

Case study – Fr Jack

Fr Jack has just celebrated his silver Jubilee of priesthood. He tells everyone how much he loves being a priest. Whenever you see him he is always smiling, he always has time for you and he is involved in every aspect of the parish.

And what a parish. Apart from a wide choice of Masses and other liturgical celebrations, there is a group for everything from SVP to justice and peace, youth groups, music groups, RCIA and Alpha, as well as a thriving parish hall and social club.

Jack loves his pastoral ministry especially in the two local schools and in the hospital and he visits the housebound in his parish regularly. He has an open house approach to the presbytery and to his time. He will drop everything to help and when he arranges a pastoral visit he always allows others to set the time and place.

He rarely takes a regular day off to himself and when he does plan a day out this is always after he has said Mass for the parish and if something comes up, such as an additional funeral, he will abandon his plans rather than rearranging them.

Lately, some of the parishioners have noticed how short tempered Jack has become and they are worried that he seems extremely tired.

Questions;

Can you identify with Jack?

What advice would you give Jack?

Can you identify where you might suggest setting some boundaries?

What would stop you creating and maintaining these boundaries for yourself?