

Mayor honors priest for 50 years of service

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CHICOPEE – Rev. Marion Tolczyk – who was recently back in the city to mark his 50th anniversary as a priest – was honored by Mayor Richard R. Goyette.

Goyette, on behalf of the city, met with the priest in his office in City Hall and presented him with a plaque commemorating his 50th anniversary in the priesthood.

The mayor noted Tolczyk spent 16 of those years ministering at St. Stanislaus parish as a priest and rector.

Goyette “commends the impact Father Marion has had in the community and wishes him well in his future endeavors.”

In August, the popular priest returned from his present assignment at St. Paul Church in Kensington, Conn., to attend a reception and dinner at St. Stanislaus School. Hundreds attended the Aug. 15 event and Tolczyk said he was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support.

Since 2002, Tolczyk has served as parochial vicar at the Connecticut church.

A Franciscan friar, Tolczyk was a longtime pastor at the Basilica of St. Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr and has no plans to retire at the age of 77 but to continue to work, minister and help people as long as he can.

He served in Chicopee from 1982 to 1991, and his formal installation was on Oct. 4, 1982. Some of the events he presided over at the basilica and the school were the blessing of a crucifix on the school’s exterior wall in 1983, the installation of adult servers in 1984, the dedication of a handicapped ramp in 1986, the addition of air conditioning to the church in 1986, and the restoration and painting of the church, convent and friary in the fall of 1987 to the spring of 1988.

He also presided over the filming of a series of Masses which are shown daily Monday to Friday on Channel Cable 5, the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Stanislaus B M Society in 1988, the establishment of St. Stanislaus School Board in 1989, the refurbishing and rededication of the cemetery chapel, providing cable TV for elderly parishioners who are homebound so

they can watch the daily Masses, the recognition of the church as a historically significant building by the Chicopee Historical Society in 1990 and the celebration of the Parish Centennial in 1991.

The priest established several programs over his career, including a program of ministry to troubled young men in Buffalo, N.Y.; development of a pension fund to provide for the needs of the aged and sick friars, an edu-

cation fund and a program that allowed a large number of friars to enroll in Franciscan studies at such places as the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University in Olean, N.Y.



Photo submitted by Susan Brooks

The Rev. Marion Tolczyk, left, was honored by Chicopee Mayor Richard R. Goyette on the occasion of his 50th anniversary of being ordained into the priesthood.