



AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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American National Catholic Church Welcomes New Priest

The Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM, Presiding Bishop of the American National Catholic Church, joyfully welcomes Fr. James Lehman, FCM, as the newest clergy to join the ANCC.

A priest for nearly two decades, Fr. Jim currently pastors Holy Family Independent Catholic Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, which he founded in 1995 after leaving his position as deacon administrator of Immaculate Heart of Mary Cathedral. Holy Family, a vibrant parish of some 60 families served by several clergy, is likewise discerning a call to the ANCC.

Fr. Jim decided to leave the Roman Catholic Church in the mid-1990s because he felt "that the Church should be a place open to all." After serving in two independent Catholic jurisdictions since then, he believes he's found a home in the ANCC. "What I found in the ANCC," he says, "are the familiar Roman rituals and tradition along with a new vitality coming from the ANCC's focus on the wealth and treasures of Vatican II. The ANCC is a Vatican II Church where I can work with others to build a church where all are welcome."

For his part, Bishop Lucey is delighted that Fr. Jim has joined the ANCC. "Like many of us in the ANCC," the bishop notes, "Fr. Jim's journey started in the Roman Catholic Church. His decision to request incardination has been a prayerful and deliberate process, and I am grateful that he has decided to bring his many gifts and talents to the American National Catholic Church."

In addition to his pastoral duties at Holy Family Parish, Fr. Jim, who holds MSW and PsyD degrees, maintains a private counseling practice, has taught in the Graduate School of Social Work at New Mexico State University, and serves as chaplain at a local psychiatric hospital.

The American National Catholic Church is an inclusive Catholic community independent of the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to making the world a more caring place. Guided by a presiding bishop, the ANCC celebrates the same sacraments as the Roman Church and follows the spirit of reform initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Although sharing core theological and liturgical practices with Roman Catholicism, the ANCC differs on several major points, such as married clergy, female priests, divorce and re-marriage, same-sex marriage, and lay leadership. The Church has parishes across the U.S. and a host of ministries to the alienated, under-served, and forgotten. For more information, visit www.theANCC.org.

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