

St. Rose of Lima Church

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Dear Parishioners of St. Rose,

On May 1st I was informed by Archbishop Burke that, effective June 17th, I was being assigned as pastor of St. Rose of Lima to take Fr. Hopmeir's place. I am writing to introduce myself to you and to tell you that I am delighted to be coming to your parish.

I was born in St. Louis in 1949, the 3rd of six children - 3 boys and 3 girls - born to Alex and Mary Anderson. My parents are now deceased. Three of us children live in the St. Louis area and three live out-of-town. We were all born and raised Catholics. I entered the seminary in high school and was ordained a Priest by Cardinal Carberry in 1975.

My first assignment was St. Pius V Parish on Grand Avenue in St. Louis. In 1979 I went to St. Blaise Parish in Maryland Heights and, after a year there, went to work as a judge in the Marriage Tribunal for the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

During my 8 years at the Tribunal, I was part-time assistant at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in South St. Louis, and St. Simon Parish in South St. Louis County. I then became resident chaplain at a home for children - some who suffered with emotional problems - St. Joseph's Home for Boys on South Grand Avenue.

In 1989 when my time at the Tribunal was over, I left the Tribunal and the children's home and became a full-time assistant at St. Andrew's Parish in Lemay. It was there that I was assistant to one of your former pastors, Fr. Ed Hilgeman. After a few years at St. Andrew, I moved on to become the assistant pastor at Assumption Parish in South County. I was there just short of a year when I was assigned pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Eureka, my present assignment.

It was 1992 when I came to Sacred Heart, and I've been pastor here ever since. My life here, like all of my assignments, has been happy. Even though it is a pretty active parish, I'm used to being the only priest here.

In my almost 16 years here there has been lots of growth and lots of building and lots of things to do. Like St. Rose, there is a school and a PSR program. Like DeSoto, Eureka is a tightly-knit community, with lots of local pride. I've enjoyed such a parish and community life here, and I look forward to becoming part of St. Rose and DeSoto when I arrive in June.

Of course, we all have our crosses to bear. In 2002, during the Church's sex abuse scandal, two of the former residents of the children's home, within weeks of each other, came

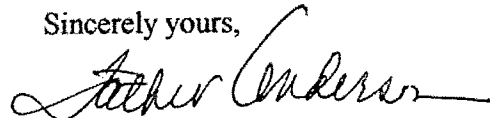
forward and accused me of improprieties. No facts were ever presented and no charges were ever filed. One of the young men eventually withdrew his complaint and the other was discredited. I'm telling you this now because I wanted you to hear it directly from me.

Back to happier topics - I am grateful to Fr. Hopmeir for all that he has been able to accomplish in his years with you. He speaks highly of St. Rose, and I know you're going to miss him and he's going to miss you. I'll do my best to keep things organized and moving. I look forward to working with the Parish Council, the parish staff, and all of you. If I can be of help in any way, please don't hesitate to contact me.

One of the most important things a parish can do - in fact, the ONLY thing it is supposed to do - is to help people grow in the image and likeness of Christ. Everything takes second place to holiness, and everything else that is part of parish life is supposed to help us become holy. Sunday Mass and the celebration of the Sacraments take on an added importance when holiness is our goal. We all need to work together to accomplish this goal.

Please keep me in your prayers as this time of transition unfolds, and be sure of a very special place in my prayers for all of you. I plan to arrive right on time - Tuesday, June 17 - and I'll see you all when I get there! May God bless you and me and St. Rose of Lima Parish! St. Rose of Lima, pray for us!

Sincerely yours,



Fr. Alexander R. Anderson
Soon-to-be Pastor
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
June 10, 2008