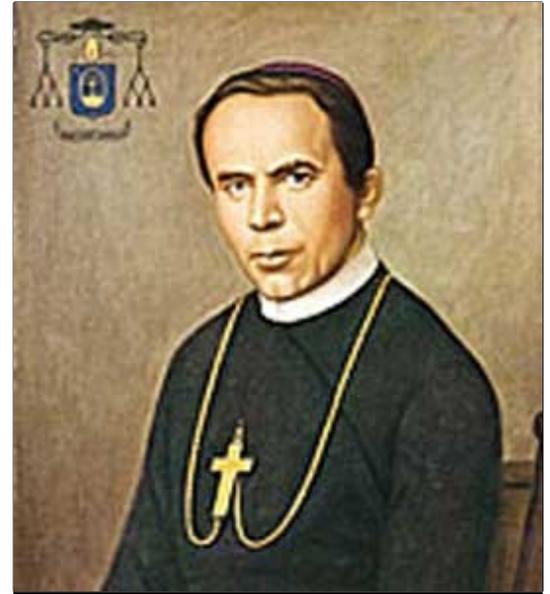


"I have labored with all my powers to fulfill the duties of my office."

— Saint John Neumann

My Dear and Precious Friends,

It was with great joy last Sunday that Father Edmond announced that the name of our new parish is Saint John Neumann Parish. Saint John Neumann was born in Prachatice in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) on March 28, 1811. He studied theology in the seminary of Budweis. Zealous for the missionary life and to lead souls to Christ, he decided to leave his homeland to dedicate himself to the European immigrants in America, who were deprived of spiritual support. Neumann was ordained a priest by the bishop of New York in June 1836, and gave himself to the pastoral care of people in the vast area around Niagara Falls. Wanting to live in a religious community that corresponded more to his missionary vocation, in January 1842 he entered the Redemptorists. A tireless missionary, Neumann busied himself in particular with the German immigrants, first in Baltimore, then in Pittsburgh. Having filled the role of vice-provincial superior of the Redemptorists from 1846-49, he became the parish priest of Saint Alphonsus Church in Baltimore. In 1852, at the age of 41, he was named bishop of Philadelphia. Neumann had a strong effect on the religious life of



of the United States by founding Catholic schools and promoting devotion to the Eucharist. He founded a new religious institute—the Third Order of Saint Francis of Glen Riddle. The School Sisters of Notre Dame likewise regard Neumann as their secondary founder, their “Father in America.” In just seven years, he built 89 churches, as well as several hospitals and orphanages. As a bishop, Neumann was untiring in visiting his vast diocese. On January 5, 1860, at the age of 48, he died suddenly of a heart attack on a Philadelphia street. Neumann was beatified during the Second Vatican Council on October 13, 1963, and was canonized on June 19, 1977. In the homily on the occasion of Neumann’s canonization, Pope Saint Paul VI summarized the activity of the new saint: “He was close to the sick, he loved to be with the poor, he was a friend of sinners, and now he is the glory of all emigrants.” Saint John Neumann is invoked as the patron saint of sick children and of immigrants. Saint John Neumann, pray for us!

As we celebrate this great feast of Jesus Christ Our King, we reach the end of another liturgical year. With the celebration of the First Sunday of Advent next weekend, a new year begins. We invite you all to join us as we welcome



our Vicar, Bishop Joseph N. Perry, as the celebrant of our 10:30 a.m. Mass on that Sunday, November 27th. At that celebration, Bishop Perry will formally install Father Edmond Aristil as the first pastor of Saint John Neumann Parish. We congratulate Father Edmond and, even more importantly, we pledge him our support as together we build the new reality of our new parish family. Advent is more than just a time of waiting. It is a time of joyful expectation, not just for the coming of Christmas, but for the coming of God’s Kingdom. We pledge our love to each other as we work together to make that kingdom come here at Saint John Neumann. Cardinal Cupich has chosen the beginning of this special season to remind us all that we pray better when we pray together. Being church means being together, praying together, singing together, something that the pandemic took away from us, something that we must now restore to our lives of faith. With this in mind, he has lifted the general dispensation granted because of the pandemic, and restored the obligation for all of the faithful to attend Sunday Mass. We welcome his call to return to church each week, and we promise to do everything in our power to help our brothers and sisters join us in prayer. Following

the example of Saint John Neumann, let us labor with all of our powers to fulfill our duties and our obligations to pray with and for each other. Let us come back to church to be church again!

In Awe and Wonder of the Power of God’s Love and His Divine Mercy,
your friend and brother always,

Please remember to watch and subscribe to “Father Ralph’s Neighborhood” on YouTube

Father Ralph