



+ November 21, 2020

To my Brothers and Sisters from Holy Rosary, St. Ann, Visitation, St. Rita of Cascia and St. John of the Woods,

Peace of Christ be with each of you.

The great commission Jesus gave the apostles after his resurrection is still the mission of the Church today: "Go into the world and preach the Good News!" As Church, we need to be bold and creative in re-imagining our present structures so that we are better equipped to carry out this mission of Jesus, which is why I am writing to you today.

With the recent assessment that Holy Rosary Parish is no longer viable, I am asking parishes in the Pierce Deanery to work together to achieve the mission of proclaiming Christ and helping people grow closer to him.

Your pastors have been part of ongoing strategic planning efforts for some time. I am so grateful for the good-faith efforts of your pastors and parish leaders to develop an understanding of the vitality and strengths of each parish in the deanery.

Based on the work led by the pastors in your deanery, your parish has been selected to participate in this urgent planning process. Over the next few months, your pastor, along with support from Bishop Mueggenborg and Leigh Stringfellow who lead our strategic planning efforts, will guide you through a process to develop a new, vibrant, mission-focused Catholic community. We are eager to help you build one vibrant community that authentically proclaims the word, celebrates the sacraments and generously serves Christ in others through charitable works.

In the next few weeks, your parish will host an educational meeting to discuss the pastoral and strategic planning efforts and your role in the process. As we all know, the current status quo is not an option. We must better understand the challenges of our present reality, and respond with the faith and hope that is ours in Jesus Christ. We have many fragile parishes that are not able to fully achieve Christ's mission. If we ignore these realities and the changes we must make, we will not be serving you, the faithful, nor will we be achieving the mission of the Church.

There are tough decisions ahead, many of which will be painful since our faith is central to who we are. Parishes are the heart of many communities and have strong personal ties for

generations of faithful parishioners. At the same time, we recognize that change will help us grow stronger and breathe new life into our Catholic community. Our faith compels us to provide your community with strong ministries, Catholic education and Catholic disciples who are following and leading others to Jesus every day. We have an opportunity ahead to create something new that will help people encounter Christ. How can we do things differently to create personal relationships with Christ? How can we provide people with more opportunities to put their faith into action? How can we inspire people to live as Christ every day? How can we ensure a strong faith community for generations to come?

Each parishioner is invited to participate in this process. It is very important that your voice is part of this process. Some of you will be asked to serve on a new taskforce dedicated to this important work. I encourage each of you to fully participate.

It brings me great joy to think about a new vibrant Catholic community of faith in Tacoma that will celebrate together, live out the Gospel, serve the poor and help people encounter Christ. As we enter into this new phase for the Pierce Deanery, I ask that you pray for everyone involved – especially your leaders and fellow parishioners who will journey with you. Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide us and give us the grace to work together building a stronger Catholic community grounded in the mission of the Church. As always, I remain,

In the Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul D. Etienne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "E".

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle