

April 13, 2023

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

As your bishop, I write to you today to announce that some of our priests will have assignment changes effective June 27, 2023. Those priests who are reassigned, will be making an announcement this weekend. The new assignments will be made public to all parishes soon.

A huge thanks to my brother priests for the incredible flexibility, sacrifice, and their "yes" to serve where there is a great pastoral need. I am most impressed and grateful for those who have been incredibly supportive in making the needed changes. Also, I want to thank all of you, the Christian faithful, for your prayers and support to our priests. I am very aware of the sacrifices and adaptability on your part as some priests are being reassigned.

I will soon complete seven months of serving you as shepherd. This is a great blessing as I make my way around the diocese. I have heard many stories where people have shared the great difficulty of being part of a parish closure, merger, or reduction of Masses. The Diocese of New Ulm's Pastoral Plan for Parishes was implemented many years ago and has been driven by numerous factors. The greatest challenge we face is that we will have lost three priests who served full-time since the last year, and we currently have several retired priests who are valiantly carrying the torch in their late 70s and early 80s. Also, as we look down the road, no priestly ordinations are anticipated for the next five years. The overall numbers of seminarians are down in dioceses across the United States. This challenge can be very painful for pastors and parishioners.

You are aware that I served the Diocese of Fairbanks for eight years. This vast arctic region encompasses 410,000 square miles and 46 parishes (37 in remote villages) that 18 priests serve. Unfortunately, most villages have Mass only once every eight weeks or longer. The people are most appreciative for anything the priests did. I share this as the challenge of fewer priests and seminarians has placed tremendous pastoral difficulty in many places.

I am most grateful for your sacrifices, support, and prayers. Please pray for more vocations to the priesthood.

Sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Chad W. Zielinski

# Join Us for a Caribbean Knight Party!

**Saturday, May 6, 2023**

**5:30 PM — Midnight**

**St. Mary's School, Sleepy Eye**

**A Can't-Miss Tropical Night with Games,  
Pull Tabs, Raffles, Friends and  
Tropical Food / Drinks**

**Live Band: UP SOUTH**  
(upsouthband.com)

**Live and Silent Auction!**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**



**1st Prize Wins  
\$4,000 OR a trip to  
the Caribbean!**

**2nd Prize Wins  
\$1,000**

**3rd & 4th Prize Wins  
\$500**

**5th-14th Prize Wins  
\$100**

**\$25 / Ticket**

**Proceeds used for  
increasing enrollment  
and maintaining  
affordable tuition.**

**Purchase your  
tickets today!**

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school or the  
rectory.**

**Need not be  
present to win**