

Dear Brother Priests,

Our diocese has had some setbacks in the last few months with the death of two active priests, Fr. Paul Minnihan, pastor of Pleasanton, and Fr. Jay Matthews, Rector of the Cathedral. As a presbyterate, we really miss them. In addition, we have lost the services of Fr. Alex Castillo and Fr. David Mendoza Vela.

Yet we see signs of hope and the blessing of God with the upcoming ordination of three new priests on Friday May 31, at 7 p.m.: Fr. John Pietruszka, Fr. Javier Ramirez, and Fr. Mark Ruiz. I give thanks to God, and to the generosity of these three men, in offering their lives for the service of Christ and His Church. I hope you will join me in the Imposition of Hands, as they receive the priesthood of Christ. We are one presbyterate, united with the bishop, in caring for 84 parishes and over 400,000 Catholics.

Attached with this letter, I am announcing new pastoral assignments for a number of our parishes. All the appointments were made in consultation with the Priests Personnel Board. You are free to "give your advice and suggestions" to any member of the PPB at any time. The members are: Fr. Larry Young, Fr. George Mockel, Fr. Ramiro Flores, Fr. Ken Sales, Fr. George Alengadan, Fr. Paul Schmidt (non-voting consultant). I have recently appointed Fr. Michael Castori, S.J. to fill Fr. Jay Matthews' place on the Board.

Criteria that we are looking for in the appointment of new pastors and parochial administrators is Leadership and Initiative in implementing the Bishop's Vision for the Diocese: the Sunday Experience, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, and Forming Missionary Disciples. Also high on the list is Leadership and Initiative in implementing the "From Maintenance to Mission" model we experienced at our recent Priests Convocation. I especially value those who have participated as a leadership team with their lay colleagues in the Amazing Parish Conference, and the Alpha training. Facility in Spanish is also becoming more and more necessary to provide full pastoral care to our growing number of Latino parishioners. More and more parishes have more Spanish speaking parishioners than English speaking, with more Spanish Masses and sacramental requests.

As always, I am grateful to the priests who are moving to a new parish for their generosity of heart. I know how much your people value your service, and how much they will miss you. When people call me to complain that I have "stolen their pastor", it is a good thing. It shows how much they love you and how effective your ministry has been. But we, all of us together, have a diocese to take care of. We were not ordained to serve just one parish, but the Diocese of Oakland. I thank you for your cooperation with me, as we work together to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, and His abundant mercies.

I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming Ordination on May 31, and our Priests Picnic on June 14 at Santa Maria parish.

Grateful for your support, and the inspiration you are to me and the faithful,

I am yours fraternally in Christ,

Michael C. Barber, S.J.
Bishop of Oakland

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BISHOP OF OAKLAND



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Bishop Michael C. Barber, S.J. has made the following appointments, all effective July 1, 2019, unless otherwise noted:

Cathedral of Christ the Light: Fr. Brandon Macadaeg, Rector.

St. Anthony Oakland: Fr. John Direen, Pastor.

St. Anthony Oakland: Fr. Michael Pham, Parochial Vicar.

Catholic Community of Pleasanton: Fr. Mark Wiesner, Pastor.

Catholic Community of Pleasanton: Fr. Luke Ssemakula, Parochial Vicar.

St. Charles Borromeo Livermore: Fr. Kwame Assenyoh, Parochial Administrator.

St. David of Wales Richmond: Fr. Benedict Wonganant, Parochial Administrator.

Corpus Christi Fremont: Fr. Luis Lopez, Parochial Administrator.

Divine Mercy Oakland: Fr. Matthew Murray, Parochial Administrator.

Holy Spirit Fremont: Fr. John Carillo, Parochial Vicar.

St. Bede Hayward: Fr. Javier Ramirez, Parochial Vicar (newly ordained).

St. Joseph Old Mission Fremont: Fr. Mark Ruiz, Parochial Vicar (newly ordained).

St. Edward's Newark: Fr. John Pietruszka, Parochial Vicar (newly ordained).

Fr. Juan Franco: Sabbatical.

Fr. Paul Chen: Sabbatical.

Fr. Gustavo Barrientos: leaving St. Bede's Hayward, returning to his home diocese of Zacapa, Guatemala, with our thanks and best wishes.

Fr. Michael Castori, S.J., appointed member of the Priests Personnel Board, effective April 10, 2019.

Deacon Peter Lawongkerd: Full-time Pastoral Associate, St. Joseph Basilica Alameda.

Deacon Benjamin Mac Lingo: Full-time Pastoral Associate, St. Louis Bertrand Oakland. (To be ordained Deacon August 4, 2019)

For the greater glory of God