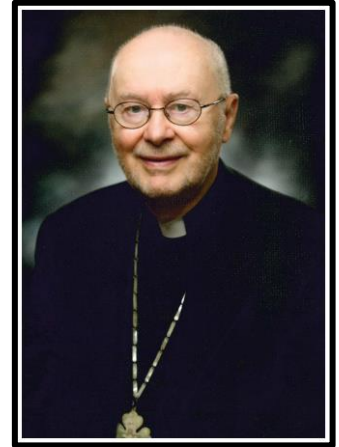


*And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. (John 1:16)*

We are always overflowing with God's grace, but sometimes we don't realize it. Recently, though, at St. Philip's, God's generosity has been too much for even my hard heart to ignore.

First, we said goodbye to our beloved founding pastor, Fr. Boniface Black. He was a great man with a big heart and many years of pastoral and missionary success. We didn't want to say goodbye but God planned it another way. While we are still under a cloud of mourning, we are also basking in Father's beautiful, effective, and generous servanthood and excellence of his administration, communication, prayer, and counseling. His funeral was truly a whiff of heavenly aroma that God sent us, since "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 115/116). We are trying to live the simple day-to-day life in Christ that he taught us by word and deed: "fly under the radar...", "keep on smiling...", "wait until Christmas..." May his memory be eternal and may we have half the grace, love, and pastoral success that God blessed him with!



Secondly, our long-term deacon, Herman Acker, was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop THOMAS on October 9. Fr. Herman has been celebrating 40 days of liturgies



with the solemnity, joy, focus, and calmness for which we love him. It has been a joy and a blessing and an honor for me to serve with him these ten years and then to guide him and serve him as he spreads his pastoral wings wherever God's will blows him through the voice of our Bishop THOMAS and the confirmation of our Metropolitan JOSEPH. Fr. Herman's recent teaching to us after these liturgies has been about the reality of God's presence in our life when we receive the Holy Eucharist and also about growing in prayer by faithfully following the liturgical forms that have been handed to us. I've been reflecting on each liturgy as a celebration, a remembrance,

and a proclamation of Christ's life (1 Corinthians 11:26). May God grant him, Kh. Veronica, and their boys many blessed years of health, prosperity, spiritual vigor, and apostolic labor!

Thankful for God's grace in the storm as in the still, small voice, I remain,

Your Servant in Christ,  
+ Fr. Noah