



Dear Friends:

This past Wednesday, I began my term as your new Pastor. I am delighted to be assigned to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. And I ask for your prayers and support as I begin my ministry here.

Let me begin by giving you a little background about me and my priesthood. My ordination took place on January 31, 1981. I was assigned for the first five years of my priesthood to St. Boniface in Elmont. In 1985, Bishop John McGann invited me to begin work in the diocesan Office of Family Ministry. I served there as Director of Family Life and Coordinator of our diocesan Pro-Life Ministry for eleven years. For three of the years that I worked in Family Ministry, I resided at Maria Regina Church in Seaford. That gave me an introduction into the Seaford, Massapequa and Massapequa Park areas. In 1996, I was asked by the Bishop to become Pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in West Hempstead. That assignment was a particular joy for me in that West Hempstead is the community I grew up in. And St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is where I received my Sacraments and celebrated my first Mass after ordination. Having served two terms as Pastor of St. Thomas, the Bishop has now invited me to become Pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes. I welcome this new opportunity. And look forward to building on the thirty-one year legacy of your retiring Pastor, Father Robert Mason. Father Mason will continue to reside in the Parish, and while continuing some pastoral ministry, will now enjoy the status of spiritual elder statesman. A role he has so richly earned through his half century of priestly service.

In addition to my years in diocesan special ministry and parish ministry, I've also been working extensively in the Catholic and secular media. I'm presently a contributor on the Fox News Channel on matters concerning religion and ethics. I've served as Director of The Christophers in New York City and have hosted television and radio programs for the United States Catholic Conference. I'll continue to do that.

It's been my privilege to address conferences around the country on family life, the Right to Life, and to offer Clergy Conferences to priests throughout America. I've written four books, and hope to finish a new book by January of 2009.

On the personal side of things, let me tell you something of my family. I'm one of three children. My parents, Cecelia and Nicholas Lisante, were married for fifty-seven years before my Dad entered into eternal life in January of 2005. They had been residing at our family home in West Hempstead until then. Now my Mom lives with my sister Patricia in Massapequa. So coming to this wonderful area also gives me a chance to be more present to my much loved Mom. My sisters, Patti and Joan, have made me an uncle five times, and I have a warm and close relationship with my nephews and nieces.

I hope this gives you a little sense of my background and history. I hope, over the next few years, we can come to know and appreciate each other much more deeply.

Again, I ask you to keep me in your prayers as I begin my service at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. Know that I'll be keeping you and your family in my daily prayers as well.

In His love, I am,  
Sincerely,

Monsignor Jim Lisante  
Pastor