

From the Pastor

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Last week I returned from my medical leave and resumed my pastoral duties at St. Paul and St. Boniface Parishes. As I am grateful for Fr. Tomy's faithful service as administrator of both parishes for these past five months, I also appreciate your warm welcome. I missed you, too, during my time of physical and spiritual recovery.

As I told you before my time off, I had struggled with conditions of diabetes and pancreatitis for years. Working through ups and downs I could hardly manage my blood sugar levels and the pancreatic pain. The bishop, after hearing about my struggles with health, gave me the opportunity to work with specialists in order to put my body on a strict discipline of specific diet and exercise. When I got to the hospital I could hardly walk the stairs. I also needed to lose some weight.

The first month was the most difficult. Setting regular every day physical activity came with a lot of struggles and anxiety to see some fast results. They were not coming as fast as I wanted. I could say I started feeling stronger after about 8 weeks of intensive very disciplined exercises. I lost my first pound after three months. It was after so much time when my metabolism finally kicked in and started working to my advantage.

But that wasn't the only problem. With more intensive physical activity came inconsistency of my blood sugar levels. In the beginning it was dropping radically after I exercised. I needed to find a way it wouldn't happen again. My doctors started teaching me proper balance between diet and physical activity, the right proportion of nutrition needed before and after exercise. My health depends on that proportion and my strength on disciplined physical activity.

I have also learned that I used to have problem with self-discipline, which contributed to my poor self-care. Bad eating habits and lack of exercise was an important part of that. I took many classes teaching me how to deal with my problem. Many practices of mindfulness and emotional therapy helped me overcome my weakness. However, it took me months to finally become comfortable with the rigors of a new lifestyle.

I am happy to have learned so much and have started really paying attention to my particularly uncommon condition. Implementing it in my parish ministry reality is just another challenge. It was much easier to do it with the supervision of doctors, nurses and therapists; now it seems like I am on my own. The good news is that I formed a specific Wellness Plan which will be implemented in my particular environment with the assistance of a special Support Team - a group of people who will be assisting me in keeping me accountable to my Wellness Plan. I hope this new plan of keeping me in shape is going to work just fine.

Thanks again for your prayers - I continue to feel the strength that comes from them. I am glad to be back home.

+ Father Roger