

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

THANK YOU MONSIGNOR WHALEN...

As most of you have heard, a few days after Christmas, Monsignor Edmund Whalen who has helped out here at Saint Charles for many years, was assigned by Cardinal Dolan to a new position in the Archdiocese. I think that we can definitely state the new job is a "promotion." Monsignor Whalen will be the Vicar for priests, replacing Bishop Gerald Walsh who has held that post for many years.

Monsignor Whalen as the new vicar will assist the clergy here in New York. He is well known and somebody the priests trust so he is eminently qualified to take on this role. I think that we all know too, that he takes this office in a very difficult time in the history of the Church with all the scandals that have occurred in the last few years. Even though admittedly it is a difficult time, I am positive that Monsignor Whalen will do a great job and will give it his all!

I can say that with assurance because as we at Saint Charles know very well, he is an exemplary priest; what one parishioner of mine would call a "Priest's priest." It is my hope that Monsignor will continue to assist us here at Saint Charles on the weekends. After all, most of the phone calls that come into the rectory on Saturday sound something like this: "What time is Monsignor Whalen celebrating Mass?"

People like the way he says Mass because he is reverent and gets to the point! That is why it would be a shame to lose him. Like the good teacher that he is, Monsignor Whalen usually gives three points for us to reflect upon in his Sunday homily. In this article, I would like to offer my own three points in summing up Monsignor's ministry and why it is a great example to all of us and especially to us priests.

Number one-Monsignor Whalen is a prayerful priest. This is so obvious from the way he says the Mass-with real devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Then of course, he loves the Blessed Mother and always prays the rosary before he says Mass. Thank God he does say the beads because he is able to quiet down some of the loud chatter that occurs before Mass here especially on Saturday afternoons! Then too, he always prays at the end of each Mass for some particular need and intention and asks everybody to join in.

Secondly, Monsignor Whalen is a zealous priest. He has great enthusiasm and a strong work ethic. On most Sundays he says more than four Masses in various island parishes. He also goes to a lot of wakes and funerals of people that he knows. Besides all the pastoral activity, he also runs a school-Monsignor Farrell! I am sure the kids will miss his presence very much because he is so devoted to them.

I saw evidence of that one September morning shortly after I arrived here at Saint Charles. During my early morning run, I observed Monsignor Whalen heading to the train station to greet and escort the students over to the school. I thought to myself, "Well, that's certainly dedication!" Yes, he is a dedicated and zealous priest!

Third, Monsignor Whalen is an obedient priest. The word "obedience" comes from the Latin "To listen to." Every priest has to listen to his Bishop. We take a vow at our ordination to do this. I am sure it is difficult for Monsignor to leave Farrell family and teaching. But he told the Cardinal when he called, "I will do what you want me to." That really is the proper spirit for a priest to have. Obedience is not too popular today among some in the clergy. Monsignor Whalen's good example in obeying will be an inspiration for all of us to truly live out our vows.

As he takes up his new post, we wish him all the best and hope that he will be with us as often as his schedule permits. Thank you Monsignor Whalen and congratulations from everybody here at Saint Charles!

Sincerely,  
Father Jerome