



MARY, QUEEN OF SAINTS

P A R I S H

Dear Parish Family,

June 19, 2025

Since the announcement of my recall to the Archabbey, I have been deeply moved by your overwhelming love and affection. I am truly grateful for each of you and love you all dearly. The five years I have spent with you in this parish have been the greatest joy of my priesthood. Your faith, support and friendship have been a profound blessing to me.

Like many of you, I have also experienced much grief with this news. It saddens me deeply. In the midst of my sorrow, I have had to remind myself of a very important truth: Grief is a good thing. It is good because it is a sign that we had something good in our life that we will no longer have in the same way. My grief is a sign that you have impacted me in a remarkable way.

Although I am tempted to feel anger arising from my grief, I am confident that anger is not the solution. Rather than choosing to react in anger, I am choosing to feel the ache of love instead when I think of you. At this time, I will encourage you to do the same. If you are experiencing any anger toward the diocese, the parish or even to me, please surrender your hurt and grief to our Lord as a sacrifice of Love. The Catechism tells us that "it is not in our power not to feel or to forget an offense; but the heart that offers itself to the Holy Spirit turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming the hurt into intercession" (CCC 2843). This is what I want for me and for you! Please surrender any hurt or angry feelings to the Holy Spirit so that you can be free from slavery to anger, and free to prayerfully support the diocese, the parish and me, with your compassion and intercession. For that, I will be eternally grateful. In the end, I beg you to please cease protests. We all need to move on to what it means to be hope-filled disciples of Christ.

In light of the announcement, I understand that many of you have questions and concerns, and I would like to address your desire for clarity.

First and foremost, please know that my recall to the Archabbey is NOT the result of any administrative, financial or moral issue. Rather, it stems from differences in pastoral preferences between myself, the Bishop, and the Archabbot and several other personal personnel issues. While we may not always see things the same way, I hold both the Bishop and the Archabbot in high regard and have always felt their respect in return.

The decision for me to return to the monastery was not mine personally, but I do not see it as an injustice. It is really a matter of my obedience which I professed at ordination. I trust that both the Bishop and Archabbot, as men of prayer, have sincerely discerned what they believe is best for the parish and the diocese. I humbly submit to their judgment and to God's will in this. I also ask you to warmly welcome your new pastor, Fr. John Gizler, III. I have had the pleasure of knowing him for a number of years. He is a good man and a prayerful priest. He will certainly be a good shepherd for you. I am confident of this!

Please know that I carry each of you in my heart. I will miss you deeply and will continue to keep you in my prayers.

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Saints,

Father Canice McMullen