

LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

For Our Children and the Future

FATHER JOE KERN: OFFICIALLY RETIRED, BUT NOT TAKING A BREAK

Father Joe Kern officially retired from the archdiocese during the summer of 2001. Next year, he will celebrate his 50th jubilee of the priesthood. Today he stays busy volunteering for a variety of organizations and continuing his ministry as a priest throughout the Terre Haute area.

Thanks to the archdiocese's commitment to its priests, Father Kern was able to retire at the age of 70. The proceeds from the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign supplemented by the United Catholic Appeal provide Father Kern and all retired archdiocesan priests with a pension, health care and other benefits they deserve.

Father Kern may be retired, but he continues to give himself to many causes. He is dean of the Terre Haute Deanery and chairman of Catholic Charities Terre Haute. Father Kern also serves as a local hospice volunteer and is on call for hospital emergencies. He is involved in prison ministry at the Rockville Correctional Facility, where he visits on Friday evenings. All the while, Father Kern continues to celebrate Mass during the absence of other priests.

"I would go crazy if I weren't so involved. I have been working all my life. I can't and don't want to stop now," Father Kern said.

Many would agree that all this activity does not define retirement, but Father Kern is adamant that this is what he loves to do. "I can be as free as I want to be. This is what I want to spend my time doing," he said.

After 16 years as pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Rockville, Father Kern still loves to celebrate Mass. He will fill



in temporarily for a fellow priest who is planning a sabbatical in 2007.

"Father Kern just gets it done because he always puts himself last," said Sue Butwin, director of the Terre Haute Deanery Pastoral Center. "He always tells me that this is why he was ordained—to serve the people."

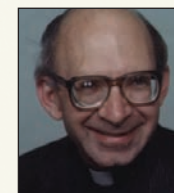
So what does it really mean when archdiocesan priests retire? Every priest chooses how active he wishes to be. Father Kern is a prime example of the many priests who choose to continue serving as they always have.

Retired priests are also responsible for their own housing. Father Kern leases an apartment in Terre Haute and now pays for his utilities, rent and other expenses. Other retired priests may choose to live in an archdiocesan retirement facility, where they pay their own living expenses.

"He is so eager to help out everywhere," Butwin said of Father Kern. "His willingness to be there for the people, the parishes and his fellow priests never tires."

The *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign will also support retired priests who wish to attend retreats. Father Kern feels blessed to be able to attend these retreats with the support of parishioners across the archdiocese.

Father Kern recently received the Career Achievement Award at the Celebrating Catholic School Values event in Indianapolis. The Catholic community honored him for his lifetime of service throughout the archdiocese. Father Kern graciously accepted the award and thanked all those who played an important role in his Catholic education.



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Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocesan capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the local and changing needs of archdiocesan ministries such as caring for retired priests. By contributing to the Legacy for Our Mission campaign, a portion of your gift will be allocated to support retirement assistance for priests.

Please visit the new online home for *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign. Our campaign Web site is <http://www.archindy.org/legacy>.