

Retirement Homily at the 9A.M Mass March 2019 Fr, John,

Introduction

I think I am expected to say a few words at this time. – I was looking for a word that best describes all our lives -“JOURNEY”.

_ From the beginning of each of our lives, when we are all conceived in each of our mother’s wombs – Doctors and Scientists today ,try to crack its mystery, - it is so full of the mystery of God. – And when we die - “ Death is not the End” St. Paul says-Rather death is the door we all pass through “Returning Home to the House of the FATHER.”

CENTER

So believing Life is a journey ,with all its “ups and downs,twists and turns ..” in the words of the famous British born actress, JULIE ANDREWS, (you remember her), in the well known movie, that made her famous “The Sound of Music” when she sang the song to the Von Trapp Children trying to teach them, their A,B,C, ... let’s see if anyone here remembers it –Lets hear you sing : “Let’s start at the very beginning .. a very good place to start...” Hold it..There is a scratch in the record... We are giving away our age now-!

My beginnings were in the country of IRELAND,-the land of my birth.- For—anyone who may not be aware,- Ireland is Located on the Western Seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean.—Ireland is an

Island, 32,000 square miles.-- We are an island people, currently with a diverse economy, one of the ancient cultures in the World as well as having one of the oldest Roman Catholic spiritualities in the church, known as Celtic Spirituality,-- going back to the 3rd century,- spoken about,- at length ,- by Pope Francis when he made a weekend pastoral, last August to Ireland, for the International Pastoral Conference on “THE FAMILY”.

POPE FRANCIS

I am sure many of you know, Pope Francis is a Jesuit Priest, born in the Country, of Argentina, in South America. Many of you also know Pope Francis speaks a number of languages including English.

But I wonder how many of you here know, where Pope Francis learned English, before he was ordained a Jesuit Priest. Pope Francis learned English, in City of Dublin,-- the Capital of Ireland.

Speaking about the Jesuits I want to publicly thank the Jesuit Order for setting me thinking on the road to the Priesthood. I want to thank one particular Jesuit Priest , my teacher in class, his name Patrick Maher.—While I never once discussed Priesthood,with him, the example of the man , set me thinking of the Priesthood. A reminder to all of us young and old, the

importance of always being a source of good example , for one another.

SEMINARY

I studied for the Priesthood in St. Patrick's, Seminary Ireland, of happy memory. 42 of us students, for the Priesthood started off. 19 of us finished. Later 2 other students joined us later, from former years, - bringing the total for Ordination to the Priesthood to 21. It is a 6 years course. – I managed to do it in 5 years.

Now if you are wondering how I managed to do a 6 year course in 5 years, I will not tell you. The reason,--it would be bad for my humility. – After all, the bit of humility I have, I am proud of it. I was Ordained to the Priesthood , on SAT. June 10th 1972,

We students, studied for every English speaking country in the World, outside of Ireland, wherever English was spoken such as England, Scotland ,Wales, The United States, New Zealand , Australia, including South Africa, in keeping with the scripture quotation on each of our Ordination Momento Cards:“GO, make Disciples of all nations ..”. As you know I chose to be a Priest, in London, where I spent many happy years where I made many friends.

In October 1981 I moved to the United States here to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. I was appointed to St. Basil's Church

, in the Wilshire District , in the City of Los Angeles, where I spent almost 5 years , followed a total of 19 years, at Our Lady Beach area .I was there for nine years. While there I met Fr. LUIS Estrada , 11 years ago, when he was a Seminarian with us in Norwalk. Luis is a late vocation having had a very successful Business Company, before choosing the Priesthood. Luis was Ordained Priest only a few years a having gone to St.John's Seminary, in nearby, Camarillo. He is currently an Associate Pastor at St. Paschal Baylon Parish, in Nearby Thousand Oaks.

ST Rose of Lima Parish.

I arrived here at St Rose of Lima Parish, Simi Valley, July 2nd 2017, over 2 and a half years ago, one day after that hot Spaniard, Gregorio arrived.

I do not know how many people here this morning know, the odd way, how I ended up coming here to St. Rose. The back story is briefly this.

We were Three Priests in my last Parish, called, St. John of God ,Norwalk, in the North Long Beach area. All three of us Priests were informed by H.Q to expect to be transferred to another Parish in the Archdiocese effective July 1st 2017. They decided they wanted to put in a Religious Order of Priests. We are Diocesan Priests. My other Priest Colleagues received their letters of appointment. I heard nothing. Not a squeak! Maybe they have forgotten me!

Eventually I received,- not a letter,-not a phone call,-but the briefest text I ever read:-“ Fr.Moloney,- you have been appointed the Associate Pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish, Simi Valley. Best Wishes. Alan.

I pulled myself and called Alan. –Alan happened to be the Vicar for Clergy, at the time,-the one in charge of all the Priests. He happened to be a Priest in my last parish. Last week he was announced to be the new Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles. – May I say the person who wants to be a Bishop these days, deserves it.

I called Alan at the Office. -- “ I got your text Allen,-- Where is Simi Valley – Ventura.

Who is the Pastor : -- Joe Shea... Who- is- Joe- Shea ..
Understand! We never met before.

Bye... (PAUSE)... Oh Oh..

Literally..(less than one minute later),.. I find myself on the phone again .. The voice at the other end of the line said:”Hi John.. I’m Joe Shea, St rose of Lima Parish ,Simi Valley,...I hear you might be coming to us.. By this time everything was happening so fast.. I was Flabbergasted.. there was a deadly silence ..I don’t remember what I said...That was a miracle right there .. Can you imagine an Irishman stuck for a word ...

Then I heard.. Tell you what John let's meet for lunch Mon 12 noon...Bye..Never a man to waste time .. JOE SHEA.. I learned fast, shortly after I arrived here.

Throughout the lunch I was beginning to get the warmies for the situation around here. By the end of the lunch both of us felt deal done.. The rest is history. ..I never looked back..

A priest is never a priest for himself.. Always... He is a Priest for others like you..

Thank you for making me that Priest. .. Amen.