

Dear St. Mildred Parish Family,

Thank you for the kind welcome you have given me to St. Mildred. I am delighted to be here and am grateful to God and to Bishop Luis Rafael for sending me to be your shepherd. I am especially grateful to Deacon Jerry Fatica and Mr. Wojciech Chudziak for the beautiful care for and guidance to you this past year. Father Don left our parish in good form and in good hands. They are, of course, important members of our Parish Team and will continue ministering with us. It will take a while but I look forward to meeting all who are in leadership positions in the Parish and to meet all of you, our Family.

A little bit about myself, I am a priest of the Diocese of Raleigh, ordained by Bishop Vincent S. Waters, third Bishop of Raleigh, in St. Mary Church in Goldsboro in 1961. A native of Biloxi, Mississippi, I first came to North Carolina in 1952 as a Navy Hospital Corpsman assigned to the second Marine Division at Camp Lejeune. I made the Med Cruise and I like to tell people that I won the Korean War in the Mediterranean.

One doesn't go to the Seminary to become a priest, rather one goes to the Seminary to discern the will of God. From Camp Lejeune I studied at the Jesuit School of St. Philip Neri in Boston and then with the Resurrectionist Fathers at St. Mary College, St. Mary, Kentucky, and finally at the Sulpician School of Theology, St. Mary Seminary and University in Baltimore.

As a Priest I have served in many parishes in North Carolina, from St. Frances in Sparta, to St. Peter the Fisherman in Oriental. Interspersed with the Parish assignments were several Diocesan Ministries: Director of Religious Education, Chancellor and Vicar General to Bishop Gossman.

Officially I retired in 2002, and have continued to serve in various ministries and parishes, most recently as Archivist of the Diocese and now Director of the Archive, which I will continue to oversee as I minister to you.

Our loving God, in His good graces, has sent me here. I pray for you every day and ask that you pray for me. May we together be witnesses to the Love of Jesus, may our motto be, **OUR FAMILY TOGETHER.**

Love and blessings to all.

Father Lewis