

Father Muth to head Blessed Sacrament

When Father Joseph L. Muth Jr., pastor of St. Matthew, Northwood, also took over as shepherd of Baltimore's Church of the Blessed Sacrament Jan. 1, he looked to Third World countries for inspiration.

Pastors are spread thin in large, underdeveloped countries, but Father Muth said they have been forward-thinking in encouraging lay people to take leadership roles. Knowing that guiding two faith communities will be difficult, the priest will call on his parishioners for help.

"There are strong lay leaders at Blessed Sacrament," Father Muth said. "They do a lot of good work by knocking on doors. The people get along very well with each other."

Both St. Matthew and Blessed Sacrament are members of Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD), which will aid in the transition.

Father Muth wants everything to be centered on the Eucharist and the Gospel.

Ordained in 1974, Father Muth grew up at nearby St. Mary of the Assumption, Govans, and went to St. Paul Latin High School. He later attended St. Charles, a minor seminary in Catonsville, and St. Mary's Seminary and University on Paca Street.

Father Muth was first an associate pastor of St. Agnes, Catonsville. For 32 of his 35 years in the priesthood, he has served Baltimore City parishes like St. Jerome and St. Ann. He was assigned as pastor of St. Matthew in 1990.

Prior to taking on the role of pastor of Blessed Sacrament, Father Muth was serving as a temporary administrator for the parish and celebrating Mass once a month. He said Deacon Paul Shelton and School Sister of Notre Dame Marie C. Mack, the parish's pastoral administrator, provide excellent guidance and knowledge.

Working with city parishioners who come from many different nations has proven rewarding and educational for Father Muth.

“It’s real life,” he said. “It’s people going through all the challenges and excitement of life.”