



June 2025

Dear Friends,

As we approach the sixth anniversary of our linkage and I celebrate ten years of priestly service to the Diocese of Syracuse, I write with great joy and gratitude. Six years ago, on the Feast of Pentecost, we entrusted our communities to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Now, reflecting on this journey, we give thanks for how the Spirit has drawn us closer in faith, expanding our roots beyond parish boundaries to positively impact our greater community, both physically and spiritually.

In his first homily, Pope Leo XIV emphasized the importance of recognizing the marvels the Lord has done. He highlighted the need for the Church to serve as a beacon of hope in a world increasingly dismissive of religion, urging believers to witness the Gospel through holiness rather than grandeur. Echoing this call, we rejoice in the transformations within our communities: a unified Mass schedule, a single Faith Formation program, a cohesive staff, collaborative ministries, a unified Pastoral Council, and the laity embracing the responsibilities of parish life. These developments reflect a deeper understanding of our calling as missionary disciples to live out our baptismal promises.

Our linkage has taught us the necessity of embracing change to foster a vibrant relationship with Jesus. We face challenges, including a declining number of priests: currently the diocese of Syracuse has 60 priests serving in 7 counties. Compare that to 126 priests in 2015 and 196 priests in 2005. Despite the physical and financial hardships faced by many parishes, we remain committed to spiritual growth. This commitment begins with dialogue through the Holy Spirit, building a foundation of trust in God and communicating that trust to all who seek Jesus. In doing so, we form hearts that trust the Holy Spirit, understanding that our roots are in Jesus.

As I celebrate ten years of ministerial service to the Diocese of Syracuse, Christ the King, Pope John XXIII, Immaculate Conception, and the Liverpool Catholic Community, I am profoundly grateful for our shared journey. This experience has deepened my understanding of pastoral care and reliance on the graces of the Holy Spirit.

In the coming days, I invite everyone to join me in celebrating God's call to the priesthood on June 6, 2025, at 8:30 AM at Christ the King. We will begin with Mass, followed by Adoration from 9:00 to 9:30 AM, giving thanks for ten years of service. Additionally, I encourage all to wear red at our Masses during Pentecost weekend, June 7 & 8, honoring the gifts of the Holy Spirit and our continued trust in the years ahead.

God Bless,
Fr. Zach