

New pastor named for Sacred Heart of Mary

After serving six months as temporary administrator and a year as associate pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary in Graceland Park, Father George Gannon is elated that Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien has appointed him the new pastor of the east Baltimore parish effective immediately.

"I've really gotten to know the parish and the people, and I feel very much at home here," said Father Gannon, a 48-year-old Prince Georges County native who described his parishioners as "very warm" and "very genuine."

"The people are willing to share their gifts for the benefit of the parish," he said. "They're willing to be involved in ministries they may have never tried before."

Father Gannon said some of his top priorities as pastor include encouraging people to stay involved in their parish. He is also working to build a new youth program and looking at ways for the parish and the parish school to coordinate activities more effectively.

"We would love to increase the number of students in the school," said Father Gannon, noting that there are currently 195 students.

With about 1,600 registered families at Sacred Heart, Father Gannon said the faith community has a large number of senior members.

Father Gannon studied psychology and political science at the University of Maryland, College Park, before earning a law degree at the University of Baltimore School of Law. He worked 12 years as an attorney in Montgomery County - experience he said will help him in the administration of the parish.

Father Gannon studied for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary and was ordained in 2002. He is a former associate pastor of St. John, Severna Park who served as that faith community's temporary administrator for five months. He was also the temporary administrator of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Edgewater.