

Greetings from our new Pastor Fr Jim Berning – Part 2

This week, I continue with another segment of my life; part 2, with the hoped for outcome that parishioners have a better understanding of their new pastor. I encourage that parishioners do the same -- with each other!

By revealing more about your lives in the course of the last several months, together we develop an attitude of openness, such that, becoming acclimated to life beyond the pandemic. We proceed with renewed faith, energy and vigor to live St. Benedict's mission "as signs and bearers of God's love".

What preceded the Canadian experience?

I grew up in the states with my family of seven with me as the middle child, who early on was in the image of a beach ball, but eventually stretched out. Now I look at myself as being 'vertically gifted and horizontally opposed'! Having mom and dad, two older brothers, and two younger sisters made for a life filled with constant family company, where there was always someone to spend time with, or you could say, life was filled with abundance.

Given that my father worked in the oil industry, we were relocated many times: Illinois (2 times), Michigan, Indiana and then the long trek out West to the Rocky Mountains where Yellowstone National Park became our backyard. Mountaineering, fishing, hiking, and skiing were all the trimmings that provided for a wonderful and exhilarating way to grow up as well as a great setting to really get to know people. My parents did their part to make the best for us, such that even during economic downturns they absorbed such concerns and encouraged us to live life to the full. While the 1970's were faced with economic recessions, growing up I always saw life as the "roaring 70s".

Currently, my mom, Ann, and sister Ann live in Texas, with two brothers John and Joe in Colorado, and my sister Mary in Montana. They all visited here two years ago to celebrate my birthday and take in Niagara Falls, Niagara On-The-Lake, and the CN Tower. My dad passed away from a stroke in 2004 and has taken up residence in paradise with my little brother Michael, who passed away at birth.