



Seasons article 21st July 2019

Dear parishioners,

I am Joseph (Joe) Danh Truong. I believe that you may have heard that Archbishop Peter Andrew Comensoli has appointed me to be the Administrator of St Thomas More's Parish from 31 July 2019. I am excited about coming to join your parish and school communities at the end of this month.

I come to you as a foreigner for the following two reasons. Firstly, I come from a very different cultural background to most of you. My father, along with my oldest brother and sister came to Australia as refugees in 1986. It took my father about five years to settle down in Australia. By 1991 my father successfully sponsored my mother, an older brother and myself to come to Australia for family reunion. We are refugees from Vietnam and we are proud to call Australia our new home. I have done my best to assimilate to the Australian life style and culture. But, I believe that there are lots more that you can teach me about the Aussie way!

Secondly, although I have been in Australia for 28 years, I have not been to Mt Eliza. I do not know anything about this beautiful part of the peninsula. Therefore, I will be relying upon you to help me to become familiar with this area where I will live and minister as a priest.

Since, I am coming to you as a foreigner, for the reasons mentioned above, I believe that it is important that we have a good solid period of time to get to know each other. Then, let us move into a time of discernment to see how we can work collaboratively as missionary disciples of Jesus. I am coming to your parish community with openness and enthusiasm to serve and care for all.

I entered Corpus Christi Regional Seminary for Victoria and Tasmania in 2002.

I was ordained to the priesthood in 2009 at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne, and since then I have been appointed as an assistant parish priest at the following parishes: Mill Park, Scoresby, Clayton, Mernda and Geelong. Also, I had a period of study leave during which I completed a second unit of Clinical Pastoral Education and two semesters of pastoral studies at Stirling's Theological College.

I chose the image of the Sacred Heart for my ordination prayer card. What I want to convey through the use of this sacred image is that I am ordained to serve the people of God with the love and compassion of Christ. I come to your parish community with only one gift – the love and compassion of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

I am currently an assistant parish priest at St Mary's of the Angels Parish, Geelong. My main responsibility is to work as a chaplain at the Geelong University Hospital and St John of God Hospital. My greatest passion is to administer and to walk with people during their time of grief and suffering due to illness or other personal reasons.

This is my first time being appointed as Parochial Administrator. Therefore, I ask for your patience and understanding as I do have lots to learn and adjust to in this new role.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Fr Laurie Pearson PE for his years of dedicated service to the people of St Thomas More's Parish. I would like to wish Fr Laurie many blessings in his retirement and am looking forward to have Fr Laurie joining us at various parish events.

Yours in Christ,

(Fr) Joseph (Joe) Danh Truong