

# **‘A pastoral priest’ - Baltimore’s Bishop Newman marks 60 years of priesthood**

**By Jennifer Williams**

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Three months shy of his 26th birthday, on May 29, 1954, William Clifford Newman was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Baltimore by Archbishop Francis P. Keough. Sixty years later, now three months shy of his 86th birthday, the retired bishop is still serving Catholics of the archdiocese.

Bishop Newman, a Baltimore native, was present at the dedication of the new St. Joseph on Carrollton Manor in Buckeystown this month as well as the ordination of four new deacons. He continues to assist at St. John the Evangelist in Hydes on weekends.

“That’s important to me because I spent all my 30 years as a bishop sort of bouncing from one faith community to another as you’re serving them,” he said. “While that’s very satisfying, I still miss the community element that’s a permanent thing. So I have adopted St. John as my faith community so I can love and support them and in turn they love and support me.”

Bishop Newman, a graduate of Calvert Hall College High School in Towson, began his 60 years of ministry at St. Elizabeth of Hungary in Highlandtown, his first permanent assignment, where he served eight years. From there, he went on to become principal of St. Paul’s Latin High School, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese, pastor of Ss. Philip and James, rector of the Cathedral of Mary our Queen and auxiliary bishop of Baltimore.

“My whole life has been a blessing as a priest, but has been very challenging ... and it’s been exciting and rewarding,” he said.

“As I reflect on my 60 years, I really wish I was just beginning,” Bishop Newman said. “I’m so pleased and happy with the direction of the church today with the new evangelization and the direction of Pope Francis, I really feel the church is on target.”

Bishop W. Francis Malooly of the Diocese of Wilmington, Del., and former auxiliary bishop of Baltimore, first met Bishop Newman nearly 50 years ago at the wake for Bishop Malooly’s father.

“He was a good friends with all my family,” said Bishop Malooly, a priest of 44 years.

"He's a wonderful man, a great mentor. He was always an outstanding priest, no matter what his job was. It wasn't easy."

He described Bishop Newman as a pleasant and good-hearted priest.

"You can't not like him," he said. "With some people, they come into a room and there's a presence they bring, a gentleness that is part of their persona, and he has that."

Father William F. Franken, pastor of St. Joan of Arc in Aberdeen and former pastor of St. John in Hydes, where he resided for a number of years with Bishop Newman, describes his friend as "a wonderful priest and person, someone who is very committed to pastoral ministry and has been his entire life."

"He's a very generous, genuine, kind and pastoral priest, someone that people related to," he said. "He certainly enjoys being with his family and is very committed to them as well."

His message to the bishop on his 60 years of priesthood is one of thanks.

"I would want to say thanks for your 60 years of ministry as a priest and bishop to the priests and people of the Archdiocese of Baltimore," Father Franken said. "I would say thanks for being a blessing to me."

Bishop Malooly's message is: "I wish him continued good health and God's blessing. Ad Multos Annos! (To many more years.)"

In his retirement, Bishop Newman enjoys reading, exercising, a weekly poker game, socializing with the other priests residing at Mercy Ridge and celebrating Mass at St. John's. He said he enjoys "kibitzing" with Father Myles F. Muller and Monsignor Charles F. Meisel as they play pool. He watches the Orioles with Monsignor Edward J. Lynch.

With new ordinations approaching June 21, Bishop Newman said he would give this advice to the new priests, which he adopted from the book, "Pope Francis: The Argentinian Pope," by Larry Berg.

### **Seven papal precepts:**

1. Simplicity of life with a big touch of humility
2. Don't live a double life
3. Be accountable for your priestly stewardship
4. Focus on service to the people
5. Be compassionate; be ministers of mercy
6. Be a real agent of evangelization, not only in word, but in deed and in attitude
7. "Do not be afraid to have your shoes get soiled by the mud of the street."

Bishop Newman said prayer life is important and encouraged new priests to relate with people.

"With all this social communication going on," he said, "they miss out on interpersonal relationships that are necessary as a priest."



*Retired Bishop William C. Newman speaks with Justice Hartley, an eighth-grader at Mother Seton Academy in Baltimore and the first recipient of a four-year scholarship in Bishop Newman's name to Calvert Hall College High School in Towson. The bishop was a member of Calvert Hall's Class of 1946. (CR file photo from 2010)*

### **Ten things you might be surprised to learn about Bishop Newman:**

1. According to Bea Hradsky, his secretary when he was superintendent of schools, Bishop Newman has the best penmanship of anyone she has ever known.
2. When Bishop Newman was a student at Calvert Hall College High School, he excelled in baseball and caught the eye of many baseball scouts.
3. His first job was working for the sexton of Blessed Sacrament Church, cleaning up the church and church hall after parish card parties.
4. On his first day of his first permanent assignment at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church, Bishop Newman inadvertently parked in his new pastor's cherished parking space. "You could take his right arm, but don't dare take his parking space," Bishop Newman said of the memory.
5. According to his friend Francis Meagher, the worst swearing Bishop Newman will do on the golf course is the occasional Shakespearean "forsooth." "He's a sweetheart of a guy," Meagher said.
6. Bishop Newman was principal of St. Paul's Latin School, where George Weigel attended. Weigel went on to write the definitive biography of St. John Paul II.
7. In 1974, after serving for nine years as superintendent, Bishop Newman asked the newly installed Archbishop William D. Borders to consider someone else for the job. It was the same year Bishop Newman had a heart attack.
8. When he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Baltimore in 1984, Bishop Newman found it difficult to come to terms with his newfound authority. "I didn't want to be some pompous guy, because that's not me," he said.
9. In 2002, the bishop had a critical blood infection that came from old defibrillator wires. He underwent seven surgeries and had to learn how to walk again. "It was humbling," he said.
10. Ten years ago, before Pope Francis was elected as pope, Bishop Newman was quoted as saying "The church needs to be more missionary. It needs to go out and find out where the presence of Christ and the love of Christ belongs, and bring it."

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