

Dear St. Kilian and St. John Congregations,

By now you have heard the news that I, Father Britto, have been assigned as your new Pastor. I am thrilled to have been given this new assignment. I look forward to getting to know and serve all of you. First, I would like to "break the ice" and share a wee bit about myself.

My given name is Britto Raja Suresh, but I prefer to go by "Britto." Both my parents are retired and living in my hometown in South India. I am the eldest of their two sons. My younger brother is a school teacher, teaching the native language of Tamil. In the village of my hometown, it is customary for sons to be named after St. John de Britto, a Portuguese Missionary of the Jesuit order. He preached the Christian religion, in the region of Madurai, South India for 20 years (1673 to 1693). It was in 1693 that he was executed in the place called "Oriyur" for defending the Gospel values and was canonized St. John de Britto on June 22, 1947.



Being from the soil of "St. Britto's Great Martyrdom," I, too, was impressed by his values and started my vocation as a Jesuit scholastic. I was soon called by the Holy Spirit to become a shepherd for God's people. It was then that I decided to become a diocesan priest, as the Jesuits had limited opportunities for such a vocation. In 2003, I was ordained to the priesthood in South India.

After 11 years of my priestly ministry in India, I was awakened with the call to continue as a shepherd of God's people in the United States. In 2014, I was appointed as Associate Pastor at St. Veronica in Milwaukee and served for 2 years. From there, I joined St. Alphonsus Congregation in Greendale and have been serving as their Associate Pastor for the past 4 years.

I have been blessed in my priesthood in the United States. I have had the privilege to serve, counsel, and minister to many. I have shared the joy of birth and baptism, the wide-eyed wonderment of First Communion, the confident commitment of Confirmation, the excitement of Marriage, and the sorrow of illness and death. I have cherished these opportunities to share God's love and mercy.

While I am excited and ready to transfer to my new assignment, I admit that I feel a wee bit of stress and sadness. Leaving behind the comfort of staff, friends, and parishioners who have become my family leaves me a bit saddened and stressed. Added to this is a new layer of stress from the pandemic and protests. Rest assured, I will be comforted and guided by the Holy Spirit to overcome these stressors.

As I was working on this article, I happened to see this quote from an unknown author: *"Don't confuse your calling with your assignment. You're called to fulfill God's purpose. You're assigned to specific tasks for God's purpose."* Is this not true?

New opportunities to share Christ's love and mercy await me at St. Kilian and St. John. I am officially set to begin my new assignment on August 4th. I am eager to be your shepherd; to serve, counsel, minister, and become a part of your families.

Peace and Blessings,

Fr. Britto