

## *Who's Who Amongst Priests in the Diocese of Superior?*

To *'get to know'* the Indian Priests in our diocese, the Superior Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (SDCCW) occasionally will be featuring a few of the Indian priests in the bi-annual SDCCW Newsletter and the majority of Indian priests on the SDCCW website: <http://sdccw-wisconsin.weebly.com> The first priest being featured in the Fall Newsletter is from Our Lady of the Lakes Parish in Ashland which is clustered with parishes in Dauby, Ino, Moquah, and Odanah.

### **Rev. Jerome D'Souza**

Fr. Jerome moved from the Southern part of India (Bangalore, Karnataka State). He formerly belonged to the religious order (Claretian Missionaries), was ordained in 2000, and spent 17 years in India, having been exposed to various realities of mission and formation.

Holy Week of 2017 marked the beginning of his pastoral ministry in the United States. He was first assigned to St. Peter's Parish in Winter and Sacred Heart in Radisson. In 2019, he was reassigned to the Chequamegon bay area of Ashland.

Fr. Jerome is the oldest sibling in his family, followed by a sister and three brothers. His parents are still active and in their seventies.

In December of 2020, Bishop Powers incardinated him to our diocese as a permanent member. This means Fr. Jerome will spend many years in active ministry in the diocese. Fr. Jerome describes it as "a great blessing" to be part of our diocese!

When asked how he enjoys our weather, he remarks the weather is not a challenge but, there is still a long way to go. He enjoys the four seasons, although summer could be a little longer and the winter shorter.

His favorite foods: although he misses some of the home dishes, he is getting more familiar with local food habits – bland fish, fries, venison chilies, pots of soups, salads, and pulled meat. He just laughs when commenting on so many varieties of deserts and jellies and cheese, bars, soda etc. When describing his diet, he gives a great laugh while expressing, "I carry a missionary stomach!"

He feels welcome and enjoys the friendliness of the northern communities. His parishioners appreciate him and are thankful that he is their priest. Fr. Jerome is well pleased with his missionary destination of Ashland and the other four clustered parishes.

When asked if he is looking forward to 'day light savings time', for Fr. Jerome, it remains a puzzle to figure out day light savings time is it to sleep longer, and what really is it!

He surprises himself from being a motorcycle priest to becoming a four-wheeler priest (driving a car); because motorcycles were his missionary wagon back in India.

I was honored to interview Fr. Jerome for this article. He is laughing and having a great time during the interview. Fr. Jerome is full of many pleasant surprises. He has a great caring spirit. He is so active and dynamic.

Fr. Jerome feels blessed to be among the people in our diocese as we deepen our faith journey, marching together in and with Christ, and Mary, also as our companion.

Jane Schiszik, SDCCW President