



Priest assignment  
changes and reflection  
on the Powell Butte  
Retreat Center

This summer it will be necessary to re-assign a number of priests because four of our pastors will no longer be available for service here. Father Anthony Mbaegbu of Lakeview is being sent by his bishop in Nigeria to study theology in California, as is Father Jude Nwachukwu of Ontario, at the direction of the superior his religious order. Father Bernard D'Sa is being recalled to India by his order there, and Father Gerry Condon of Heppner will step into well-deserved retirement. We are blessed as a diocese to have been served with such dedication by these valuable men, and I thank them most heartily for the years they have given us - especially Father Condon for his many decades of faithful ministry.

These simultaneous departures have set in motion a chain-reaction of new assignments. Father Francis Akano will go to Lakeview, leaving his parish in Merrill and Bonanza to be served from St. Pius X in Klamath Falls. Father Jose Thomas Mudakodiyil will become pastor in Ontario, assisted by Father Michael Nwokocha, who will also be administrator in Nyssa and responsible for Jordan Valley. Father Theodore Nnabugo will go to LaPine as pastor, and Father Gabriel Ezeh will take his place as parochial vicar in Hermiston. Father Charles Nnabuife will become pastor in Milton-Freewater; he will be succeeded in The Dalles by Father Joseph Levine. Father Juan Carlos Chiarinoti will come to Bend as

parochial vicar. These assignments will take effect August 17th. (Father Condon's replacement is yet to be determined.)

Far, far south of our border the Archbishop of Guayaquil, Ecuador, has named Father Cornelius (Con) Kiely a Monsignor in honor of his 40 years of service to the poor there with the St. James the Apostle Society. Monsignor Kiely was ordained a priest of Baker in 1967 and served here until he took up his mission to Ecuador in 1971. We can be both proud and humbled that this fine priest has gone forth from our midst to do so much good so far away for so long.

Great good is being done here at home this summer at the Powell Butte Retreat Center. When I arrived in May, people told me about the diocesan summer youth camps. I was eager to see for myself what they were so enthusiastic about. Now I have seen. I've celebrated Mass in the beautiful chapel for the campers and have joined my fellow priests in hearing their confessions. These confessions give me great hope, as the confessions of young people usually do. Their world is much more complex than was mine at their age, and in confession they come to grips with all that roils around them and in them much more searchingly and honestly than I ever did. I am grateful that our priests near and far have been so generous with their time in providing this vital sacramental ministry. It nicely complements the careful planning, hard work, and long hours of the retreat center staff and volunteers. They have put together a program we all can be proud of. May more and more young people take advantage of it in summers to come.