

Father Ward to head Edgewood parish

After nearly a decade as pastor of Our Lady of Hope in Dundalk, Father John B. Ward is taking a new assignment as pastor of Prince of Peace in Edgewood effective Jan. 1.

"I'm really anxious to go up there and be a part of the community," he said. "I've met the people and they're very nice. They're very welcoming."

Made up of about 400 registered families, Prince of Peace has 2,200 fewer families than Our Lady of Hope. Father Ward said he needed a smaller parish so he could minister effectively as adjutant judicial vicar of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. He was named to that post earlier this year, working mostly on annulment cases at the Catholic Center in Baltimore.

"I wanted to also stay in parish ministry," Father Ward said.

Father Ward succeeds School Sister of Notre Dame Joan Minella, a personal friend, who served as the Harford County parish's pastoral life director for six years.

"She did a wonderful job," Father Ward said. "She left the parish in great shape."

Father Ward's top priority at Prince of Peace is getting to know the people. He plans to continue inter-parish cooperation in the region. A committed football fan, he joked that he's glad there are a lot of Baltimore Ravens and New Orleans Saints fans at his new parish.

While he's excited about his new pastorate, Father Ward acknowledged that it will be difficult to leave Our Lady of Hope. He will especially miss the parish school and working with Our Lady of Hope's athletic association.

A New Orleans native who moved to Baltimore at age 17, Father Ward's home parish was Immaculate Heart of Mary in Baynesville. He taught at Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore, Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Baynesville

and St. Mark School in Catonsville.

After studying at St. Mary's Seminary in Roland Park, Father Ward was ordained to the priesthood in 1986. His assignments included serving as associate pastor of St. Mark in Catonsville and the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland. Before being named pastor of Our Lady of Hope, he was the priest secretary to Cardinal William H. Keeler.