

**A-1 Summary Statement:** In Mark's Gospel, after Jesus sent the twelve apostles on mission, they returned from their ministerial tasks and gathered together with Jesus. They reported what they had encountered. His response to them was to "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." Mark 6:31. Good sense is found in those words of Jesus, and they have recently become particularly wise words for the pastor of the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville, Fr. Tom Clegg. He relates that as he has entered into prayer over the last few months, he has heard that call from Jesus to "rest for a while." In response, and with his guidance, a committee was formed to plan a sabbatical program for Fr. Tom. The proposed program would allow him to get that rest, fulfill some of his dreams and goals, and spend some quality time with his family and friends.

**A-2 Rationale:** In 2003, Fr. Tom arrived in Jeffersonville, Indiana, as the new pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. In 2007, he was additionally named pastor of St. Augustine Parish, also in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Now three and one-half years into the clustering of the two parishes as the "Catholic Community of Jeffersonville," Sacred Heart and St. Augustine remain two distinct parishes operating side-by-side in the same community. For the parishes it has been a journey of hope and cooperation. For Fr. Tom, however, it has also meant three additional Masses celebrated each week, three additional evening meetings each month, and approximately thirty extra funerals per year. In fact, he had a recent stretch of eleven funerals in seventeen days including one each Monday in that period, which is his only day off. It also means the additional supervision of four team members and two part-time employees. He has twice as many people needing his time at the hospital, twice those confined to their homes and twice those having marriage or personal problems who are in need of spiritual counseling. Understandably, this increase in ministry has taken its toll on him.

A recent liturgy survey at St. Augustine Parish contained a comment that, “Fr. Tom sometimes seems to be hurrying through Mass to get it over.” Fr. Tom expressed that he struggled when he read that statement and wondered if it were true. He concluded: “After I thought about it, I don’t think I am rushing through Masses, but I do think that sometimes I have gone into ‘autopilot.’ I have referred to this at times as ‘going through the motions.’ I don’t want that in my priesthood.” His parishioners don’t want that for him either. In making his request to the parish councils, Fr Tom wrote, “I love being a priest. I love being a pastor and love pastoring both parishes in the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville. I love preaching and I love leading the community in worship. However, I am tired and in that respect this sabbatical, if granted, would come at a good time for me personally.”

Jesus saw the wisdom of taking time to reflect on one’s mission in life. He saw the need to rest for a while. Hopefully, this sabbatical will allow Fr. Tom to rest and renew his spirit, to explore the wisdom of the ages and to return to the abundant life Jesus envisions in the Gospel when He said, “. . .I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.” John 10:10.

The theme chosen for this renewal program is “The Wisdom of Abundant Living.” This plan will allow Fr. Tom some time to delve more deeply into the wisdom literature of the Bible. He has expressed a long-standing desire to explore more thoroughly these Hebrew Scripture books as he believes the wisdom literature leads to the abundant living that Jesus speaks of in John 10:10. Therefore, the sabbatical planning committee, along with Fr. Tom, designed a sabbatical to allow him to discern more deeply the wisdom in various people, times, places, and events and experience those things that give him abundant life through personal fulfillment.

Abundant living often comes to us when we mix God’s initiative with our hard work. When he was a newly ordained priest in 1990, Fr. Tom wrote a list of twenty-five things he

wanted to do before he died. It was his “bucket list” long before the movie of the same name was ever made. The parishioners of the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville believe it is important to assist him in realizing those dreams. The planned sabbatical will allow him to check off a few more items from that list. His time is designed to be restful, enjoyable, refreshing and renewing. Hopefully, it will allow Fr. Tom to continue faithfully shepherding the parishes in the years to come.

In his proposal to the parish councils, Fr. Tom wrote, “My hope is that I will be able to complete two terms as pastor of the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville. This would mean I would be pastor here until the latter part of this decade. The sabbatical that I have envisioned would allow me to do so with renewed energy and wisdom.” This is the hope of his parishioners as well. Parish leadership has considered and authorized this application for that purpose. In giving their unanimous approval for this application, leaders of both parishes noted that the community is on solid footing and now would be a good time for him to be away for an extended period of rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation.

**A-3 Program Description:** Fr. Tom has expressed in his own words what he hopes to gain both for himself and for his parishes in this sabbatical time. His guiding principal in this process has been to find the abundant life of which Jesus spoke by searching for wisdom in a variety of places and activities:

**“THE WISDOM OF REST:** I would begin my sabbatical taking a couple of weeks to spend with family and friends that are located in the Midwest. I would drive to Indianapolis to spend some time with most of my nine brothers and sisters. I would also drive to Cleveland to visit with my good friend, Tony, and his wife. Finally, I would drive to LaPorte, Indiana, to spend some time with cousins that I do not get to see very often. In all of these places I would

stay with my family and friends and I would have rest time as they move along with their daily lives. Evenings would be spent reconnecting with them. These two weeks would allow me time to ease gradually into the rest of my sabbatical program.

**THE WISDOM OF HAITI:** One of the main focuses of my sabbatical time would be spent in Haiti. In 2009, I made a mission trip to Haiti with our parish Haiti Committee. We visited with our sister parish in Haiti, St. Raphael Parish in St. Raphael, Haiti. I have made a couple of other visits since that time. Each time I have visited Haiti I have been impressed with both the wisdom of the people I met there as well as what I perceive to be abundant living even in the midst of poverty. These mission trips have challenged my view of what abundant living is really all about.

My hope is to spend about six weeks in Haiti. My time in Haiti would not be spent in doing mission work but in meeting with people in a more informal basis. I would have some time to visit some of the places in Haiti that I do not have time to visit when going on mission trips. With the help of a Haitian friend and guide, Bruno Cherenfaunt, I plan to visit the Citadel, Port Salut, Cap Haitien, Milot, Grison Gard, and Hinche. I would like to visit the Cathedral Churches of the cities that I visit as well as spend some time at Labadee Beach. I have met enough friends in Haiti that I would stay with them in each of these places. If necessary, most hotel rooms in Haiti run about \$35 USD per night (meals included).

I hope that my time in Haiti would also allow me to learn a little bit more about their culture and their language. I would use this time also to catch up on reading, relaxing in a warm environment, and perhaps beginning a *new* list of 25 more things I want to do before I die.

**THE WISDOM OF OUR NATION:** Over the last twenty years I have completed many of the items on my 'bucket list,' but there are three items that I would like to accomplish during

this sabbatical. And so, the next leg of my sabbatical would be to discover the abundant living of fulfilling my ‘bucket list.’

First, I would like to take an RV tour of part of the United States. Second, I would like to complete my visits to all 50 states; I have three to go—Alaska, Washington, and Oregon. Finally, I would like to examine the wisdom of great leaders by visiting all the Presidential Libraries. I have visited a few, but still have several to go. I would spend three weeks visiting presidential libraries by RV. This trip would cover 3036 miles and I would visit seven libraries: Lincoln, Truman, George W. Bush, Johnson, George H. W. Bush, Clinton and Carter. I envision spending one day touring each library and the remaining time driving and relaxing with my dog, Caesar.

**THE WISDOM OF STAYING CONNECTED:** Since being assigned to Jeffersonville I have missed a lot of family activities: birthdays of my nieces and nephews, graduations, first communions, even weddings. I have nine brothers and sisters, twenty-one nieces and nephews, and fourteen great nieces and nephews. Including spouses, we number about sixty-five.

I would like to offer my family a weekend reunion of sorts. To that end, I have planned a weekend at Walnut Hills Retreat in Brown County, Indiana. Walnut Hills is a perfect setting for this weekend as there is something for everyone: a swimming pool, a lake, a gym, a rec-room, and even room for a campfire, something my family really enjoys. We would arrive on a Friday evening and stay until Sunday evening. I plan to fly in the four who live outside of driving distances and to offer one day for extended families (aunts, uncles, and cousins) to join us.

**THE WISDOM OF LIVING ABUNDANTLY:** The final portion of my sabbatical would be found in completing the bucket list item of visiting all 50 states. I would fly with three close friends to Seattle, Washington, and then tour Washington and Oregon. From there we

would board a cruise ship and cruise to Alaska. This would mark the completion of the sabbatical with the exception of using a few days at home to ease back into parish life.”

The sabbatical planning committee has concurred that the program laid out by Fr. Tom would offer just the right mix of relaxation, personal enrichment and renewal. It is an opportunity for him to experience very intentional “re-creation.”

**A-4 Pastor’s Statement:** I believe the benefits of this Sabbatical program lie in helping my parishioners to realize that while Jesus tells us he came that we might have life abundantly, that happens best when we work with God to create that abundant life. One of my favorite stories is of a woman who is working in her garden when a neighbor passes by and says, “That’s certainly a beautiful garden God put there.” The woman working in the garden replied, “Yeah, you should have seen it when God had it by Himself.” I have always believed in the notion that we are co-creators with God. It is my hope that as my parishioners see me *intentionally* taking time for rest and renewal, it might give them permission to do the same.

Our sabbatical planning team has therefore developed a series of talks/workshops to be given for our parishioners while I am away on sabbatical. The first talk would center on a theme of wisdom found in the Bible. This would lead to the second theme of abundant living, which in turn would lead to the third theme, a workshop allowing our parishioners who haven’t done so to begin creating their own “bucket list.” These activities will be coordinated by the sabbatical planning committee and given by local clergy and lay leaders.

**A-5 Statement of the Congregation:** We are very blessed in the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville to have a warm, energetic and dynamic priest in Fr. Tom Clegg. In 2006, when we were presented with the opportunity to form a unique partnership between Sacred Heart and St. Augustine parishes, it was clear it would take a very special leader to make our plans succeed.

Indeed, our expectations have been fulfilled, and in many ways exceed, by Fr. Tom. He leads in all the tangible and ordinary ways that any church leader does: by providing counsel, attending meetings, overseeing staff, and composing weekly sermons. But more important for our community, he leads with patience and by example, showing us how to come together in times of celebration and in times of difficulty. To maintain two unique parishes with many shared resources can be a tricky and tenuous balancing act, but Fr. Tom manages it with aplomb.

Even more than that, Fr. Tom goes above and beyond his regular duties in the parishes. He has organized and completed a number of mission trips to our sister parish in Haiti, St. Raphael. Indeed, St. Raphael and the Haitian people have become a cause dear to many of us because it is dear to Fr. Tom. As a former teacher, he also remains an active part of Sacred Heart School. In addition to regular weekly Masses and seasonal prayer services with the students, he participates in fundraising events and even taught an elective course to middle school students in Haitian Creole.

We recognize, however, that unlike most of us, Fr. Tom does all of this with few days off and little opportunity to rest from the burden of his responsibilities. He has himself expressed to a number of us that he is weary and that his heart is not always in it. We don't want this for our priest or for our parishes. We hope to have many more years of Fr. Tom's service, and we want to see him with a renewed energy in his work, as we know that sense of renewal will flow to all of us. Working through Fr. Tom's absence during his sabbatical is an opportunity to come together as a community and perhaps discover our own paths to renewal and to forge new relationships. Moreover, as "absence makes the heart grow fonder," it is a chance to renew our sense of gratitude for Fr. Tom's loving presence and faithful leadership in our parishes.

**A-6 Plan for the Congregation:** One of the true blessings of the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville is a pastoral team that works well in collaborative ministry. Susan Wheatley, Pastoral Associate at Sacred Heart, and Deacon John Thompson, Family Life Minister at St. Augustine, will pick up the additional pastoral ministry void left in Fr. Tom’s absence. Other members of the pastoral team will also assist them, including Director of Religious Education, Ann Northam; Youth Minister, Barbara Renners; and Director of Music and Worship, Dr. Karen Shadle. Fr. Tom has additionally secured Fr. Joe McNally, a retired priest of the archdiocese, to cover the sacramental schedule while he is away.

**A-7 Sharing Insights:** Prior to Fr. Tom’s departure, the sabbatical planning committee will plan a farewell celebration. At this time Fr. Tom will share a little bit more about the process of his original “bucket list,” his hopes for a new list, his “fascinating” desire to visit Presidential Libraries, and his hopes for Haiti. He will also use this time as an opportunity to challenge parishioners to search for wisdom in their own lives and to define their own abundant life, possibly by exploring the creation of their own “bucket lists.”

During his absence, Fr. Tom will share his experiences on his weblog so that parishioners can follow him in his travels. He plans to share not only his activities but occasional reflections of the wisdom he discovers and the abundant living that he sees and experiences. Primary sharing of the experiences, observations, and lessons of the sabbatical will occur upon his return and reintegration with his parishes. Upon his return parishioners will hold a similar gathering to welcome him back to the community, to hear stories of his adventures, and to possibly share with him some of the “bucket lists” created by parishioners in his absence.

**A-8 Discernment for Proposal:** Fr. Tom presented his proposal first to the pastoral team, seeking their direction for this application, where he received ardent support. He next formed a

sabbatical planning committee made up of himself, parishioners from both parishes, pastoral team members, and a couple of long-time friends. A member of the committee traveled with Fr. Tom to Indianapolis to learn more about the grant process. The committee then met and made formal proposals to both parish councils who unanimously supported applying for a sabbatical grant. An article has appeared in the parish newsletter, and parishioners have commented positively on these plans.

**B-1 Congregational Information:**

**MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS CATHOLIC CHURCH**, Established 1954

**Membership:** 675 families, 1651 parishioners

**Average Weekly Mass Attendance:** 600.

**Previous Pastors:** Fr. Tom Clegg, 2003-present; Fr. Raymond Schafer, 1998-2002; Fr. David Groeller, 1996-1998; Fr. Jim Farrell, 1989-1996

**Organizational Structure:** The operations of Sacred Heart are divided into seven Commissions: Christian Service, Faith Formation, Parish Life, School, Spiritual Life, Stewardship, and Youth. We have over seventy-five ministry groups and activities including: school ministry (Pre-K through Grade 8), parents club, bereavement ministry, fellowship committee, men's and women's spirituality groups, Bible studies, a senior group, and Scouting.

**ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**, Established 1851, at present location since 1905

**Membership:** 536 families 1105 members

**Average Weekly Mass Attendance:** 500

**Previous Pastors:** Fr. Tom Clegg, 2007-present; Fr. Cliff Vogelsang, 1993-2007; Fr. Harold Knueven 1988-1993; Fr. Edward Ripperger 1973-1988

**Organizational Structure:** The operations of St. Augustine are divided into five Commissions: Faith Formation, Family Life and Social Concerns, Spiritual Life, Stewardship, and Youth. We have over fifty ministry groups and activities including: An Advent Project providing Christmas for those in need, bereavement ministry, fellowship committee, prayer line and prayer groups, Bible studies, Special Religious Education Program, as well as hosting the Faith Formation Program for the Catholic Community of Jeffersonville.

**C-1** Fr. Tom Clegg is a 1983 graduate of Marian College (now Marian University) with a degree in Elementary Education. After working for four years—two years as an Indianapolis firefighter and two years as a parochial school teacher—Fr. Tom returned to seminary at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. He received his Master of Divinity degree there in 1990. Fr. Tom was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 1990 and celebrated his 20 year anniversary of ordination, as well as his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, in 2010.

His first assignment after ordination was associate pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. He served that community for two years. He was then appointed pastor of two parishes in center-city Indianapolis, St. Catherine and St. James. During his pastorate there, he led the two parishes through a process of consolidation into Good Shepherd Parish. He oversaw the building of a new church, the extensive renovation of a vacant school building to house Central Catholic School, and saw the parish grow from 400 to 600 families. He continued to serve there until his appointment to Jeffersonville in 2003. From 1999-2003 he was also a full-time teacher and chaplain at Roncalli High School while continuing his ministry at Good Shepherd Parish. Fr. Tom has served on the archdiocesan Council of Priests, the clergy personnel board, and as a member of the archdiocesan strategic planning teams in 1995 and 2000. He also previously served as chaplain for the Indianapolis Fire Department.