

# Msgr. Raymond Cole *Celebrating 50 Years*

At 79 years young, Father Ray – as his friends and parishioners call him – has a biography worthy of the most experienced religious.

He first realized the Holy Spirit calling him at the age of eight, finding joy in the Mass at the McGuire Air Force Base chapel, Lakehurst, where his father was stationed. Later, he attended Holy Cross High School and was an altar server at his parish, where he went to confession weekly, formed a choir and became adept at liturgical procedures. Along with the other congenial parish priests, Father Francis Sergel had a great spiritual influence on the teen – as well as sharing in fun fishing expeditions.

After an initial year in a monastery, young Raymond decided to leave and enroll at LaSalle University, Philadelphia, and major in Classical Studies.

In the summers, he worked in construction and as a security guard. It was after college graduation, however, that he re-entered formation at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y., in 1968. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1972 at the Cathedral of St. Mary, Trenton, by Bishop George W. Ahr.

With stints as a pastor at St. Joseph Parish, Hillsborough for more than 30 years, as well as associate pastor and parochial vicar roles at parishes in

Bordentown, Trenton, Bernardsville, and South Amboy before that, Msgr. Cole now serves as a weekend assistant at St. James the Less Parish, Jamesburg.

Fluent in Spanish, he is a welcome celebrant to the parish's Mass celebrated in that language. He especially finds this skill useful for his occasional trips to Guatemala to assist in activities with a sister parish there, which he launched during his years as pastor. His fundraising acumen helped build a village chapel, buy a truck for hauling, and allow the people in that Central American country to gain easier access to clean water – thanks to the generosity of St. Joseph parishioners.

His accomplishments at St. Joseph's also include moving the parish family from the original small house of worship in the East Millstone Historic District and building a much larger church, parish center and rectory; installing energy-saving solar panels on the grounds; establishing a bond with the poor in Appalachia through material and monetary donations; expanding visitations to the sick, homebound, and at Carrier Clinic; and creating Bible Study and social service programs.

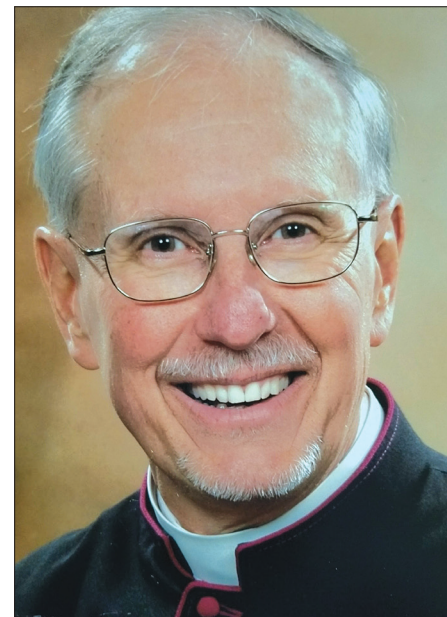
"Being a pastor for 33 years in one parish enabled me to be 'father' rather than 'administrator.' Something in me brought about a desire to collaborate

and reach consensus in real pastoral matters," he explained. "I believe in forward movement and risk with careful understanding of building community and respecting Ecclesiastical expectations. I have loved being a priest and still do."

Msgr. Cole's responsibilities over the course of his vocation include being a member of the Diocese of Trenton's Catholic Charismatic Renewal Steering Committee, Council of Priests, Commission for Continuing Education for Priests, Priestly Life and Ministry Commission, and Seminary Review Board; and co-moderator for the Diocese of Metuchen's Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

In addition, Msgr. Cole has been Chair of the Spirituality Committee; Priestly Life and Ministry Committee; the Commission for Collaborative Ministry; executive director of the diocesan Department of Pastoral Life; member of the priests' personnel board, diocesan curia, and College of Consultors; Chaplain for the First Aid Squad, Fire Company, and Knights of Columbus in East Millstone; plus Dean of the County Seat Deanery.

"Taking care of my spiritual life is especially rewarding continuing to help build up the Kingdom of Christ with priests and bishops from around



the United States," he said about his current role on the leadership team of the Association of United States Catholic Priests.

"I'll never give up, even after these 50 years," he said. "It's too exciting, and there is still so much to do."

In-between doctor appointments, Msgr. Cole jokes, he likes to enjoy reading and preparing weekend homilies.

— Debra Stevko Miller

The Parish Family of  
*Our Lady of Peace, North Brunswick*  
offer our prayers and congratulations to

*Rev. Daniel Sloan*  
(A Native son of our Parish) and

*Rev. Paolo Fedrigoni, JMC*  
(Our Weekend Assistant)

on the 40th Anniversary of their Ordinations and

*Rev. Msgr. David Fulton*  
(who served our parish in its Mission Days)

on the 55th Anniversary of his Ordination

*We thank you for your  
service to the Church  
and being a part of our  
Parish Community!*



## CONGRATULATIONS *Monsignor Robert J. Zamorski!*

For 50 years you have walked in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd and have watched over the flocks entrusted to your care with total dedication, love, and respect for each of your "sheep." You have been, and continue to be, a blessing to countless individuals.

Congratulations on this important milestone in your priesthood! You are celebrated, loved, and appreciated!

*"You are a priest forever!"*

Your Friends in Christ,  
Sister Rebecca, Sister Dorothy  
& Joan Polonkay

