

# Installation of Msgr. Jarboe

## Introduction

Traditionally, the Third Sunday of Advent is known as “*Gaudete* Sunday” – and as you know, the Latin word, “*gaudete*” means, “rejoice”. As we anticipate our Sunday celebration, we have good reason to rejoice. First and foremost, the Lord is near, near to us in the approaching Feast of Christmas, near to us in our life of faith and through the Sacraments, and near to us as we await his return in glory at the end of time. So the Church says to you and me, “Rejoice” – not with a fleeting joy but with a profound joy that does not fade away in time of trouble, illness, or distress. So St. Paul says, “Rejoice in the Lord *always*, again I say it, rejoice” (Phil. 4:4).

Of course, we have another, more immediate reason to rejoice – the installation of your pastor, Msgr. Bruce Jarboe. He’s already been on the job for a while, so you’ve gotten to know him and to appreciate his wonderful qualities and talents as a human being and as a priest. Today it’s my joy and yours to celebrate his appointment even as we pray for God’s blessings on St. Ann Parish for years to come, together with St. Maria Goretti High School.

## A Scriptural Job Description

Almost all of us are used to having job descriptions that are provided to us by business and industry but few of us have a job description right out of the pages of the Bible. The job description I share with Msgr. Jarboe does in fact come from the Bible and more specifically, from today’s Scripture readings. Let me explain.

Beginning with the first reading from the prophet Isaiah, where he says: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me.” The Spirit of the Lord is upon Msgr. Jarboe because of his baptism but also because the Holy Spirit descended into his soul on the day of his priestly ordination so that he can be “another Christ” – so that he can make the Lord near to us by reenacting his saving words and deeds.

And the priestly anointing Msgr. Jarboe received at his ordination was for a mission: like the Jesus, the Son of God, sent into the world by the Father, so too Msgr. Jarboe has been sent to you to proclaim the good news of God’s love. It is not his own word

but truly the Word of the Lord, a word that 'brings glad tidings to the poor, heals the brokenhearted, frees the captive.' Thanks to the Word of life and love which he preaches and to which he bears witness, we can open our hearts to Jesus, who is so near to us, so that we no longer need be spiritually impoverished by being cut off from God, so that we might find healing from those spiritual and emotional wounds we bear, so that we might be free from the captivity of a self-centered style of life. In the Word which Msgr. Jarboe preaches, you and I find renewed dignity and joy, such that, for all of our struggles and flaws, we can say before one another, "I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of soul, for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation ... " (Isaiah 61:10).

In the second reading, St. Paul's first to the Thessalonians, he tells us not only to rejoice and give thanks in all circumstances, but also to pray without ceasing, to discern God's good gifts in our midst, and to form a community that is made up of men, women, and young people who are at peace with God, with one another, and themselves. So the pastor, as the spiritual leader of a parish, must infuse his parish with gospel joy. Not for nothing did Pope Francis call his first exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel" - "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus," he writes. So the Pastor's chief concern is that his people encounter Jesus, that they know, love, and trust him and open their hearts to him and to His Word, because once we've fallen in love with the Lord everything changes. And as this happens, the Pastor discerns with his people those gifts that are from God, given to build up the parish community in truth and love, given to make the parish vibrant, attractive, welcoming, and engaging. The Pastor discerns and calls forth those gifts, and in the Holy Spirit, strives to make all these gifts work together for the common good.

In the Gospel we meet the figure of John the Baptist, who went into the desert to announce the coming of the Lord and offered a baptism of repentance in the Jordan River. John said One was coming after him who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire; he was referring, of course, to the Lord Jesus. A good shepherd, a good pastor, calls us all to repentance. We are done no favor when a pastor tells us that we're good enough as we are, that our sins don't matter, that our maltreatment of one another is good enough, and that we needn't bother to bear witness to our hope in our daily lives. On the contrary, good pastors are conscious of their own need for

forgiveness and in the joy of their own reconciliation with the Lord, proclaim that the Lord is near to us with his merciful love. And not only do they proclaim his nearness, they are the instruments by which the Lord draws near to us. So Msgr. Jarboe has the joy of celebrating the sacraments: Baptism by which we receive the new life the Lord won for us by his death on the Cross and his Resurrection; the Holy Eucharist, the source and summit of our faith, in which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ offered for the forgiveness of our sins; the Sacrament of Reconciliation in which God's love triumphs over our sins; the Sacrament of Matrimony, the basis of the vocation of marriage and family life; and the Anointing of the Sick in which our sufferings are joined to those of Christ. When we rejoice over the nearness of the Lord, truly we must give thanks for God's gift of the Seven Sacraments. In bringing the Lord so near to us, the Pastor enables us to worship with joy, by repeating Mary's Song of Praise, our responsorial psalm, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior ...The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is His Name."

## **Conclusion**

All in all, it's quite a job description, and more than that, it's a mission. And much as we rejoice today in the installation of your new pastor, so too we must pray, and pray earnestly, for an increase of priestly vocations an increase of good and generous young men who are willing to answer the call to serve as priests of the Church and to serve in the parishes of this Archdiocese. I am confident that God is calling some in this parish to the priesthood and with your prayers and encouragement, that call will be answered.

So let us rejoice and be glad! The Lord is near! And let us pray with and for Msgr. Jarboe, that his ministry here at St. Ann's will bear the abundant fruit the Lord promises to those who love him. May God bless us and keep us always in His love!