

“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.” – Winston Churchill

My dear parishioners,

I encourage you to look forward with me and others as we explore the very real possibility of moving the priest's residence and parish office to its new location in Northwood.

For the past one hundred years or so, every priest and pastor serving in this parish has resided in the parish rectory located on River Road, in Pittsfield.

During this time many wonderful things happened within the parish. Many families, peoples, religious, and clergy have prayed, worshipped, served, and lived their lives or part of their lives in this parish dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes.

In the year 1956, the church in Northwood was built and dedicated to Saint Joseph, so as to address the growing population of Catholics in the Northwood area. It was designated as the "mission" church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The distance between the two churches differs depending on which way one chooses to go. The shortest distance is pegged at 10.4 miles via Catamount Road.

This has worked splendidly for all these years since 1956. However, since then many things have changed. I'd like to mention just two.

Perhaps the most noticeable and profound change occurred when the parish built the beautiful church hall and center in the mid 1990's. One result of this is that most all of the parish undertakings and activities outside of her liturgies now takes place in the Parish Center. This is precisely what it was built and meant to be utilized for.

Another and no less important change is associated with the parish population. In the intervening decades, the Pittsfield location has greatly diminished in number while simultaneously increasing in average age. This is said not to analyze why, but simply to state a fact.

Conversely, the Northwood location has slowly been doing the opposite. As of now, one could confidently say that the church in Northwood is a younger and more numerous population than that in Pittsfield.

These are just two considerations that will be carefully looked at in the coming months. There will be many more considerations closely examined as well.

An "exploratory committee" composed of members from both churches will be formed to begin this process. Members of the parish finance and pastoral committees will be included and kept current and abreast every step of the way.

The parish as a whole will be invited to participate as well. Comments, concerns, and suggestions will be welcomed and brought before the committee too. There will be a time or times for a "whole parish meeting."

Now that you are being made aware of this, I encourage you first of all, and most importantly, to bring it to prayer. Somewhere in your daily prayers and petitions to God, I ask you to include this as well.

I opened with a quote on "change" from the great Winston Churchill. I will close with a quote from our first Catholic President:

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." – John F. Kennedy

These two leaders and men aptly point out how necessary change is. They lived and experienced change mightily in their own lives. Some they orchestrated, and others simply came to them.

May God give us an open heart and willing spirit to carry out, day after day, His holy will in our lives, as we pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Gratefully yours,

Fr. John / Mack