

Come Meet Pastor Kevin Bettens

By Jeannette Timmerman

Rollicking sense of humour. Acapella singing voice. Welcoming manner. Happy priest. If you know someone that fits these descriptors, then undoubtedly you have met Fr. Kevin Bettens, pastor of Mary, Mother of the Church in Richmond West.



Fr. Bettens grew up in the St. Vital area of Winnipeg where he and his three brothers kept their parents hopping. He said in his late teens he felt called to the priesthood and eventually acted on it. Fluent in French and English, his studies include a BA from the University of Manitoba and a Masters of Divinity from St. Joseph Seminary in Edmonton.

Ordained in 2006 for the Archdiocese of St. Boniface, his first placement was for one year as an assistant at St. Bernadette Parish in Winnipeg. After that he was pastor at Notre-Dame-de-la-Miséricorde in Île des Chênes, Man. From there he went to St-Eugène and Coeur-Immaculé-de-Marie in St. Vital before arriving at Mary, Mother of the Church in August 2011.

This parish was established in 1979 with 300 families. In 1989, it moved to its present location at 85 Kirkbridge Drive. With over 2,200 families currently registered, Mary, Mother is one of the most culturally diverse and growing faith communities in Winnipeg. Its parishioners speak more than 20 languages. With his outgoing personality, Fr. Bettens enjoys interacting with individuals and groups in the parish



When I asked him what he would like The Sou'wester readers to know about him he said, "I would like them to know how much I enjoy being a priest and how cool it is to pastor a dynamic parish such as Mary, Mother of the Church is. There is always something new and exciting happening. People are sharing their gifts for the parish and wider community."

In his welcome on the parish website, he writes, "Outreach is at our heart, ministering to the poor and those who are victims of society's injustice, using the resources God has blessed us with." Until recently, he was Director of Vocations to the Priesthood for the Archdiocese of St. Boniface.

Despite his busy hours with pastoral work, he does have spare time. He says, "I like fishing, lake-life and entertaining friends." Travel is another of his passions. His last jaunt was to the Philippines and Thailand.

Fr. Bettens says if you would like to meet him, give him a call at 204-261-1579 and come by for a coffee or juice.

**This article was originally published in The Sou'wester on September 6, 2017.*