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Rev. Joji Reddy Boyapati's Story

When Fr. Joji joined the parishes in Superior: The Cathedral of Christ the King, St. William, St. Anthony, and Holy Assumption along with St. Anthony's Parish in Lake Nebagamon the pandemic prevented many of the usual parish activities and events and decreased the parishioner's opportunity to get to know Fr. Joji. Fr. Joji was hesitant at first to be interviewed, but then graciously agreed to answer a few personal questions. Some of the following is in his own words, and some has been summarized. We hope you will enjoy learning a bit more about Fr. Joji and his history.

Fr. Joji was born on December 20, 1976 in Mattampally in Telangana state of South India and this was his hometown until his ordination. He is the youngest boy of 7 children (3 boys, 4 girls) His father died when he was 19, but his mother is 77. One of his older sisters is a religious nun in St. Ann's Congregation. He said his family faced many hardships when he was young, but their faith in God gave them strength.

When asked about how holidays were celebrated when he was young, he said, "I have early memories of Christmas only when I was in the mid school. The semi-Christmas celebrations in the school brought great joy with colorful decorations, creative manger, liturgy, carols, Christmas concerts, sweets etc. My parents used to present new festive clothes, keep us happy with making special dishes, cookies and good food. All the siblings come home for Christmas vacation and the joy of Christmas was being doubled." The annual thanksgiving feast is celebrated on February 2.

He said, "All my schooling was catholic. My Primary and mid schooling was with St Ann's nuns and High school with Montfort religious Brothers." He speaks TELUGU, his native dialect, as well as English.

He said, "I received my First Holy Communion in my 3rd grade (12.03.1983) and since then started serving at the altar. I am blessed to continue my close association with the altar and sanctuary from being an altar boy to being a priest now."

Fr. Joji entered the seminary after 10th grade, studied at Sts Peter and Paul Minor Seminary for 11 years and was ordained on April 24, 2002 for the Diocese of Nalgonda in south India. He served that diocese in 3 different parishes for 15 years before moving to Canada in 2017. We have been blessed to have him in our diocese since March 12, 2021.

At present Fr. Joji calls Kanchanapally (pop. about 6600) in Jangaon district of Telangana State in South India his permanent hometown. Its climate contrasts sharply with ours with summertime temperatures reaching 115°F and the lows in winter around 60°F. Basically, people are dependent workers or agricultural farmers that grow rice, peppers and other vegetables.

There are about 90 Catholic families in the parish called the Purification Church which was founded about 125 years ago. Similar to here, the resident priest attends to 3 other parishes. However, a major difference from our area is the presence of religious order nuns who operate the primary, secondary and high schools. The Catechist Sisters of St Ann not only teach but they help in the parish and also do social service.

With such strong support from the church, Fr. Joji said, "The faithful follow the catholic tradition faithfully and give their witness to the faith in the village....Faith wise the majorities are Hindus and there is also presence of Muslims and Christians in small numbers. All live in solidarity and peace."

Fr. Joji does not follow any professional sports teams, but he does like to play badminton, basketball and cricket. Fr. Joji said, "My hobbies are to compose and act drama, and liturgical hymns. I love nature, music and poetry. In all beauty of God's creation, my soul magnifies the Lord. I love to be creative, positive and more practical."

As we can see from Fr. Joji's background, he is used to a much different climate than he has encountered here. He said the cold was very difficult on his body at first, but having served in Canada and now here, he is learning to adapt and prepare for the cold weather. He said, "I realize God prepared me well with all the requirements and I rely on Him. Moving, working and serving with and for warm hearts, the changing climate causes no effect on me."

Fr. Joji prefers healthy type foods. He said, "To be sincere, I love the natural food required to the healthy body more than anything. They are Nuts, Sprouts, Fruits, Vegetables, Eggs, and Fish etc. I take much care of my health with strict diet, regular exercises, and disciplined lifestyle."

The parishes in Superior and Lake Nebagamon are very thankful for Fr. Joji' presence in their faith community. His faith, hope and love of God and others is an inspiration for all of us. He concluded his comments with the following message:

"Finally, one thing I would say. Life has got a purpose. We are not sure of it what it is. Only the Creator is the right person to deal with that. We need to cooperate and move on accordingly with trust and being loyal. Jesus, the Lord had shown us the Way. We need to follow Him. I am trying to do that and helping others too. Thank you and God bless."