

Rev. Jerry Boland, of Glenview's thriving Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish, set to retire



Right, Rev. Jeremiah "Jerry" Boland, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church (OLPH) in Glenview, is in the church's vestibule and about to participate in the procession of 9 a.m. Easter mass on April 5, 2026. On left, in gold, is Cardinal Blase Cupich, archbishop of Chicago. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

By **JENNIFER JOHNSON** | For the Pioneer Press

He still has a few weeks to go before retirement, but the Rev. Jeremiah "Jerry" Boland of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic parish in Glenview has received his share of early celebratory send-offs.

There was the congratulatory letter from the Chicago-based consul general of Ireland, crediting him for “embody[ing] the very best of the Irish diaspora;” the OLPH St. Patrick’s Day Party, nicknamed “Boland’s Last Call,” on March 7; and a special Easter Sunday visit from Cardinal Blase Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, who presided over one of the day’s masses.

Cupich told the congregation that he asked to celebrate Easter mass there as a way of thanking Boland for his years of service.

“I just wish we had more like him,” Cupich said, jokingly adding: “In fact, it almost moves me to want to tell the Holy Father to change the church teaching on cloning.”

Cupich’s offer to lead the Mass on Easter was a welcome surprise, Boland said.

“He said, “I know this is your last Easter as pastor;” Boland recalled. “To have the archbishop come on Easter Sunday morning to say thank you was very meaningful to me, and certainly to the parishioners.”

Boland, who was ordained a Catholic priest in 1981 and joined OLPH in 2014, will retire June 30. The Rev. John Trout, currently pastor of St. Anne in Barrington, will become OLPH’s new pastor on July 1.

A final, parish-wide retirement celebration for Boland is scheduled for Saturday, June 6 after 5:00 p.m. Mass.

Boland humbly credits his parishioners for OLPH’s “tremendous vitality” and for the large and active parish it is today. Every year, he says, “remarkable people come forward.”

“It’s a great parish and historically it’s always been a highly regarded parish,” he said. “It’s a forward-thinking parish in terms of its social mission and its role in the life of the community. It was a great parish to be appointed to as pastor because the people are very committed to it.”



Left, Cardinal Blase Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, jokingly thanks, on right, Rev. Jeremiah "Jerry" Boland, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Glenview, for allowing him to preside at 9 a.m. Easter mass on April 5, 2026. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

While many schools within the Chicago Archdiocese have closed due to funding challenges and falling enrollments, OLPH School, under Boland's leadership, holds the title as the largest Catholic elementary school in the archdiocese with an annual enrollment of roughly 820 students, according to the school. The parish's religious education program enrolls another 500 children each year, Boland said.

The pastor credits the parish community, too, for this.

"People will say, what's it like to be the pastor of such a large parish? Sometimes it's just staying out of the way, going with the flow and trusting," he said.

"If it's meant to be, it will happen I've found that the more you encourage people to go where they feel God is leading, in the end this produces so many wonderful things."

Boland said he is also pleased with the community's support of financially struggling parishes and communities on Chicago's South and West Sides and for establishing relationships with them.

"This is an example of a parish not just focused on itself, but helping other parishes get what they need," he said.

According to the Archdiocese of Chicago, Boland has been widely recognized for his leadership and dedication to the archdiocese.

He has served in various parishes, including St. James in Arlington Heights, Mary, Seat of Wisdom in Park Ridge and Holy Cross in Deerfield.

He also held administrative roles for the archdiocese, including delegate for international priests, overseeing the assignments of priests from around the world, and interim vicar for Vicariate I, overseeing the day-to-day administration of a geographic area within the archdiocese.



From left, during the special mass processional are Bishop Jeffrey Grob of Elmwood Park, Rev. Jeremiah Boland, OLPH pastor, and Rev. Larry Basbas, OLPH associate pastor, at the dedication and blessing of the church bells and clock tower on Aug. 11, 2024 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Glenview. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

When Pope Leo XIV was selected to lead the Roman Catholic Church, Boland was interviewed by local television news media, as he had met the former Rev. Robert Prevost years earlier through his diocesan work.

"I was wondering what they were going to ask me and what they would be wondering about," Boland said. "The big question was: 'Is he a Cubs fan or a Sox fan?'"

"So much for his theology of the church!" he added with a laugh.

Growing up in a large Catholic family with a brother and cousins who joined the religious life, Boland was studying psychology and political science in college when the priesthood became a path he decided to follow.

"I'd thought about going into psychology or law, but then I saw the priesthood as being able to do both of those things on a number of levels," he said.

And though retirement approaches, Boland notes that a priest "always stays a priest," retiring only from the day-to-day administrative duties of overseeing a parish. He will assist in the new pastor's transition over a period of about six months before determining his next chapter, he said.

He does hope to travel, focus on photography and spend more time with family and friends, he said.

"I'm a better priest in 2026 than I was in 2014 when I came to OLPH," Boland acknowledged. "I've learned so much about how important community is, how important faith is, and the spiritual hunger of people. Many want to write an obituary on the role of religion in our society, but I want to tell those people, 'Spend a weekend at OLPH. You will see the world through a different lens.'"