
News From I5000

Greetings,

My name is Father Fred Pesek, your new Shepherd. I come to you via the southeast corner of the Archdiocese of Chicago from the town of Lansing. Allow me to take this opportunity to not only introduce myself, but to express my excitement of being the newest member of the St. Patrick family. Please allow me to share some of my story as we begin our journey of faith.

I was born and raised on the southwest side of Chicago—to be more exact, the Marquette Park neighborhood—where I spent many hours fishing, biking, sledding and doing many other outdoor activities. There are six in my family—my three sisters, mom, dad and myself. I am the third in order of birth, but not the spoiled only boy as some may think. We all attended Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Grammar School except for dad, who claims (and rightfully so) to have been a good public school boy. During my grammar school years I was involved in the YMCA swim team and a member of our parish boy scouts unit. On September 28, 1980, I was honored to become an Eagle Scout, so I am looking forward to getting to know and work with our scouting units.



In 1977 I began high school at Quigley Seminary South, which was located on 77th South Western Avenue in the city. I choose Quigley because of my love for swimming, and the Olympic-size pool was right up my alley. Only later did I consider the idea of priesthood as a possibility. That is another story for another article. I graduated from Quigley in 1981 and attended Niles College Seminary for one-and-a-half years before taking some time away to discern the call to priesthood. During those years, I attended Saint Xavier University and in 1985 earned a degree in Sociology with a minor in philosophy.

In the fall of 1985 I began studies at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, IL. If memory serves me properly, we were Father Marty Zielinski's first class. On May 20, 1989, I was ordained to serve the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin. My first assignment (1989-1993) was at Saint Mary of Czestochowa in Cicero. My second assignment (1993-2003) was on the northwest edge of the Archdiocese, Saint John the Evangelist in Streamwood.

In the spring of 2003 I was granted a sabbatical and studied in Rome for several months. This was my first time visiting Rome, and what a fruitful time of learning. For ten days of my sabbatical, I worked on family genealogy research in the Czech Republic. This was one of the greatest experiences of my life. During my research, I found the home of my grandmother Pesek's birth, as well as the village of my great grandmother, and I even received a copy of her marriage certificate.

I returned from sabbatical in July of 2003 and was appointed the administrator of Queen of the Universe Parish in Chicago. My time at Queen was only for the summer months until a bilingual pastor was found. In the fall of 2004 I was approached by the pastors of Lemont asking if I would be open to working with the four parishes of that town. After interviewing with the priests and their staffs, I thought it would be a great opportunity to experience a different approach to ministry. On December 1, I was appointed the associate pastor to the Parishes of Saints Patrick, Alphonsus, James, and Cyril and Methodius churches in Lemont. From what I understand, this was the first time that a priest was assigned to minister in four parishes. I must admit that this was a good experience as well as a learning opportunity. Working with the four pastors was quite enjoyable.

In March of 2004 I received a call from the Archdiocesan placement board asking me to consider pastoring the people of Saint Ann in Lansing. For the past six years I have called Lansing my home. Through prayer and discernment, I followed the call to serve the faithful of Saint Patrick. This time the Archdiocese did not ask me but I requested to come up north to serve the people of Saint Patrick in Wadsworth. Once again I am humbled to be the new pastor of one of the oldest parishes in the Archdiocese. I have heard so many wonderful compliments about this faith community and how the Gospel message is being shared. I am very excited about calling this beautiful area my new home, and I am even more excited to see what the Lord has in store for us as we journey in faith.

Please know I would like to take this first year to share in your stories and get to know the heart of those who call Saint Patrick their church home. For now I am a bit disoriented to this area, so please pray that I do not get lost too often and that I learn quickly. With this new assignment, I have served on all four corners of the Archdiocese. Like the saying in bingo goes, "four corners is a winner," and that is how I view my coming to serve you. By the way, my roommate would like to say hello as well. Her name is Annie. Her picture is shown below. She is five years old, very friendly and loves all people and all other dogs. For those who visit our parish office, I am sure that she will greet you at some point.



Annie

On another note please pray for Fr. Pat, Deacon Dennis and all those who are on mission in Peru. I look forward to learning more about our parish mission. As we pray the Mass for the first time this weekend, let us remember all the women and men (through the generations) who have served and died in the Armed Forces for the daily freedoms we enjoy. May you and your families stay safe, and have a blessed Fourth of July.

Until We Meet at the Table,

Father Fred