

***“Instead of being just a church that welcomes and receives by keeping the doors open, let us try also to be a church that finds new roads, that is able to step outside itself and go to those who do not attend Mass, to those who have quit or are indifferent.” — Pope Francis***

My Dear and Precious Friends,

After so many months of meetings and planning for our future together as a new parish family, this weekend we see the first fruits of our labor as we celebrate our Unity Mass. I cannot even begin to tell you how very much I have been looking forward to this day, and how very much I thank you all for working so hard together to make this new day in the life of our new parish possible! However, this special celebration is only a milestone on our journey together. As our Holy Father Pope Francis teaches us, opening wide the doors of our new parish is not enough. As we celebrate this special moment together, we must redouble our efforts to find new roads, to step outside of our church and reach out to our brothers and sisters who no longer attend Mass, to those who have decided to quit or who have become indifferent. Indeed, our work has just begun, and our efforts to bring the Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ must start with the members of our new parish family. As of this writing, we still do not know the name of the saint under whose patronage our parish will continue its journey into the future. There is, however, a well founded hope that we will be able to announce the Cardinal’s decision at our Unity Mass. This will be yet another important step in solidifying our identity as a new creation, a new parish with a new beginning. The work of our Unification Team has just begun. I pray that we will all be patient as we begin the next phase of our journey together, and that we will keep our arms around each other as we sing God’s praise and dance our way into the future!



Change is never easy, and even with our best efforts some of our dearest and most precious brothers and sisters will decide to follow a different path into the future. And so it is with great sadness that, after 18 years of service to our parish family, John Ligda has made the decision to move on to a new future. John had become much more than our director of sacred music. He worked tirelessly behind the scenes in every aspect of our liturgical life, becoming a source of unity and inspiration for our many parish ministries. I first met John when he was in grade school. He attended Quigley Seminary’s Summer Program, which I had the privilege of directing, to explore the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood. While he decided not to enter the seminary, he went on to Brother Rice High School, and then in 2004 earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Saint Joseph College. He came to our parish and became our music director fresh from college. He continued his study of music at Saint Joseph College, earning his Master of Arts degree in 2006. He expanded his horizons, going on to study Mortuary Science, and in 2010 graduated with an Associate Degree in Applied Science from Worsham College. In addition to his many years of service here with us, he has become the director of his own funeral service, serves as the president of Trade Service Professionals, and is also a consultant and innovator at Frigid Fluid Company. As a fellow musician, I would like to add that John is one of the most gifted organists it has ever been my pleasure to know. We will miss John and the many gifts that he has brought to our parish family over the years. We wish him well as he continues his work as a liturgist and musician, and as he continues to touch so many families in grief in his work as a funeral director. May God bless him with much happiness and success!

In Awe and Wonder of the Power of God’s Love and His Divine Mercy,  
your friend and brother always,

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*Father Ralph*