

## Good News

Dear Friends,

As we move forward in faith, I have some good news for our parish.

Several months ago, Fr. Brown hosted long-time friends for a few days at his home. The wife is from St. Alphonsus parish in Auburn, NY which was Fr. Brown's second assignment as a priest. He reconnected with her and her soon-to-be husband in 1985 when Fr. Brown began his tenure as a chaplain in the United States Navy. They have been close friends ever since.

Gary and Mary Ann recently retired to beautiful Erwin, Tennessee. Their arrival coincided with the beginning stages of the construction of a new church, St. Michael the Archangel. Gary and Mary Ann quickly fell in love with this parish situated in a rural area of the Diocese of Knoxville. The parish is staffed by missionaries from the Glenmary Home Missionaries, a society of apostolic life founded in 1939 to serve the needs of rural areas of the United States.

The new Church is multi-purpose which means it is used for Sunday Mass, fellowship, and religious instruction. It is a building of modest means that reflects the nature of a rural area in the Appalachian Trail region. When I met Gary and Mary Ann, they enthusiastically told those of us who had gathered for dinner how exciting the project was.

Ironically, it was at the same time that I announced that Immaculate Heart of Mary Church would close on Labor Day, 2019. As I prepared to return home, I made an off-handed remark that stuck, "Well, if you want to take a Church with you, let me know!" As the weeks went on, a reality set in -- we have in abundance what others need. Later I began a discussion with the pastor, Fr. Tom Charters, a remarkably spiritual and humble priest with whom I easily connected in an amazing exchange of the same priesthood with two different missions.

As a result, in consultation with members of the parish liturgy committee, parish council, staff, and long-time members of the former IHM Church, I am happy to announce that St. Michael's parish in Erwin, Tennessee will receive all of the liturgical furnishings of IHM. This includes everything that a parish needs in the sanctuary for Mass as well as some items from the sacristy. The plan for other items remains the same: the stained glass windows will migrate to the Mausoleum at the cemetery, the original statues of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph will be placed in the Brennan Chapel, and The Blessed Mother statue purchased by the women's club in the 1980s will find a home somewhere in St. Mary's Church.

In 1985 IHM underwent a renovation. Led by the pastor, Fr. Wainwright, the liturgical items have remained a part of the Church since that time. I think it is proper and fitting to gift this complete set to a parish that is up and coming and in need of these items. I do not think it is appropriate to sit on them and wait to make a profit. All agree that it is better to share from our abundance.

The closing of IHM church and its listing for sale brings about the same practical reality every time a home is sold: where are we going to put everything?! Thankfully, for our current situation, we have an answer. Please pray for the members of St. Michael the Archangel in Erwin, Tennessee. I hope we will have further occasion to support this parish in their needs, and I believe we have found a new partner parish where we will mutually enrich each other with distinct expressions of the Catholic faith.

On another note: if you wish to have your pets/animals blessed, please mark your calendars for Friday, October 4th at 8:00am in front of All Saints Academy. The tradition of blessing animals that are not necessarily pets goes back several centuries. I have participated in this ritual when people brought animals from their farm, those that would provide sustenance. Many will bring their domestic animals (pets); I look forward to welcoming all to this event.

One last item: the Miraculous Medal Novena will begin on October 14th and conclude on December 9th. Please note, the Novena will be prayed on Monday evening this year. More details next week.

In Christ,  
Fr. Jones

