

News From Father Mike

I have some news to share with you all. On November 15 I will be moving to Bethlehem Woods Village in LaGrange Park. The reason for the move is concern for my well-being. We priests have two nurse practitioners to oversee our health. I walk with a cane now. They have been concerned about the 17 steps I go up and down four times a day at the parish house. There are additional steps outdoors when I leave or come back to the house. I also sought the wisdom of my priest prayer group who have observed me when I have been on retreat with them. There was a clear consensus among them that for my own well-being it would be good to be in a facility that had no stairs to climb. There are many other advantages to living in a retirement home such as prepared meals. I have resisted making this move because I have grown very attached to our parish where I have been a resident priest for 20 years. I have loved the people of this parish and enjoyed assisting with Mass and the sacraments. In praying over this matter, the Lord has told me that it is time to move. Bethlehem Woods, overseen by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, is a very good facility. The sisters have served our parish in the past.

Part of why I chose Bethlehem Woods Village is because of its proximity to Holy Guardian Angels Parish. It is on Ogden Ave, two and a half miles west of St. Barbara. I will be able to continue to offer Mass on weekdays as well as Sundays, hear confessions, preside at holy hours, and help with funerals at our

parish. For those coming to church nothing will change because you will see me as often as you do now. It will take me less than 10 minutes to drive to either St. Barbara or Saint Louise. Our pastor, Father Brian, is pleased that I intend to continue to help out as I have done over the years. I do ask that you keep me in prayer as I make this transition. Deciding what to keep as I move to my small apartment at Bethlehem Woods and getting everything packed up is rather stressful. Even though I will continue to serve Holy Guardian Angels Parish as I currently am, this is still a big change in my life. I will miss living with Father Rodrigo. I appreciate your prayers and will always keep you in mine.

Peace and love always,

Father Michael Ahlstrom

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