



INSTITUTE FOR
Evangelization

Office of Life, Justice & Peace

Archdiocese of Baltimore



DEAF MINISTRY

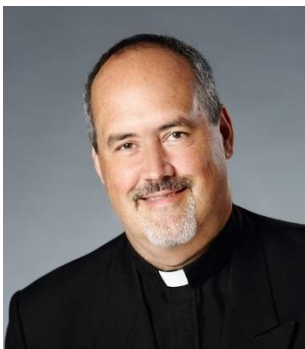
June 2023



Fr. Luke Koski was ordained on Saturday, June 24 in Baltimore at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen. Fr. Luke Koski has received his assignment from the Archbishop. He will be an associate pastor at Christ the King Parish in Glen Burnie and St. Bernadette Parish in



Severn. He will also serve as chaplain at Archbishop Spaulding High School. So, Fr. Luke will be busy with a full-time job. Although Fr. Luke has been working on his ASL skills, it does not appear that he will be available to assist with Mass in ASL at this time.



Fr. Mike Depcik will begin his position as **Chaplain for Deaf Ministry** in the Archdiocese of Baltimore beginning about August 16, 2023. **Fr. Mike begin having weekly Mass at the Country Church in Urbana, MD on Sunday, August 20 at 10 am.** There will also be regular Mass in the Baltimore area (probably once each month starting after Fr. Mike is settled in after the move). More details will be provided as we get closer to that time. Plans are also being made for an Open House/Welcome event for Fr. Mike probably in September. Please watch for further announcements! **Welcome Fr. Mike!**

Q & A Re Fr. Mike Depcik's Move to Maryland

Q: When is Fr. Mike moving to MD?

A: Fr. Mike is planning to move to Maryland on **August 16, 2023.**

Q: Where will Fr. Mike live?

A: It is planned that Fr. Mike will have two different places to live while he is here in Maryland. Fr. Mike is a member of a religious community, the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. They have a house **in Washington, DC**. Fr. Mike will stay some nights with them in DC. It is planned that Fr. Mike will also have a place to stay **in the Frederick area**. The specific place has not been identified. It is hoped that he will be able to have a room in a parish rectory where another parish priest(s) live.

Q: How long will Fr. Mike be here in the Archdiocese of Baltimore?

A: Both Fr. Mike and the Archdiocese of Baltimore have agreed that he will be here in the Archdiocese of Baltimore for **at least three years**. After three years, it will be decided if he will be here longer or not.

Q: Is Fr. Mike here full-time?

A: Basically, yes, but **not completely**. Why? Fr. Mike has requested to have 8 weeks (or two months) **off during the summer**. He plans to participate in meeting with his religious community (the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales) and he plans to continue his work with the Jesus' Deaf CREW summer camp in Michigan. Fr. Mike also plans to travel from time to time to minister to the Deaf in other dioceses on some weekends (like he did when he would leave Michigan to come to minister with us here in Maryland for the last several years). This is all part of the agreement with Fr. Mike and the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Q: Will Fr. Mike have weekly Sunday Mass? If so, where will he have Mass?

A: Yes. Fr. Mike plans to have **weekly Mass almost every Sunday** during the year, except during the two months during the summer. However, he may need to be away several Sundays during the year to travel to other dioceses to minister with those who also do not have a Deaf priest or a priest who can sign.

Regular weekly Mass is planned to take place at the **Country Church in Urbana, MD at 10 am on Sunday mornings beginning Sunday, August 20, 2023**. Fr. Mike also is planning to have Mass **once each month in the Baltimore area**. When that will start has not been decided.

Q: What will happen when Fr. Mike is not available for Mass?

A: The details for when Fr. Mike is not available have **not yet been worked out**. It is possible that we might be able to find a priest who could come to the Country Church for Mass at the regularly scheduled time along with an interpreter. It is also possible that, especially during the summer when Fr. Mike is away, interpreted Masses will be provided in the parishes much as they were before Fr. Mike arrived.

Q: What about Fr. Luke Koski? Could he come and provide a Mass in ASL when Fr. Mike is away?

A: Fr. Luke Koski has received his assignment from the Archbishop. He will be an associate pastor at Christ the King Parish in Glen Burnie and St. Bernadette Parish in Severn. He will also serve as chaplain at Archbishop Spaulding High School. So, **Fr. Luke will be busy with a full-time job.** Archbishop Lori is very aware that he has studied ASL, however, as you might expect, the archdiocese would like Fr. Luke to get experience at a regular parish. It does not appear possible that he will be available to assist with Mass in ASL at this time.

Q: What happens when Fr. Mike completes his time here in the Archdiocese of Baltimore?

A: This is something that all of us need to plan for. We need to work to have a well-functioning worship community. This means that the members of the Deaf Community will need to take ownership of roles needed to make the worship community function well. The Archdiocese will need to prepare to have a plan so that an archdiocesan priest might be able to step in and replace Fr. Mike when he is called to minister in some other place. None of this can happen without planning and commitment on our part and on the part of the archdiocese. **We will need to be working together with the Archdiocese to have a plan in place before Fr. Mike leaves after three or more years.**

Q: What will we do if we have too many people to fit in the Country Church in Urbana?

A: That will be a good thing! It is possible that we would need to consider having Mass at two different times at the Country Church.