



St. Dominic Parish

A message from Fr. Ben on the Death of Fr. Jim Walsh

On Wednesday morning at 4:25am, at Christ hospital, Fr. Jim Walsh, passed away after a short illness. Fr. Walsh was the pastor of St. Dominic parish for over twenty years. He was assisted during that time by his friend Fr. Chris Lack who loved Fr. Jim like a father and son. Over the last few years, I have had the opportunity to get to know Fr. Jim a little better and that has truly been a blessing for me. He was a scholar, a pastor, and a gentle priest and at the same time he had a wonderful sense of humor and enjoyed the good humor and companionship of others. Even after "retiring" Fr. Jim agreed to stay on to help me as the new pastor and to continue to serve our parish. Fr. Jim enjoyed his life and loved being a priest and being your priest.

Fr. Walsh once told me that when he received the call from Archbishop Pilarczyk that he was appointing him as pastor to St. Dominic parish he was not happy with the assignment. However, Jim and the Archbishop, were good friends so the archbishop assigned him anyway and Fr. Jim came home to the Westside. Then he smiled and said to me: "You know Pilarczyk was right. St. Dominic has been my best and happiest assignment."

Fr. Jim had many assignments and missions in his life, he studied in Rome, he worked at the Bishops Conference in Washington D.C, he was president and rector of our seminary, he was a very accomplished man and priest. Any of these assignments could define a priesthood but what defined it for Fr. Jim was his love for the people of St. Dominic. It's true to say that St. Dominic parish became his life, but it is truer to say, you became his life. Your joys and sorrows, births and deaths, struggles and achievements, ups and downs, your families, your interests, your engagements with him – this was his joy in life. This is what he loved most, this is what his life was about, you. He loved you and he was so happy to be here living in the midst of this community. Jim didn't speak of his achievements he spoke about you, his family. Thank you for making his life at St. Dominic such a beautiful and rewarding time in his life, his priesthood. Fr. Jim's priesthood was never about himself, it was always about serving God, and loving you.

Requiescat In Pace: Sacerdos In Aeternum