



### *Father James Tighe—25th Anniversary*

If you should encounter Father Tighe near the Church, you may notice a hammer sticking out of his back pocket—that's a sure sign he is on his way to perform a repair job at one of the parish buildings. Besides Father's involvement with the altar servers, Lectors (young and old) and other priestly duties, Father Tighe can be called the handyman of our Lady of Grace. This can be witnessed when you enter the Perpetual Adoration Chapel and see his handiwork.

**Besides his carpentry** and mechanical skills, Father's other passion is handball. From his youth he loved to participate in all sports, but it was the handball bug that bit him. He participated in handball competition in high school and college, and was player-captain of the Cathedral Prep High School team that won City Wide Championships in 1961 and 1962. Father still plays today, and said "you can tell by my limp when I played the day before."

Father James Tighe, the son of James Tighe and Virginia Burkhard, was born on October 1, 1944, at the Fifth Avenue Hospital in Manhattan. The great influences on his life were his grandparents, and father, who died in 1969 (just before his ordination). His mother is an active parishioner of Our Lady of the Snows in North Floral Park, Queens. He has a sister, Mrs. Loretta Tipton and three nephews, James, 24 years, Brian, 21 years, and Eric, 19 years.

Father started school at Our Lady of Victory in Floral Park, NY, which he attended from 1950-58. From 1958-1962 he attended Cathedral Prep High School in Brooklyn and Cathedral College from 1962 to 1966. He then studied for the priesthood at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Huntington, NY (earning a BA, ST. B and M. DIV Degrees.)

**Father was ordained** on May 30, 1970, and was assigned to St. Pancras Parish, Glendale, Queens. Its Pastor, Father Charles Bermel, influenced him greatly. "He taught me what being a priest was all about—he still remains a close friend."

In 1973 Father was asked by Father Ed Troike, a teacher at Cathedral Prep, to help teach some of his religious classes. Father had been his altar boy and always admired him; he was dying of cancer and needed help—Father could not refuse—so on his days off from St. Pancras Parish he became a part-time teacher.

In 1976 while still at St. Pancras parish, Father John Savage, Athletic Director of Christ the King H.S., an old classmate asked if he would coach handball at the school, which he did on his free time.

In September, 1980, Father became a full-time teacher at Cathedral Prep, Brooklyn. For the next ten years he taught physics, algebra, math and science courses. He had to resign as handball coach of Christ the King H. S. since Cathedral Prep had a handball team and was in need of a coach.

During his ten-year tenure as coach his teams were in the playoffs every year, and in 1988 and 1990 they won the City Championship. For a school of no more than 150 students, this was a great accomplishment. As Chairman of the CHSAA he is still involved in high school handball.

**In September 1990** Father was assigned to Our Lady of Grace parish, and for five years that he has been here he has been a great asset to the people. He said "the priesthood of Jesus Christ exists to point and direct people toward Jesus—it involves guiding people in such a way that after all is said and done they can say—we did this ourselves."