



IMMACULATE HEART^{OF}MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR MAY 21, 2023

Dear friends in the risen Lord,

As you will soon read in *The Georgia Bulletin*, the Archbishop has accepted my request to retire for health reasons on June 30. I have a progressive illness that has begun to affect my ability to give the parish the leadership it needs and deserves. Stress accelerates the progress of the condition; and although it is a sublime joy to pastor IHM, the job is not without its share of stress.

I've known that this day would come for some time, but I promised Archbishop Hartmayer that I would do my best to see IHM through the pandemic. I was gratified to see the crowds at Easter masses this year; they give me hope that we have, indeed, reached a good place in our recovery.

The Archbishop also asked me, before I retire, to raise the money for the long-postponed renovation of the historic church, since a new pastor would need to wait several years before conducting a capital campaign. We launched the *Fulfilling the Promise* campaign in recent weeks, and again, I am grateful that the response has been so strong. (If you have not yet made your pledge, please do so. I made my own pledge on the first day of the campaign, and I'll continue fulfilling it for the next three years, wherever I am.)

It has been an honor to pastor this wonderful, gifted and diverse community. I've made a lifetime of friends in just a little over eight years. You will be relieved to know that Father Robbie will remain here with you. (Securing his appointment to IHM two years ago was one of my prouder accomplishments!) Your new pastor will be announced in *The Georgia Bulletin* soon.

I would like to bid IHM farewell with an ice cream social on Sunday, June 25, 2:30-4:30 p.m. in the historic church. Please put that date on your calendar. I look forward to that opportunity to say goodbye and thank you in person.

Your brother in Christ's word and work,