

SUMMER 2018
Meet the Clergy



THE CATHOLIC PARISHES OF OAKMONT, PLUM & VERONA

St. Irenaeus, Oakmont

St. Januarius, St. John the Baptist, Our Lady of Joy, Plum

St. Joseph, Verona

www.opvcatholic.org (website available soon)

CLERGY

Group Email: office@opvcatholic.org

Rev. Kevin G. Poecking
Priest Administrator

Rev. George Dalton
Senior Parochial Vicar

Rev. David DeWitt
Senior Parochial Vicar

Rev. Frederick Gruber
Parish Chaplain

Deacon Joseph Vannucci

Deacon Timothy Noca

Explanation of the Grouping Logo

*There are five parishes
in our new grouping.*

*There are five fingers of a hand that
reaches out to greet a new soul.
Each of the fingers has the name of a
parish, with St. Joseph on the thumb
since it is the original church in this
area, historically leading us all.
With one hand, we receive God's
blessing, with one hand together;
we can do the work of God.*

The Name: *The Diocese has designated our five parishes in this area as Grouping 452 and it contains the churches in Oakmont, Plum and Verona. Therefore, the "Parishes of Oakmont, Plum & Verona is a little easier to remember and identify. We also acknowledge that a significant portion of Penn Hills is part of St. Joseph and St. John the Baptist and equal parishioners in our grouping, not to mention the surrounding towns of registered parishioners in all five parishes. All the clergy look forward to getting to know everyone in October!*



Preferred Name to be called: Father George
Ordination date for Priesthood: May 12, 1984

Previous Assignments: Saint Maurice, Forest Hills; Saint Anselm, Swissvale; The Newman Center, Slippery Rock University (campus ministry); Accademia Alfonsiana, Rome (studies in medical ethics and moral theology); Miraculous

Medal, Meadowlands; John Paul II Institute (studies in theology of marriage and family), Washington DC; Saint Louise de Marillac, Upper Saint Clair; Saint Bernard, Mount Lebanon; Saint Ferdinand, Cranberry; Saint Irenaeus, Oakmont (since September, 2014).

Something Personal: I grew up in a wonderful, loving family in Penn Hills and Monroeville. Before ordination I studied languages at Pitt, majoring in Mandarin Chinese, minoring in Russian and German, etc; International Relations and Social Science at the University of Vienna; and Theology at the Pontifical College Josephinum. Having studied overseas four times, I love other cultures and enjoy keeping in touch with friends in many countries. I also love history and am an avid genealogist. God's greatest gift to me, however, is the gift of priesthood.



Preferred Name to be called: Father David
Ordination year: 1984

Previous Assignments: Saint Bartholomew, Penn Hills, Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Brighton Heights, (North Side), Saint Valentine, Bethel Park, Immaculate Conception, Washington PA, Mater Dolorosa and Saint Joseph, Butler County, (as pastor), Incarnation of the Lord and Risen Lord, North Side (as pastor).

Something Personal: I was born in Homewood, reared in Wilkinsburg. I have 4 sisters and 2 brothers (one brother deceased). Have enjoyed vacationing on various cruise lines.



Biography: The fourth of 15 siblings, Father Gruber said his years dealing with children as he was growing up in Whitehall have given him plenty of “child development” education. Father Gruber said his call to the priesthood did not happen as a result of a dramatic event or sudden realization. He remembers being interested in the priesthood at an early age at his home of St. Sylvester Parish in Brentwood. Over the years, that interest grew. “I remember thinking about what I would preach about if I was a priest,” he said.

After graduating from Baldwin High School in 2002 and from Christendom College in Virginia with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy in 2006, he said, he was certain he wanted to be a priest. From there, he entered St. Paul Seminary in East Carnegie and graduated from Duquesne University with a master’s degree in philosophy in 2008. He spent five years in Rome at the Pontifical North American College and graduated from Pontifical Gregorian University with a bachelor’s degree and license in sacred theology. Ordained on June 30, 2012 at St. Paul Cathedral, he then served two months at St. Maurice Parish in Forest Hills before returning to Rome for final studies. He returned to Pittsburgh and his first assignment at St. James, Sewickley and then at St. Philip, Crafton.



Deacon Joe Vannucci is currently a member of St. John the Baptist Parish and lives in the Penn Hills. Married to Virginia (Ginger); they have 2 adult daughters and 3 grandchildren. He grew up in Bloomfield. Deacon Joe was ordained on June 11, 2011.



Deacon Tim Noca is currently a member of St. John the Baptist Parish and lives in Oakmont. He is married to Lisa and they have 3 children. He grew up in Irwin. Deacon Tim was ordained on June 15, 2013.



Preferred Name to be called: Father Kevin **Ordination year:** 2004
Previous Assignments: St. Thomas More, Bethel Park, Immaculate Conception, Washington, PA with Campus Ministry at W&J College and later at Slippery Rock University, St. Peter, Slippery Rock, St. John the Baptist, Plum (since late 2016)

Something Personal: I grew up in a town just south of Buffalo, NY called Hamburg. I was raised Presbyterian, became Lutheran as an adult and later went through RCIA to become Catholic. I just finished running in the Pittsburgh Full Marathon (26.2 miles). That was my first and last marathon, but I still enjoy lighter running for exercise. I have only one brother who is a priest, also in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. I enjoy traveling the USA and world.

A NOTE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We will have plenty of time to get to know one another soon, but we wanted to share a little about the clergy in the newsletter format for parishioners in all five parishes to see in advance. So far, as the administrator, I’ve been working mostly on getting the interim Mass times set, where the priests will be living and starting to sort out some of the staff roles. The interim Mass schedules will be approved and published in mid-August. Obviously, with fewer priests, we’ll have fewer Masses, but hopefully fuller ones. We have time after the interim schedules are implemented to review and adjust in the first six months together.

I thought it was important for the priests to have one common place to reside, for our own fraternal and spiritual welfare, not to mention ease of communication. Therefore, we’ll all have space at St. John the Baptist rectory, which is about equally distant to the other 4 parishes in the group. The tall Father George has special height arrangements and will mostly live and work at St. Irenaeus rectory and office, but will have his own space with the other clergy in Plum. Father DeWitt and I will have offices at Our Lady of Joy, and we will be visiting all the parishes and Masses regularly.

I met with most of the five parish staff in May, together with all the Music Ministers in July and hope to meet with all the office staff together in August. I’m trying to take one step at a time, knowing that there has to be a pace, slow enough so that no one among us is lost. So far, things are coming along well and I’ve been impressed at how understanding, accommodating and even excited many people are about this On Mission transition, but I know that there are some fears and worries too. We’re in this together, prayerfully and spiritually on the mission that Jesus has set us on as His sisters and brothers.

In Christ’s love, Father Kevin