

There will probably be various Guilds, Societies, Sodalities, youth groups, and other meetings that will require an address or prayers. Then there are the ecumenical meetings with clergy and laity from other denominations. His administrative duties are performed under the directions of the bishop of the church.

The duties of a Catholic priest are manifold. If he is to avoid burn-out, everything must be underpinned with the Divine Office (aka breviary) and the mass and enough self-discipline to require time to relax.

*(excerpted from: en.wikipedia.org)

DAILY PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

(St. Therese of Lisieux)

O Jesus, I pray for Your faithful and fervent priests;

for Your unfaithful and tepid priests;

for Your priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields.

For Your tempted priests; for Your lonely and desolate priests;

for Your young priests; for Your dying priests;

for the souls of Your priests in Purgatory.

But above all, I recommend to You the priests dearest to me:

the priest who baptized me; the priests who absolved me from my sins;

the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me

Your Body and Blood in Holy Communion;

the priests who taught and instructed me;

all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way **(especially....)**.

O Jesus, keep them all close to Your heart,

and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

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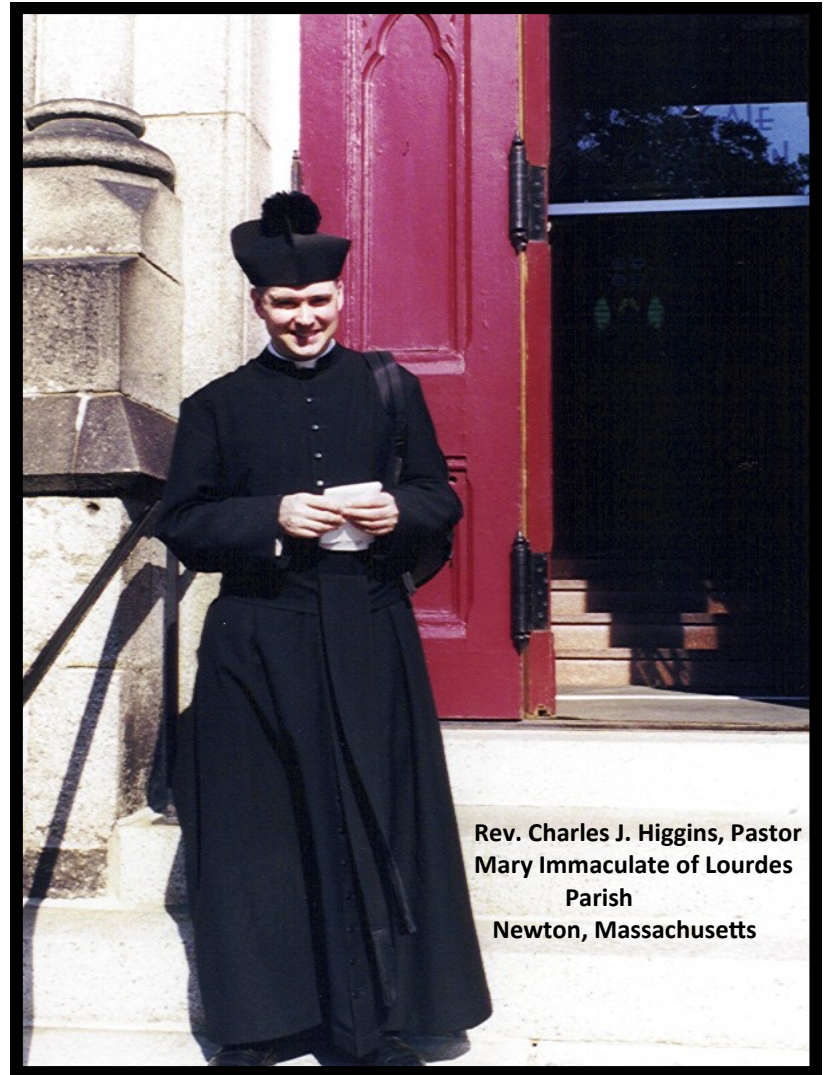
Fr. Higgins and Nick having a good laugh!

Father was saying to Nick:

"Tell Janet to keep typing those pamphlets!"



The Parish Priest



Rev. Charles J. Higgins, Pastor
Mary Immaculate of Lourdes
Parish
Newton, Massachusetts

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in Thee!

Please, bless our holy pastor!

THE PARISH

First of all let us look at a parish:

" What then is a parish? It is the smallest section of the one universal flock which has been entrusted to Peter by the Lord. Under the authority of a responsible priest who has received the care of souls from his bishop, the parish is, within the Church of Jesus Christ, the first community of Christian life; it is a community cut to human dimensions, in which the shepherd can know his flock and the flock can know their shepherd... At the heart of this area, we find the parish church with its bell-tower, its baptistery, its confessional, its altar and tabernacle, a symbol of unity and the centre of community life."
- Pope Paul VI

A parish needs two things under common law to become a parish. First, a body of Catholics within a fixed boundary and a named priest with responsibility for that parish (Catholic Encyclopedia 1913).

Each parish has a parish priest, also known as a pastor, although pastoral care of one or more parishes can also be entrusted to a team of priests *in solidum* (Can. 517). In extraordinary situations, administration of a parish can also be entrusted to a deacon or lay person (supervised by a priest– Can. 515; 517 § 2).

The practical significance of parish boundaries varies in different parts of the world. Catholics can generally choose to worship in any church that they find convenient or specially appealing, irrespective of whether they live within the parish boundaries, and if they thereby become members of that parish community, their place of residence will not count against them. A parish is thus primarily a community of people, rather than a geographic territory.

Parish Life: The parish is the centre of most Catholics' spiritual life, since it is there that they receive the sacraments. The parish generally has a busy schedule depending on size and culture. Traditionally, there is Mass daily and on Sundays, according to pastoral need, normally celebrated by priests resident in the parish. There is offered confessions, as well as other forms of prayer and social events.

THE PARISH PRIEST

"The Parish Priest is the proper clergyman in charge of the congregation of the parish entrusted to him. He exercises the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop, whose ministry of Christ he is called to share, so that for this community he may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful, in accordance with the law" (Can. 519).

In the United States, the "parish priest" is instead referred to as the "pastor", with the term "parish priest" used as a general reference to any priest assigned to the parish, including the pastor and any parochial vicars (associate pastors).

Parish personnel: In addition to the parish priest, it is common for the parish to have a group of staff; lay, consecrated religious, and ordained. For example, there can be a parish secretary who assists the parish priest with administrative matters; a parish sister who is responsible for activities like visiting the sick; and a permanent deacon, who is often married and assists the parish priest with the pastoral or administrative side of parish affairs. Often, parishes also have a parish council, appointed by the parish priest, although, unlike in Protestant denominations, this council has no authority except through the parish priest.

What are the duties of a Catholic priest? The duties of the Catholic parish priest are, according to Canon Law, to say the Divine Office each day, celebrate mass each day, baptize, preside at marriages, anoint the sick and the dying, take funerals, proclaim the Gospel, have regular time of mental prayer, hear confessions, visit the house-bound and other members of the parish, take an active part in the church school (if there is one), and by teaching classes and assemblies. He is also meant to organize and take part in classes for those who want to join the Catholic Church (RCIA).