

PASTOR'S COLUMN

“Thank You, Fr. Ken Kieffer, O.F.M.!”

This weekend, as the Faith Community of St. Thomas More, we celebrate Fr. Ken’s 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

We give thanks to God for 50 years of dedicated service to God and God’s people. Fr. Ken’s journey of faith has led him from the Midwest to places around the world and, ultimately, to the Oceanside area where he has resided since 1979.

During the last 10 years, he developed a special relationship with the people of St. Thomas More. Beginning as a “supply priest” to assist with Masses, the relationship, over the years, has grown in such a way that he is “one among us”—a committed, faithful priest, living in the midst of his people, offering the gift of unwavering availability and friendship.



Fr. Ken’s whirlwind of activities gives us a new meaning to the word retirement. His involvement here at St. Thomas More, at Mission San Diego Alcalá, the Army Navy Academy in Carlsbad, Fraternity House, Camp Pendleton, and wherever else needed reminds us that retirement does not mean inactivity, but rather greater ability to focus upon the activities that really matter.

For me, Fr. Ken is a shining ray of hope as I continue to move forward on my journey of faith, continue to live the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and begin to contemplate what my retirement, God willing, will be like.

The Gospel this weekend gives us the call of Matthew. We hear the words of Jesus to Matthew, “Come, follow me.” We are reminded that when a person not only hears those three simple words, but also acts upon them, one’s life is never the same. Nor are the lives that are touched by that person.

Fr. Ken heard the call of Jesus, responded to that call, and has faithfully lived that call in the ordained priesthood for the past 50 years. His life and all whom he has touched over the years have been blessed because of his positive response to Jesus’ call: “Come, follow me.”

Fr. Ken, know that the Church of St. Thomas More is ever so grateful for your presence among us and your ministry to us... We celebrate with you... your joy is our joy! We thank you! We appreciate you! We love you!