

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 3

Father John E Boll, Archivist

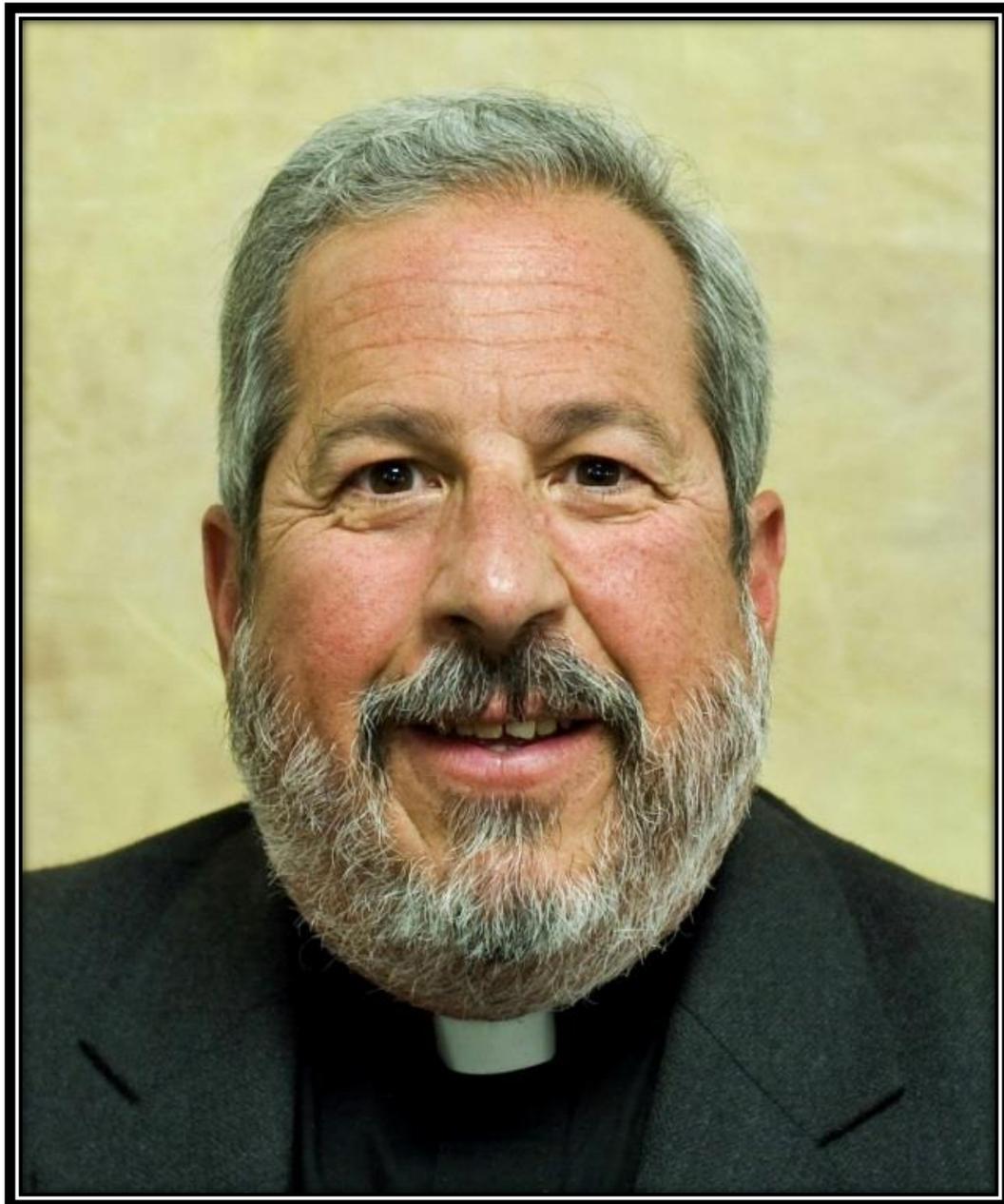
No 25

Father Joseph Paul Ternullo

Native Son of Sacramento

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor Emeritus of Saint Lawrence the Martyr Parish, North Highlands, CA



Joseph Paul Ternullo, the only son of Santo Ternullo and Rosemarie Cattolica, was



born in Sacramento, California on August 2, 1947 at Mercy General Hospital. He was baptized in the Itaian National Church of Saints Peter and Paul in the North Beach area of San Francisco.

Joseph came from Sicilian ancestry. His paternal grandparents, Giuseppi Ternullo and Rosa Barbarino, came from Augusta, and his maternal grandparents, Ippolito Cattolica and Antoinette Alioto, came from Porticello, Sicily. His first language at home was the Sicilian dialect.

Photo courtesy of Fr Joseph Ternullo

Baby Joey Ternullo

Joseph grew up in Sacramento and he and his parents were parishioners of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish on 26th and K Streets in Sacramento. As a young boy he attended Marshall Grammar School but in the fifth grade transferred to Saint Francis grammar school. He became a Mass server at Saint Francis Church which was only five blocks from his family home.

Saints Peter and Paul Church, San Francisco



Photo by John E Boll 2005



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Saint Francis Church, Sacramento

ENTERS SAINT PIUS X SEMINARY

After graduating from the eighth grade in 1961, Joe entered Saint Pius X Minor Seminary in Galt. He completed his four years of high school in the minor seminary and began seminary college in Galt for the next two years.



Photo by John E Boll 2014

Saint Pius X Seminary, Galt

SAINT PATRICK SEMINARY, MENLO PARK



Photo by John E Boll 2014

In 1967, Joe entered Saint Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park for his last two years of college where he graduated with a BA in Humanities with a concentration in Psychology. He then entered the theology department at Saint Patrick Seminary and earned a Master of Divinity degree in 1972. He was ordained a transitional deacon in May 1972 and served his diaconate year at Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn under the guidance of Father Ronan Brennan who was pastor of the parish. While serving in Auburn, he was known as “Deacon Joe.”

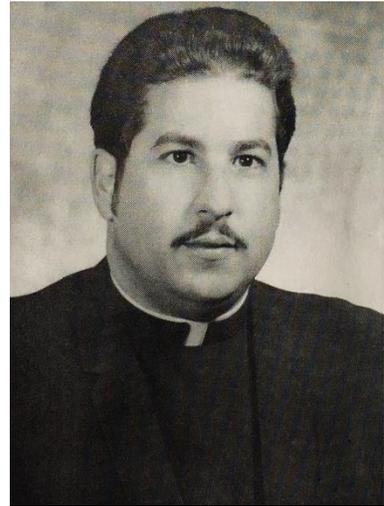


Photo by John E Boll 2011

Saint Joseph Church, Auburn

ORDAINED A PRIEST BY BISHOP ALDEN BELL

Joseph Paul Ternullo was ordained a priest for service in the Diocese of Sacramento by Bishop Alden J Bell on May 26, 1973 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament.



Photos from the *Catholic Herald* in 1973

Bishop Alden J Bell Ordains Father Ternullo in the Cathedral in 1973

FIRST ASSIGNMENTS

His first parish assignment was as parochial vicar to Holy Family parish in Citrus Heights from 1973-1978. The pastor of the parish was Father Vito Mistretta.



Photo by John E Boll 2015

Holy Family Church, Citrus Heights

Immaculate Conception Parish, Sacramento



Father Joe's second assignment was at Immaculate Conception Parish in Sacramento working with Father Dan Madigan who was pastor. He ministered at Immaculate Conception Parish for three and a half years, from 1978 to 1981.

Photo by John E Boll 2012

SAINT THERESA PARISH, SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Father Joe was then assigned to Saint Theresa Parish in South Lake Tahoe from 1981-86. His pastor was Father John Grace and while serving at Saint Theresa Parish. he became an avid downhill skier. Under the tutilage of Father John Grace, Father Joe learned how to cross country ski as well.



Photo courtesy of St Theresa Parish

Original Saint Theresa Parish, South Lake Tahoe

While Father Joe was assisting at Saint Theresa Parish, the Spanish speaking community began to grow. Responding to the need for Mass in Spanish, Father Joe, in consultation with Father Grace, began a weekly Sunday Mass in Spanish. The number of Hispanic parishioners attending this Mass continued to grow.

FIRST SABBATICAL

After thirteen years of priestly ministry, Father Joe took his first sabbatical in the fall of 1986, attending a program at the House of Affirmation's Center for Education in Natick, Massachusetts. The program focused on human psychology in service to spirituality which enabled Father Joe to work on his own inner spiritual life.

PASTOR OF TRUCKEE



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Assumption Parish Church and Rectory during Father Joe's Pastorate

Concluding his sabbatical in December 1986, Father Joe was appointed pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Truckee which included Our Lady of the Lake mission church in Kings Beach. He served as pastor of the Truckee parish from 1986 to 1994. During his eight years as pastor, he was very involved in the life of the community and made himself available to serve the spiritual needs of patients at Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee.

During his second term as pastor, the parish purchased a house next to the Truckee church and converted it into a parish office and faith formation center. This helped to separate the parish office from his residence. During these years, the Hispanic community in the parish began to participate more fully in the life of the church. Father Joe loved being in the mountains and

enjoyed the independent spirit of the people who lived in the Sierras. Life in the Sierras provided him with the opportunity to improve his ability to maneuver the slopes during the winter ski season. It was while he was in Truckee that he became a mountain biker and often biked to Donner Lake in the early morning.

He enjoyed backpacking, snow skiing, mountain biking, sailing, swimming, motorcycle riding and photography. Living in the mountains provided him the time to develop and enjoy these favorite mountain sports. It was easy for him then to balance work, play and prayer times.

Driving from Truckee to the mission church in Kings Beach on Saturday evenings and again on Sundays during the winter months of deep snow was often a great challenge. But Father Joe would not have traded those happy years in Truckee for any other place in the diocese. This mountain assignment was his favorite.



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Our Lady of the Lake Mission Church, Kings Beach

EMT AND CHAPLAIN TO THE TRUCKEE FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS

During his years in Truckee, Father Joe became an EMT and served as chaplain to the Fire Department, the Placer County Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol. He visited Tahoe Forrest Hospital on a regular basis and was always available to patients whenever his ministry was needed.

Joseph Ternullo



Story by Kathy Trissell, photo by Bill Husa

(For a free framing of your "Faces," call the Potlatch in Incline at 831-2485)

The Story Follows...

Faces in the crowd

*Personal profiles of those people who make
life at Lake Tahoe special*

He's an Italian priest who speaks Spanish and rides a motorcycle, but when it comes to guiding the spirit, Father Joseph Ternullo is pretty down-to-earth.

"There is so much alienation in the world," he said, "so many people who feel that they don't belong anywhere. I want to show them the love of God through a loving, serving, worshipping commitment."

One of two priests who serve the Catholics of Kings Beach and Truckee, Ternullo said he believes his job goes far beyond the church walls.

"If we expect people to be here in church," he said, "we have to be out in the community with them - where they are in their lives."

And Ternullo said getting out includes everything from helping his parishioners find jobs to assisting them in dealing with public agencies.

"You can't tell someone that God loves them," he said, "then they have no food or home."

While he's a Truckee resident, Ternullo said he's a familiar face in Kings Beach where he is involved with both the church and the community.

"I'm very happy in my ministry," Ternullo said. "I wouldn't trade it for anything."

APPOINTED PASTOR OF WINTERS

During the second year of his second term as pastor of Truckee, while on vacation with a classmate in Kauai in 1994, Father Joe received a call from the Diocesan Priest Personnel Board inquiring if he would be willing to move to Winters to be pastor of Saint Anthony Parish. With great reluctance, Father Joe agreed to leave his beloved Truckee and return to the "flatlands" of

the Sacramento Valley and serve as pastor of Saint Anthony Parish, Winters which included Saint Martin de Pores Mission in Esparto. He served the full six year term as pastor.



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Saint Anthony Church, Winters

HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS WINTERS PASTORATE

Reflecting on his years in Winters, Father Joe says: “The highlights of my Winters’ pastorate were the formation of a committee to explore the possibility of a new church, my 25th anniversary of ordination, a welcoming attitude to my dad when he came to live with me after his stroke until his death in the rectory, the youth day celebrations and the ‘fiestas’ with the Spanish speaking communities of Winters and Esparto, and the parish festivals, to name a few.”

PASTOR OF SAINT LAWRENCE PARISH, NORTH HIGHLANDS

In the summer of 2000, Father Joe was named pastor of Saint Lawrence the Martyr Parish in North Highlands. That fall, he began his second sabbatical for studies at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. Joining him in Rome for the fall sabbatical were Fathers John Boll and James Mennis who were brother priests of the Diocese of Sacramento.

After returning home from his Rome sabbatical, Father Joe began his pastorate at Saint Lawrence parish where he served as pastor for the next nine years. One of the painful and emotional moments for him was having to close the parish school because of the falling enrollment.

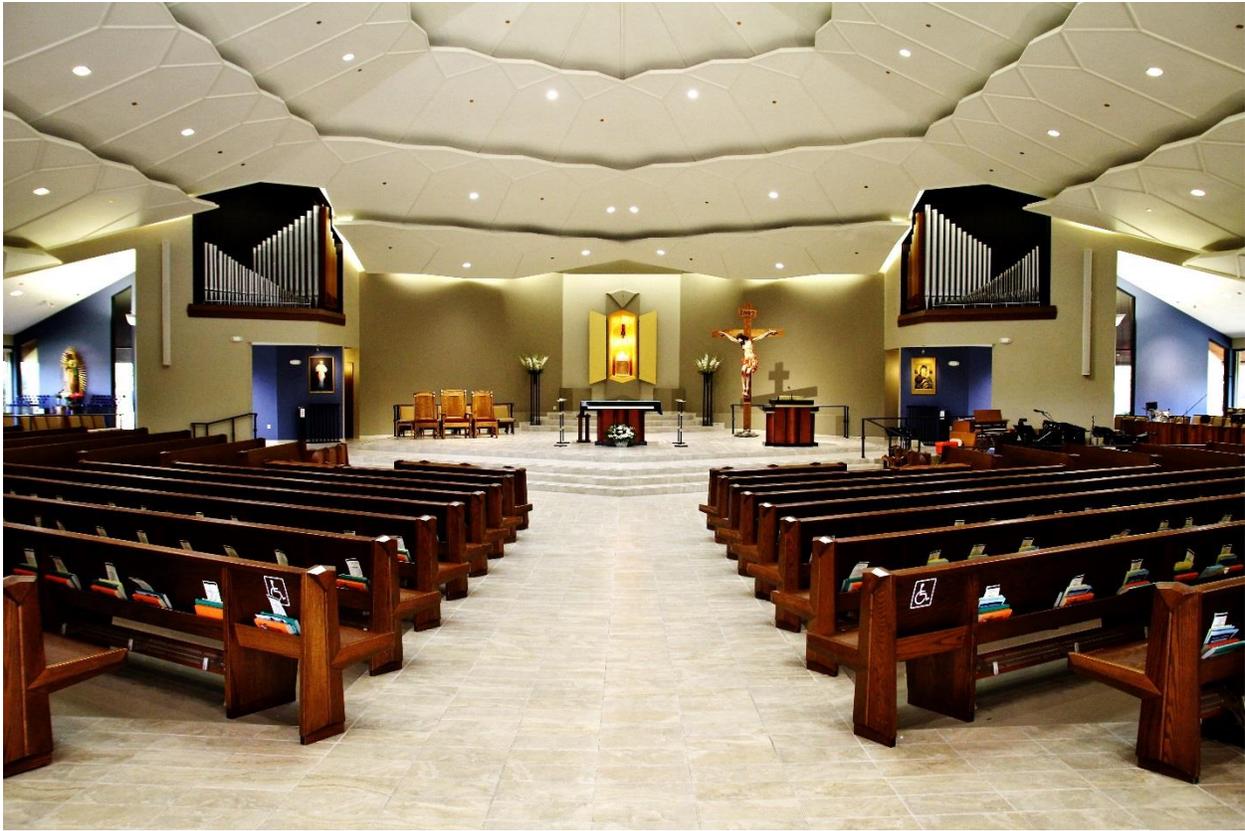


Photo by John E Boll 2015

Interior of the newly renovated Saint Lawrence Church

MINISTRIES ESTABLISHED DURING FATHER JOE'S PASTORATE

During his pastorate, the annual Guamanian Festival was reestablished in the parish. As the Spanish speaking community grew, ministry to that group was organized and Father Joe began a weekly Saturday evening Mass in Spanish. The Hispanic community held the Advent posadas and celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12. The parish began parent education classes in Spanish for the Spanish speaking families, although the children attended faith formation classes in English. The sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist for the children of the parish were celebrated together bi-lingually. Throughout his ministry, Father Joe always did his best to implement the vision and practices of the Second Vatican Council.

DIOCESAN LIAISON TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Bishop Weigand appointed Father Joe diocesan liaison to the law enforcement and fire services in Sacramento. In April 2005 he graduated from the Sacramento Law Enforcement Chaplains' Academy and continues to serve as a Law Enforcement Chaplain. In 2011, succeeding Father Michael Cormack, he was appointed Catholic liaison of the diocese to the Sacramento FBI agency. "If I had not been a priest," says Father Joe, "I would have been a cop or a firefighter. I figured out that we are overgrown kids who want to help others and do it from a different and complimentary perspective."

DOCTORS ADVISE FATHER JOE TO RETIRE

In 2007, Father Joe's doctors advised him to consider retiring for health reasons. In 2008, he shared with Bishop Soto what his doctors had told him about his health. Because of personnel constraints, Bishop Soto asked Father Joe to stay in the parish until the summer of 2009.

In 2009, Father Joe went on his last sabbatical to the Christian Brothers sabbatical program in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He found this sabbatical experience with priests, sisters and brothers from all over the world to be very positive and he continued to work on his interior spiritual life as he began to prepare for his transition to retired life.

CHAPLAIN OF SAINT FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL

Upon returning from his sabbatical, in order to minimize the stress of full time ministry, Bishop Soto asked Father Joe to serve half-time as priest chaplain of Saint Francis High School in Sacramento. He served as chaplain of Saint Francis High School from January 2010 to August 2012.

RETIREMENT FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY IN 2012

When Father Joe reached the age of 65 in 2012, Bishop Soto granted his request to retire from active parish ministry. Father Joe retired on his birthday, August 2, 2012. He then began a new ministry of serving the Catholic community as chaplain on cruise ships and has traveled the world as cruise chaplain. He also helps in local parishes on weekends as there is need.

Father Joe says he has a "marketplace" spirituality. He believes a priest needs to be where the people are and involved in their daily lives. As Pope Francis has said, a priest needs "to smell like the sheep." The reason he became a priest was to help people grow in their relationship with God in the context of the family of faith.

In whatever parish he has served, Father Joe has always made an effort to connect with the ecumenical ministerial association and be involved in ecumenical activities in the community.

Father Joe says he received his vocation to the priesthood from his parents who never said a word about being a priest but showed him by their example that life was about love and compassion and helping others. In the sixth grade after serving Sunday Mass, Joe and his parents were in a local donut shop and a parishioner asked him if he ever thought about being a priest. He answered no. But the seed of a vocation was planted that day and the rest is history.

The priests, religious brothers and sisters of Saint Francis parish were an inspiration to him and Bishop Francis Quinn and Pope Francis continue to inspire him to live a life of service for the People of God. His life as a priest with the celebration of the sacramental life of the church has been a joy for him.

THANKS TO FATHER JOE FOR HIS FOUR DECADES OF MINISTRY

We thank Father Joseph Ternullo for his life of ministry in the Church of Sacramento and we wish him good health and much joy as he lives these years of active retirement, continuing to serve the People of God in a more leisurely and calm way.

AD MULTOS ANNOS!

PHOTOS ALONG THE JOURNEY



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Piazza of Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome; Saint Paul checks a Text Message from Jesus Above



Photo courtesy of Father Joseph Ternullo

Father Joe and his 1956 Chevy



Photo courtesy of Fr Joseph Ternullo

Father Joe, Catholic Chaplain with Norwegian Cruise Line, with Captain Vaja Litovic



Photo courtesy of Fr Joseph Ternullo

The Easy Way to the top of Santorini



Photo courtesy of Father Joseph Ternullo

Giuseppi Ternullo and Rosa Barbarino, Father Joe's Paternal Grandparents



Photo courtesy of Father Joseph Ternullo

Ippolito Cattolica and Antoinette Alioto, Father Joe's Maternal Grandparents



Photo courtesy of Father Joseph Ternullo

**The Wedding Day of Santo Ternullo and Rosemarie Cattolica
Parents of Father Joseph Paul Ternullo**

CROSSING THE ARCTIC CIRCLE



A Proclamation

I, King Ægir, do Solemnly Declare that

Joseph Ternullo

*Was aboard the great ship Prinsendam when she entered the waters of my Northern Daughters
On June 28, 2014 at 8:26AM at 66°33.0N 010°45.0 E
And to each and every one present I grant this decree*

*A member of the Ancient Order of the Blue Nose you all shall be
To the Captain and Officers, My thanks do run deep
And on They and This Ship I Confer
Safe Arctic Passage while You are in My keep!*

Captain Tim Roberts

King Ægir

Cruise Director Rick Barnes

Courtesy of Fr Joseph Ternullo

Father Joe Crosses the Arctic Circle for the First Time

June 28, 2014

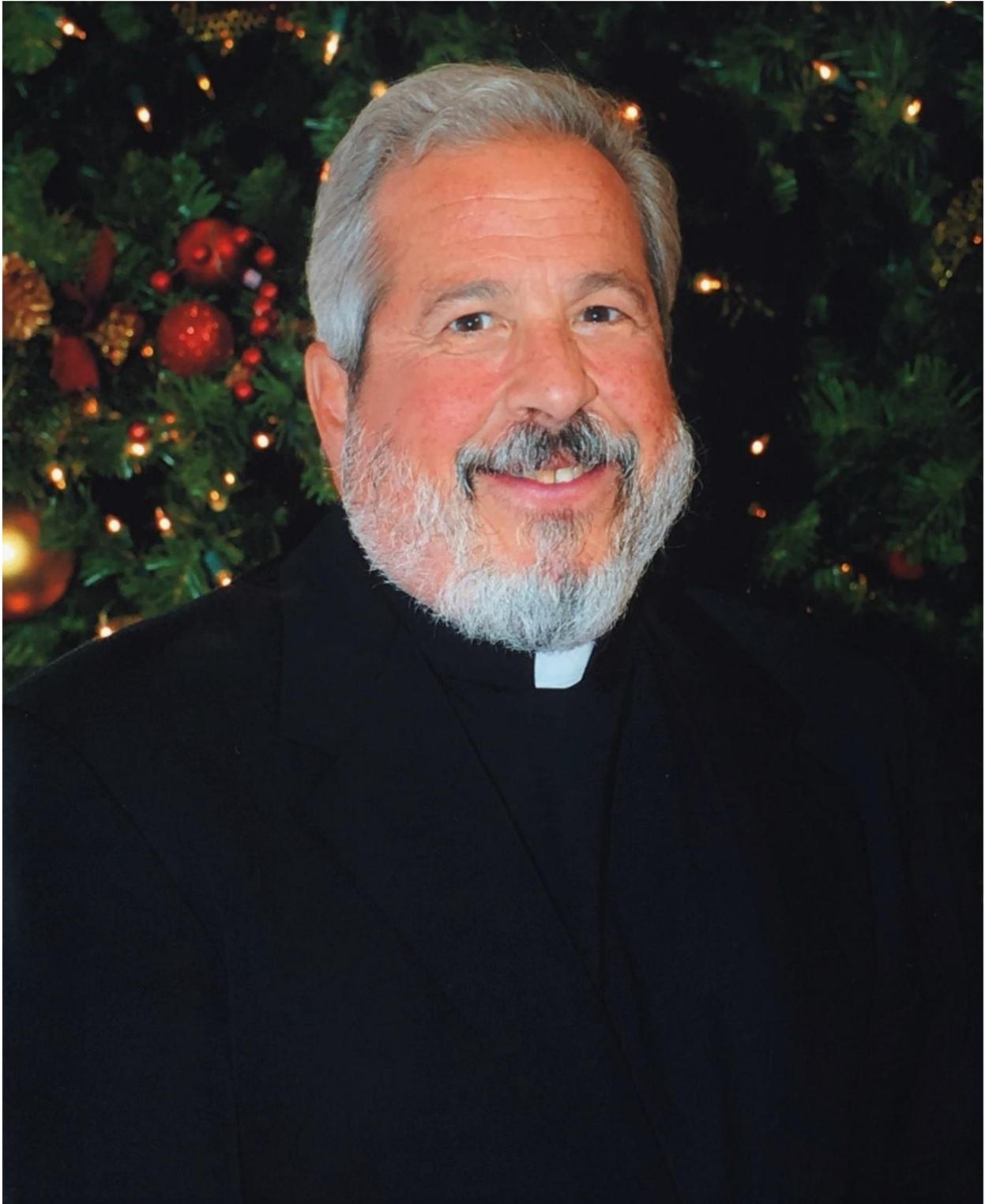


Photo courtesy of Father Joseph Ternullo

Catholic Chaplain Father Joe Ternullo Celebrates Christmas on a Holland America Cruise

Published with the permission of Father Joseph Ternullo