

A MESSAGE FROM FR. BIJU:

My name is Fr. Biju Antony and I am very pleased to be joining you here in Lake Country and Kelowna. I would love to share a little bit about myself to help you get to know me better, as I look forward to meeting each of you.

I was born in Kannur city, in the state of Kerala, which is located in the southern part of India. After completing tenth grade, I joined the Mary immaculate Order and became a Carmelite. I then began my 15-year formation as I journeyed to the priesthood. It was with great joy that I was ordained by His Excellency, Bishop Joseph Pamplani of the Archdiocese of Thalassery on December 26th, 2020.

My family in India includes my father and mother as well as my six elder siblings. Two of my three brothers are married. I have one sister who is also married and two sisters that are catholic nuns.

My interests include listening to music, reading and travelling, but most of all, I like to interact with people.

I am wholeheartedly looking forward to journeying together to where the Lord is calling our parish. The desire of my heart is to be united in one aim, as we share the love of Christ with each other, the communities of Lake Country and Kelowna and Lake Country and the greater world.

May God Bless you,

Fr, Antony

Fr. Biju & Fr. Obi Enjoying Indian Cuisine



A MESSAGE FROM FR. OBI

St. Edwards and St. Pius Parishes

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Please allow me to introduce as we begin our journey together.

Thank you for your warm welcome these past two weeks. I have truly enjoyed our time together. Thank you, Lord for the grace you have given, for without it, we can do nothing.

I am from the South Eastern part of Nigeria. I am the youngest of six children. I am a cradle Catholic. In my search for the true meaning of life and what happiness consists in, I met people who led me to Jesus. By the grace of God, I have come to know Jesus as a faithful Friend. Two of my cousins are priests. Two other cousins are nuns. I have looked up to them in my journey as a priest and a servant of God and the Church.

I came to Canada twelve years ago. Fr. Bart (now Bishop Bart), the then Vocation Director wanted to convince me that Nelson Diocese is the best. So, he told me that the climate in our diocese is the envy of the nation. However, he said that in the winter it can dip to -10. In Nigeria, the coldest I had experienced was +25. I wanted to know what -10 feels like. There was no way I could do that. I did something a little stupid. I stuck my head into the deep freeze in our house. Boy, was it ever cold. I arrived in Penticton in April. It felt like the middle of winter. In May, I moved to the seminary in Edmonton. I still don't know how I survived the cold Alberta winters 😊 Well, here we are!

After my ordination on October 13, 2015 at ICC, Kelowna, I was posted to St. Pius and St. Edwards where I served as an associate Pastor. From here, I moved to Creston where I served for three years as a pastor. My last assignment was in Penticton where I was for four years. I had had other ministries in Trail and Vancouver. **Returning to St. Pius and St. Edward is like coming home where I became my journey of the priesthood.**

Thank you for the warm welcome you have given to Fr. Biju and me.

We look forward to serving you with love, to get to know each person. If you have time after Mass, we would be at the door, please come and introduce yourself. We would love to know you by name. It would take time to remember all the names but we would do our best.

I have spent this week meeting with the Parish Council and Finance Committee Members. These are the people who assist and advise the Pastor in different things regarding the life of the parish.

Whenever a priest comes to a new parish, people look forward to know what he brings: what is the vision? What is the program? For the years we will spend together, our ultimate program will not be written on a piece of paper. It is a person: the person of Jesus Christ - He who is the same yesterday, today and forever. During our years together, we will seek to rediscover anew the riches hidden in Him, for He is the pearl of great price the Gospel speaks about today. We will

seek to fall in love with Him and enjoy His friendship. As Pope Benedict XVI said: 'There is nothing more beautiful than friendship with Jesus.'

During our Parish Council Meeting, I consulted with the members to know what is on everyone's heart: where the Lord is leading the parish at this time. I asked: **'What is the most important thing in the life of our parish today? I have categorized the answers I received thus:**

1. Vibrant Youth and Young Adult Ministry
2. Evangelization
3. Community Activities
4. Valuing and welcoming people
5. Care for the Elderly.

I am going on vacation to Mexico on August 1st. **I will present all the suggestions to our Lady of Guadalupe asking for her intercession.** Frs. Marian and Biju will take care of the parish in my absence. I will be praying for you. Please pray for me, too.

I was very pleased with the responses I got during the meeting. I have since started praying and working on them.

First, we will hire a Youth and Young Adult Minister. This requires investment in our youth. We ask for your prayers. Whatever you can do to support this initiative will be appreciated.

Second, we will start community events. We are now planning to have a multicultural day one in mid September and another in October. More details to follow. I would like both parishes to collaborate and build up our communities. When there is an event in one community, we would invite the other community. The more, the merrier. The more united we are, the stronger we become. The more we love, the more beautiful our parishes become.

Third, we have contacted all the care-homes under our care. Care-home ministries will start again. We will need volunteers. If you are interested in this ministry, please contact our office. Thank you.

Fourth, we recognize that a good number of parishioners have not returned since after COVID. We will institute an outreach program to reach out to our parishioners whom we have not seen. I will start visitations and will also be phoning parishioners who are yet to return.

Fifth, we will have a parish mission and a welcome home event before the end of the year.

By and large, **all we do should begin with a Eucharistic Revival.** To renew our love for Jesus in the Eucharist. We are Eucharistic People. As Jesus takes bread at every Mass, blesses, breaks and shares, in the same way, we are taken, blessed, sometimes broken so that we can share our lives with our families and the world. A world loved by God but often broken and in need of Jesus: our

Saviour and Redeemer. As we share our lives and make sacrifices, we become bread broken for the life of the world.

Our motto will be: building and bonding.

SOME CHANGES

1. St. Edward's Parish expressed a desire to have Saturday 6.30pm Mass return to 5pm. So, beginning on the 12th of August, Saturday Mass will return to 5pm. Please help us to spread the word.

2. Confession times: St. Edwards - Saturday at 4pm or by appointment.

St. Pius: Saturday at 4pm or by appointment.

Go and love them

Years ago, when I started out as a pastor, I was young. I wondered what to do to be a good pastor? How can I serve all the people in the parish: most of them have been practicing the faith for many years before I was even born. Where do I begin? **I asked a retired priest what to do when I get to my new parish. He said: 'Just go there and love them.' I tried it and it worked. I am going to try it again here. To love. As St. Therese of Lisieux said: 'I have found my vocation: to be love in the heart of the Church.' That is why I am here.** We will start, continue and end with that.

God love You! Happy Sunday

Your brother,

Fr. Obi



Jesus says to us: "I am with you until the end of time".....Matthew 28:20