



Father Peter Gregory

Pittsfield, MA

Father Peter Gregory finds many circles of experience that remind him of the continuity of his long life and his vocation of service to others. Born and raised in Pittsfield, he left the Berkshires to study theology in Belgium and to serve in the Air Force, later returning. As the new priest at St. Charles' parish in Pittsfield, his first funeral was for his mother who had carried him into St. Charles 50 years earlier.

The newest circle of service and experience for Father Gregory is as chaplain at Soldier On, a program that houses homeless veterans. When Soldier On called to ask if he would consider serving as chaplain, his first question was, "Do you know how old I am?" They wisely responded, "Age doesn't matter." Father Gregory draws on his experience as a parish priest, a hospital chaplain, and an Air Force veteran to serve the Soldier On residents as full human beings with emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual experiences and needs.

Father Gregory welcomes the variety that comes his way. Whether preaching a children's sermon or presiding at a funeral for a person he has known for decades, ministering to people at all phases of their lives is a joy for him. For Gregory, being authentic enables him to serve a wide variety of people.

Making lemonade out of lemons is a family trait for the Gregory siblings. When his sister Joyce got breast cancer, she opened a business called Joyce's Renewed Image Care, serving other women who had breast cancer. Father Gregory got his lemons in his 50s when he had bypass surgery. That health challenge led him to a healthy lifestyle that has contributed to his longevity.

Father Gregory expects to continue serving others as he turns 80 in September. Finding the right balance between accepting the grace of the moment and reaching daily for the impossible dream helps him stay positive. And if death should come, Father Gregory is reminded that as we live so shall we die. He expects to face death with the joy he has lived his life.

Photography: Lucy Kennedy

Words: Katherine Kidd