For Immediate Release

Three new parishes established to meet the needs of growth

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Archbishop Alex J. Brunett announced this week that he is establishing three new parishes to meet sacramental needs resulting from increased interest in the Catholic faith and the rapid growth of the church in Western Washington.

The three new parishes in the Archdiocese of Seattle include: Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Woodinville; the parish of Holy Cross, Granite Falls/Lake Stevens from the mission of Holy Cross, Granite Falls; and the parish of Holy Innocents, Duvall from the mission of Holy Innocents.

"We are experiencing unprecedented growth where these new parishes are being established," Archbishop Brunett said.

Father K. Scott Connolly was appointed pastor of Woodinville's Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta Parish. Father Joseph DeFolco was appointed pastor of the Holy Cross Parish, Granite Falls/Lake Stevens and continues as pastor of St. Michael Parish in Snohomish. Father David Rogerson was appointed pastor of Holy Innocents, Duvall and pastor of St. Jude Parish, Redmond.

All appointments are effective July 1. Commenting on the simultaneous announcement of three new parishes, Archbishop Brunett noted the archdiocese is setting the pace for all of the United States.

"This year on Easter eve, 150,000 Americans were received into the Roman Catholic Church. Here in the Archdiocese of Seattle, 1,258 were baptized and received into communion with the church, and this has been a pattern repeated for several years," he said. "In addition, there has been a strong migration of Hispanic Catholics and people from Pacific Rim countries here."

While the new parishes directly affect people in their area, their establishment carries significance for the archdiocese and the church as a whole, the archbishop said.

"This is good news because it shows that the structure and practice of the Roman Catholic faith tradition are alive and well," he said. "The growth in our church clearly indicates that being united with Christ and others whose lives are built on gospel values and Catholic faith tradition has a strong appeal in our community.

"Our parishes offer entire families opportunities for the practice of their faith and have become like an oasis in a world that often devalues the meaning of religion. They offer sound moral values and introduce strong principles in our divided and secular world," Archbishop Brunett said.

The archdiocese acquired property for all three new parishes. Blessed Mother Teresa Parish will eventually be built on the site of former riding stables on the Woodinville-Duvall Road. Holy Innocents, Duvall, plans to begin construction of a new church later this year and Holy Cross Parish has a 30-acre site near Highway 92 halfway between Granite Falls and Lake Stevens.

Mother Teresa Parish could begin with approximately 1,000 families and increase to 1,500 families by 2015, according to archdiocesan projections. The Granite Falls/Lake Stevens parish is projected to begin with 1,000 families and is expected to grow to 1,500 families by 2015. The Duvall parish, now with approximately 600 families, will increase to 900 by 2015, according to projections.
In interviews last week, the pastors of the new parishes spoke of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

"I will begin to form our new parish community by going to neighboring parishes, celebrating liturgies and introducing myself," said Father Connolly of Mother Teresa. "Then we will schedule an organizational meeting in the fall and set a date for the first liturgy and begin having Mass on a weekly basis."

Father Connolly said he would be looking for a school or other building in the area for temporary worship space. Construction of permanent facilities will begin when funding is assured.

Father Connolly said a rectory was recently purchased in the area. If buildings on the former equestrian site can be upgraded into office space the parish could locate its office on the site.

Father Rogerson will be pastor of Holy Innocents Parish in Duvall and St. Jude in Redmond which share boundaries. Holy Innocents will construct a new church to serve the growing Duvall area and St. Jude will continue to serve the rapidly growing Redmond area.

Father Rogerson has personal experience with the growth of the region.

"I grew up in Bellevue," he said. "When I was a seminarian at St. Edward, we used to go to Duvall to teach CCD classes," he said. "The area has grown so much its kind of a shock," he said.

"I enjoy helping parishes do things they are committed to," he said. "Holy Innocents parishioners are committed to this construction project. They have been looking forward to it and planning for the future."

The new church of Holy Cross Parish, Granite Falls/Lake Stevens, will be built on a "beautiful site between highway and river with Mount Pilchuck looming behind," said Father DeFolco. Meanwhile, weekend Masses will continue to be celebrated at Holy Cross church in Granite Falls. The parish will begin celebrating Masses on the first weekend of September at North Lake Middle School in the Lake Stevens School District, he said.

The church at Granite Falls was built in 1903. What does a new parish do with a church with a century of history? Bring it with them.

"Holy Cross — church on the move'— that's the sign we're gong to put up on the new site," said Father DeFolco.

The first phase of construction will be a multipurpose building that seats 400 for Masses. The church at Granite Falls, which seats about 100, will be transported to the new site when the new building is completed. The older church will be used as a weekday Mass chapel and on occasion for weddings and funerals.

"This old church has real sentimental value," Father DeFolco said last week. "When I suggested it be moved to the new property, the parish jumped on the idea. So when the time comes, we're taking it with us."

The second phase of construction, expected in the next 10 years, is a church on the new site with the multi-purpose hall becoming a parish hall.

For more information, contact: Greg Magnoni  206.382.4862