



# From the Pastor

## Blessing and Grand Opening

We will be blessing the parish convent house for the Sisters next Saturday, September 1st, after the 5 p.m. Mass, followed by a Knights of Columbus-sponsored barbeque dinner.

Although we are deeply saddened by the reports of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury and the cases involving Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the retired archbishop of Washington, D.C., we have reasons to rejoice and be grateful to God here at St. Francis Parish. It has been an incredible journey for us, where God has surprised us every step of the way, and now we are realizing another one of our dreams. Your generosity has been amazing in furnishing the convent house, and the Sisters are already working hard in the classrooms, getting them ready for the new school year.

I never imagined all these things could happen so quickly. It was less than a year ago that Bishop Liam and I started our search for a few nuns who would come to help us in our school in educating our young people. In the meantime, our debt came down from \$2.6 million to under \$500,000. Once the Sisters confirmed their intention to join our efforts, we looked at building a house for them. We then broke ground on May 27th and, ever since, the construction moved ahead quickly under the amazing leadership of Dennis Murphy of Hayden Homes. His generosity in sharing his time, talents, and resources have brought us to where we are today in providing a house for the nuns. Huge thanks go to Dennis Murphy, Steve Klingman, Parr Lumber, the House Construction Committee, and all those who have assisted us in fulfilling another dream. I hope as many of you as possible will join us for the blessing and grand opening of the house on Saturday, September 1st.

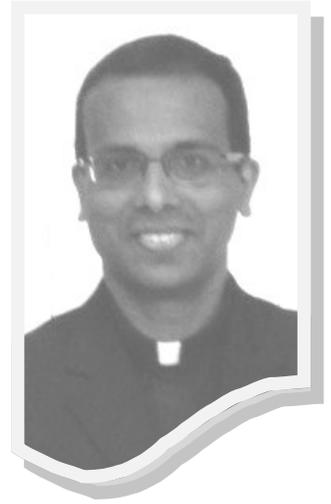
## Back to School

“. . . and Mary sat at the Lord's feet listening to what He said" (Lk. 10:39).

I'll be taking some time away from parish activities to sit at the feet of the Lord and listen. Members of the clergy who have worked in the diocese for 10 years are encouraged to take three months away for continuing education. With the approval of our bishop, I will be spending an entire month at the North American College in Rome, starting September 2nd. I am very excited about this opportunity and looking forward to it. I will be attending the one-month course offered by North American College on Saint Paul, with one week of my course spent making his missionary journey in Cyprus. My course will also include celebrating Masses at St. Peter's and St. Paul's and a general audience with Pope Francis. I promise to remember each of you while I am celebrating the Masses there, and I ask for your prayers while I'm away. You will be in my thoughts and daily prayers.

I will also be going to St. Mary's University in Baltimore for two weeks in November as part of my continuing education. A Spanish immersion in Mexico next year will complete three months of my continuing education program.

Thanks for your understanding and patience while I am away. I'm sure you will all behave, and the church will still be standing when I return. I expect to be back October 5th. Fr. Victor will take care of all necessary things in my absence. And while he is away on vacation the second part of September, Fr. Joseph Pallithazath—one of my cousins—will be here. I am sure you will be nice to him. ☺



—Fr. Jose Thomas