Saint Patrick Parish

September 2025 Pastoral Notes from Father Grace

Since my arrival at St. Patrick I have been greeted with many welcomes and blessings. I too feel that I have been blessed by our Lord to come to the Holy Land of St. Patrick in Pelham.

I also feel very grateful for Fr. Von and Msgr. Kelly for being instruments of God's grace, mercy and pastoral zeal over that past years.

My goal in these pastoral notes are simply a way to keep you updated with what I have experienced and put into action over the past months since my arrival.

- Father John M. Grace, pastor

A Time For Everything Under the Sun!

One of the joys of my time this year is meeting all of the pastoral and small groups in the parish. After reviewing the needs of the parish with the pastoral council, parish mission committee, the Faith Formation ministry and staff I turned to our Lord for guidance. It has come to my heart that there is a change of seasons taking place in our parish. I call this time a season of:

"Repair, Renew, and Rejoice!"

Repair: Already you have seen some of the things that needed to be repaired on our parish campus. First we had to put in a new septic system for the church and rectory. Then the back stairs of the church disintegrated this winter. My philosophy is when we need to fix something we do it right the first time and with beauty. This is simply how we as Catholics have always embraced the building up the Kingdom of God. Applying grace and beauty to glorify our Lord. Thus we have a new walkway and renewed garden for gathering, prayer and reflection.

Secondly, there are multiple repairs, cleaning and organizing going on in the school building. We had to call in a floor cleaning company to clean the building which hadn't been done in eight years. We also filled three large dumpsters of old, dirty and broken furniture and materials.

Renew: This is the exciting part. We have welcomed into our community *Regina Caeli Academy for Homeschoolers*. They have 120 students who use the school twice a week. You may notice them in their uniforms and at daily Mass. To learn more about this national Catholic school system you may look them up at: www.rcahybrid.org I am grateful for the generosity and flexibility of the ministries that this impacts.

Secondly, Fr. Von left me plans for renovating the church. I have approached this cautiously and asked the Pastoral Council to assist me. We have been working on the plans this past summer and have had experts come in to advise us. We've come to the conclusion to begin with the sanctuary, then move out into the body of the church. This is an ongoing project to ready our worship space worthily and beautifully ready for the Tabernacle and the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ into the sanctuary and the center of our lives as Catholics. We will do this together as a family, focused on our goal to glorify Christ in all we do.

Finally, the confessional has been painted and acoustic noise panels will soon be installed for greater privacy.

I will continue to keep you updated so that we may come to the time and season to ***Rejoice*** in the Lord.