

Fresh Start

All are to be welcomed as Christ

Welcoming strangers into our communities has been an important part of our faith and is reflected in the law of Moses and in many stories in both the Old and New Testaments. Our baptismal covenant also emphasizes the importance of welcoming newcomers into our congregations.

Newcomers bring new gifts, new challenges, new perspectives and new opportunities. But welcoming new people into a congregation isn't always easy - we don't know them and they almost always bring changes with them.

Welcoming a new priest is just as important as welcoming anyone else into our church community - and all the more challenging as they bring their new gifts and opportunities to a leadership position.

Transitions in leadership raise many important issues in the life of a community: Everyone wants the relationship to get off to a good start and they want to express their hopes for new ministries.

The early years in a new relationship are critical, formational opportunities. The more intentional you and your new priest are in strengthening this new relationship the more effectively the congregation can focus on its common mission.

The bishop is offering FRESH START because it has proven to be a highly effective way to help both clergy and congregations adjust to each other and deepen their relationship as they move forward into a new ministry together.

We encourage you to lead others in the congregation into making the most of this transition by making it a FRESH START.