



## Msgr. Mike's Blog: From Transfer to Thanksgiving

November 1 - the Feast of all Saints - marks the day 31 years ago when I was transferred from my first assignment as associate pastor at Christ the King Church in Worcester. I can still remember that day as if it were yesterday. After celebrating holy day Masses in the morning at the parish church, Notre Dame Academy and then at St. John's High School, I returned to the rectory for lunch. Out of the blue I received a phone call from the Chancery from the priests' personnel director who wanted to meet with me that afternoon. At the meeting I was informed that I was being transferred to St. Joseph's Parish in Auburn in just two weeks time. The news caught me off guard as I had not anticipated being moved until the following June. It was very difficult for me to leave the people of Christ the King. A priest's first assignment is such an important formational experience for the rest of his ministry.

Looking back on that All Saints Day many years ago I am grateful for the pastors I had for my first two assignments. Father Paul O'Connell was my first pastor at Christ the King and Father Jack Cahill, who was also moving from his pastorate here at St. Mary's, became my new pastor at Saint Joseph's. Little did I know then that one day I would be fortunate enough to succeed both of them as pastor of St. Mary's! In different ways I learned much from both Fr. Paul and Fr. Jack, and I have great memories of parish life and rectory life with them.

While the Feast of All Saints reminds me of that fateful day when I was transferred for the very first time, the month moves on quickly to the Feast of All Souls and the wonderful memories I have of family and friends who have died. Keeping their memory alive in prayer on this special feast day is a great way for me to realize again just how blessed I have been in my life. Such experiences of gratitude at the beginning of the month become for me the perfect way to prepare for the great American feast of Thanksgiving.

May these November days, which sometimes can be dark and dreary, provide for you many memories that recall the people of your life now gone before you as well as the countless blessings for which you and family will give thanks on Thanksgiving Day.