

## Fr. Jerry Gardner



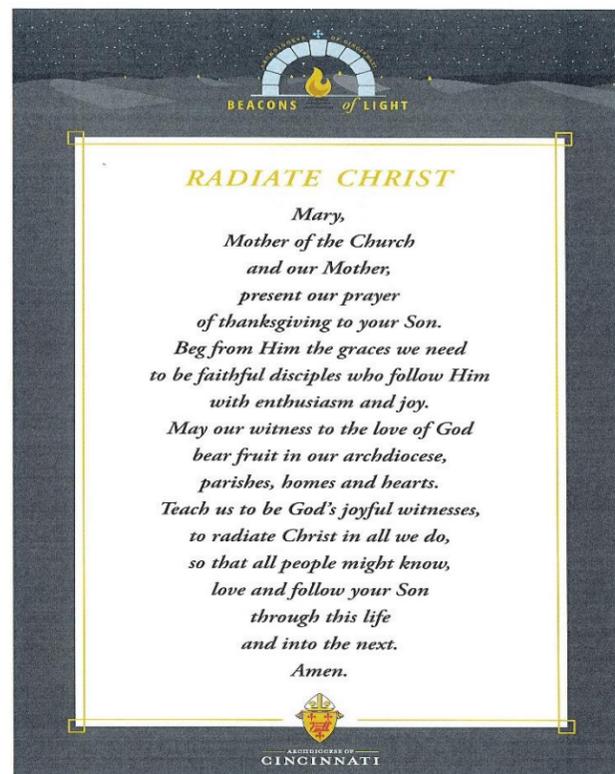
A priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for 42 years, my family home was in Deer Park with my parents, Bill and Connie, two older brothers and one younger sister. With my family as parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Parish, I attended the parish elementary school. I graduated from Moeller High School in 1971. I continued my studies at the Archdiocesan seminaries, St. Gregory College program (1971 – 1975) and Mt. St. Mary of the West Theology Program (1975-1979, M.A Biblical Studies). I was ordained to the priesthood on June 16, 1979, by Archbishop Joseph Bernardin. With my brother Jack's death in 1980, my father's death in 1994 and the recent death of my mom on July 1, 2020 (at the age of 98 during the Covid-19 pandemic while a resident at an assisting living facility), my oldest brother, Tom (Jan) and his 2 married children are residents in the southern Dayton region and my younger sister Jane and her 2 children, live in the Cincinnati area.

I enjoy following sports especially the Cincinnati area teams: professional, college and high school. I enjoy gardening and raising plants as the opportunity and space at various rectories have allowed. I enjoy reading and have reacquainted myself with cooking during the pandemic months.

I have served as a parochial vicar at St. Margaret Mary Parish, North College Hill (1979-1982); St. Helen Parish, Dayton (1982-1987); Our Lady of Victory Parish, Delhi (1987-1995); and Sacred Heart Parish, Fairfield (1995-1997). I served as Pastor of St. Patrick Parish, Fayetteville (1997-2003) until the implementing of their pastoral region's plan for their three parish communities to form one parish, St. Angela Merici, served by one pastor, in 2003.

I presently serve as Pastor of the collaborative pastoral parish region of St. Margaret Mary Parish (North College Hill (2003 - ) and Assumption Parish, Mt. Healthy (2011 - ) until the commencement of the Families of Parishes on July 1, 2022, and the start of my new assignment as a Parochial Vicar for the S6 Family of Parishes on July 1, 2022.

I find in my new assignment, with its challenges and role adjustment for myself, now the opportunity to serve communities that have many connections to my family history, being the neighborhoods and parishes in which my grandparents lived; my parents were married and lived; my childhood parks or schools and family home are located and happy memories of attending the area's parish festivals.



## South 6 Family of Parishes



**Church of the Resurrection (Bond Hill)**

**Holy Trinity (Norwood)**

**Nativity of Our Lord (Pleasant Ridge)**

**St. John the Evangelist (Deer Park)**

**St. Saviour (Blue Ash – Deer Park)**

## Fr. Pat Sloneker



Let me relate a few of the highlights of my history. Over time I'll tell lots more of my history in the bulletin and in homilies.

Hamilton is from where I harken, born in 1966 and raised there, receiving all my sacraments at St. Ann. My father, Richard, died in 1992 and mom, Carol, resides in Hamilton age 88, still living on her own. I have a sister ten years older, Sharon, and a brother eight years older, Tim, who both live in Hamilton. My younger brother is two years younger than me and lives in Baton Rouge. They all have families. We practiced the faith well, but were not overly religious, though I remember dad kneeling down with us to pray every night, especially for our deceased loved ones...after a great story he would make up or read!

My childhood was blessed and wonderful though unremarkable. I played most sports, had all sorts of hobbies, cut grass and delivered papers. I loved fishing and gardening, both taught to me by dad. At age eight I wanted to be married as a teacher or motorcycle policeman or I wanted to be a priest. After grade school at St. Ann, I went to Badin Catholic High School in Hamilton. I was in the band, Key Club and worked at McDonalds when I turned sixteen.

I applied and was accepted to XU, UD and the Josephinum, the college seminary used by the archdiocese. Mom and sis didn't want me to go to college seminary, since they were afraid I wouldn't have anything to fall back on if I didn't go on to ordination. Despite their concerns, I did feel called to discern priesthood, so I went to college seminary. It was a great experience in so many ways. At the same time, come fourth year I wasn't sure enough about the priesthood.

Therefore, after college I landed a job teaching junior high at John XXIII Catholic Elementary in Middletown for four years. That was a great experience too, though the first year was difficult. I scheduled and trained servers at St. Ann and was an RCIA catechist. I became a hospice volunteer and in the leadership of a singles group at a local United Methodist Church. I was a Big Brother with two matches for a total of twenty years. I dated, but didn't meet anyone I felt called to marry. The priesthood remained in my mind and heart. That fourth year teaching I decided I would go back to seminary at which time dad was diagnosed with lung cancer and mom and I took care of him as he died.

The five years of major seminary were also wonderful and it wasn't until the last two years that I became confident that I should be a priest. Honestly, I don't think it mattered to Jesus whether I became a priest or married, but that I love and serve him joyfully in whatever I chose. I was able to discern that I loved to preach, pray and worship and I had gifts to lead and serve.

My priesthood assignments in twenty-five years of ordination are below.

- St. James, White Oak, associate pastor, 1997-2000, 3yrs
- Holy Angels, Sidney associate pastor, 2000-2002, 2yrs; while also chaplain at Lehman Catholic High School, Sidney 2000-2010, 10 yrs
- Immaculate Conception, Botkins and St. Lawrence, Rhine 2002-2018, 16 yrs, pastor, continuing at Lehman until 2010
- St. Joseph, Wapakoneta, 2010-2018, 8 yrs, pastor
- St. John, Fryburg, 2014-2018, 4 yrs, pastor
- Incarnation Centerville, 2018 to present, 4yrs, pastor

My first pastorate in 2002, as the youngest pastor in the archdiocese at the time, was to a multiple parish region. After eight years, we added a third parish to our region, adding a new regional name of "Petersburg Parishes." Four years later we added a fourth parish, St. John, Fryburg to the region. This region remained unchanged with Beacons of Light and in that sense, we did Beacons of Light a decade ago, way ahead of the archdiocese!

- Founding pastor of Petersburg Parishes

## Fr. Dave Lemkuhl



The first 11 years of my life were spent in Oakley, where I attended St. Cecilia Grade School 1st-5th; I was the only child for 9 years then I got a sister and brother in 11 1/2 months. We lived in a 4-room house in the old-style neighborhood where I had lots of mothers and fathers who supported my young parents in raising me. In 1964, we moved to Mt. Airy, to a 2-story 4 bedroom model house in a new subdivision; I attended Little Flower Grade School, 6th-8th; Dad grew up in St. James Parish in White Oak so getting back on that side of the city seemed important to him. We had nothing in our yard so my Great Aunt who lived in White Oak had me helping her with her Nursery business, which was winding down, and sent me home with a wide assortment of landscaping plants. My youngest sister was born when I was a Freshman in High School. While attending La Salle High School in the honors program, I got involved in the Year Book, Cross Country (though I got an ankle injury and became the manager), went to every Basketball and Football game and was in the cheering section; I should say that I dated socially, attending school dances and sock hops; besides school I had a variety of jobs after school (sold Fuller-Brush

products door-to-door, helped a man at his house, poured greenware for ceramics, worked festivals for Pepsi Cola), and kept up all the landscaping at our home. During my High School years, I was involved in the Gregorian Program for those interested in possibly becoming a priest. After starting with 8 from Little Flower Parish I was the only one left by Sophomore year so I was taken in by Fr. Bob Apking who was the moderator for two Moeller Students, Jerry Gardner and Jim Schutte, who were both eventually ordained with me June 16, 1979. After graduating from LaSalle in 1971, I immediately began my seminary training at St. Gregory College, majoring in Philosophy (1971-1975) and then at Mt. St. Mary of the West, in the M.A. Biblical Studies Program (1975-1979).

My priesthood assignments are as follows:

- Our Lady of the Rosary, Greenhills (Cincinnati) 1979-1982 Associate Pastor / Parochial Vicar
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, Anderson Township (Cincinnati) 1982-1988 Associate Pastor / Parochial Vicar [in 1987 I accompanied parish youth to Kenya]
- St. John the Baptist, Dry Ridge (Cincinnati) 1988-1989 Associate Pastor / Parochial Vicar [where I celebrated my 10th Anniversary of Ordination]
- Assumption and St. Agnes Parishes, Dayton 1989-1995 Pastor [in 1992, 2nd trip to Kenya for discernment, sponsored by the Arch. Mission Office]
- Maryknoll 1995-2003 Swahili Study and Language Practice in Tanzania 1996, in Kenya Youth Chaplain at St. Jude in Athi River 1996-1999, then National Youth Chaplain under the Kenyan Conference of Bishops Youth Secretariat 1999-2002
- Upon returning to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, fulfilled the remainder of the contract with Maryknoll 2003 at the Arch. Mission Office and did Mission Appeals on behalf of Maryknoll; helped at Our Lady of the Visitation Parish in Mack, Ohio
- Canonical Pastor at St. Antoninus January-May 2004 while the pastor was on sabbatical [where I celebrated my 25th Anniversary of Ordination]
- St. Margaret of Cortona and St. John Vianney 2004-2008 Pastor; St. Margaret-St. John Parish (merger) 2008-2010 Pastor
- St. Margaret-St. John and St. Anthony Parishes 2010-2016 Pastor [My dad passed in late September 2010, shortly after taking over St. Anthony]
- Church of the Resurrection 2016- June 30, 2022, Pastor [where I celebrated my 40th Anniversary of Ordination 2019]

I look forward to July 1, 2022, when I will be one of two parochial vicars in our Family of Parishes. Being the only current priest remaining in the area, not needing to move anywhere else to live (Mom and I live in a house in Mt. Washington, formerly owned by two priests), I will join the team of priests, staff and lay leaders much less stressed in time of transition than I ordinarily would be. Aware of being ever-blessed I aspire to be a blessing as a servant-leader. Showered by Amazing Grace I anticipate that God will bless our New Family always, in all ways.