Hall” is now accessible to those with limited mobility through the outside ramp or the indoor elevator. Restrooms are also available on the Gathering Space Level. Bells that didn’t work for over two decades now announce the Angelus everyday. Improvements have been made that often go unnoticed, but are essential to the efficient and smooth operation of the parish. A non-comprehensive list of these types of improvements would include the parking lot project, computer replacement/upgrade project, internet access throughout the facilities, energy efficient HVAC upgrade for the church, safety elements added to the parking and grounds, replacement of carpeting in the Parish Center Classrooms as well as heating upgrades throughout the building. The Pantry has seen a new, expanded “regional” vision and renovated facilities to help facilitate its expanded usage. And the list could go on and on...

Father Jim is a gifted pastoral leader... he is also a pragmatic visionary who has empowered people to improve our facilities for all parishioners – now and in the future.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BY THE ARCHIVE COMMITTEE

As archivists, we have witnessed and recorded the many outstanding achievements at this parish as a result of Fr. Jim's leadership. He has made a difference and we celebrate those achievements. Thanks to his guidance and ability to inspire volunteer commitment, the following highlights reflect his leadership and ability to get things done since his arrival at our parish.

Since he joined Corpus Christi, Fr. Jim has celebrated over 4,000 masses; 400 baptisms/First Reconciliations/First Communion, and 300 funerals; and had countless opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

Under Fr. Jim's leadership and support, the parish has:

- launched the Bereavement Ministry Support Group for our regional parishes of CC, SJN and SJB;
- provided structure and support for the Nursing Home and Homebound Ministries;
- purchased a new telephone system and upgraded the computer system;
- supported the dramatic expansion of the Food Pantry and Pastoral Region St. Vincent DePaul outreach efforts;
- transitioned students from St. Bartholomew School to St. John the Baptist School; provided significant Pastoral Leadership to SJB School; and supported Youth Mission trips;
- provided leadership for the development of St. Francis Garden and the Patio Garden Area;
- built a twinning relationship with parishes in Jamaica;
- transitioned Parish Council to a Pastoral Council;
- repaired the church bell, installed a new air conditioning system and painted the exterior of the church;
- initiated the parking lot project which also improved pedestrian safety;
- initiated extended Vacation Bible School, returning the VBS to a four-day program;
- initiated and supported a Summer Religion Education Program for Grade School students;
- established and supported an on-going Adult Bible Study Program;
- developed the first Pastoral Region Plan and provided leadership and collaboration across the Pastoral Area;
- developed, supported and promoted the implementation of two parish 5 Year Plans;
- sponsored and supported our parish *Renew the Face of Corpus Christ* campaign effort, which raised over \$600,000 to build the Gathering Space and make the church more accessible;
- initiated Small Communities of Faith, "Catholics Come Home," and "Our Catholic Faith" adult program;
- encouraged our yearlong celebration of the Parish 50th Jubilee;
- hosted Black Top Dances & Reverse Raffles;
- energetically encouraged Easter Egg Hunts;
- initiated the Equal Exchange/Fair Trade Coffee effort;
- extensively renovated the McAlarney Building to include a Youth Room;
- extensively renovated and re-named Francis Hall.

How fortunate we are to have had Fr. Jim as our Pastor. Well done good and faithful servant!! Well done!!

“CHARACTER OF A MAN NAMED JIM...”

BY JACKIE GEYER

“... and that he is!” More than that, though, he is a “Proclaimer of God’s Word” with actions to follow them up! He is a “preacher man” of his word. He offers us words of God that burn in our hearts as they seem to live and grow. His words give us strength as they comfort and encourage...making us feel like anything is possible.

This “man called Jim” may be headed to retirement, but he is not ready for his Sedamsville Heaven quite yet! No, there is much to accomplish, before he rests in his heaven along the Ohio River.

Before he became the loving leader of his flock here at Corpus Christi Church, he sat among us... watching us in worship and listening to us in prayer. He chose us before we knew him – forming a bond that strengthens our very souls. He promised himself to us before we knew the commitment was made.

I have never known him to say “No.” Much more common is his refrain – “Let me think about that and get back to you!” He sees the potential of new ideas before others and offers every level of support to make them happen. He gives us the freedom to act on our inspirations and calls us each a “Saint of God.”

I have seen him wear many shoes since he came – shoes of a cook, counselor, janitor, secretary, trip organizer, leader and friend. Just as he always made me feel comfortable, so was he comfortable in whatever shoes he was wearing at the moment.

From the moment he officially arrived here at Corpus Christi, he was an invited guest in our homes. As he listened to our concerns, and our hopes and dreams for our parish, we knew we had a kindred spirit with us. He would wrap his arms around us and our parish and enjoy the process of growing into one. It has been a miraculous journey.

Our “Man called Jim” travelled with us in the sunshine of our lives – he also was at our sides when the shadows covered us. He sat with us at weddings... he stood with us at hospital beds... he held us up at funerals. Through the light and dark of our lives, he was there – being whatever he needed to be. Often we laid our hearts bare to him... he held them gently and kept them warm as he walked at our sides.

We are better people... we are a better parish because of the smile, the touch, the love of our “Man called Jim.”

“God loves you, Father Jim – and so do we!”



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**FATHER JIM, THANKS FOR THE
REMARKABLE JOURNEY**

**May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be ever at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rains fall gently upon your fields.
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.**