

March 25, 2022

Dear Parishioners:

Nearly two years have passed since I began my assignment here at St. Gertrude. I arrived at a time of crisis in the parish and during the tumultuous time of the pandemic. The parish has experienced a lot of change on the staff during my tenure; and there has been a lot of stress as we managed the protocols of the pandemic and its impact on parish life. As we continue to rebuild and revitalize the life of the parish, the leadership that is needed is a high priority.

For the past number of months, the demands of duties and responsibilities as pastor have been affecting my health. These health issues are having a negative impact on the effectiveness of my leadership role as pastor.

With the support of the provincial and my local superior, to whom I have an obligation to be obedient, I am resigning as pastor of St. Gertrude effective May 1, 2022. I know this comes as a shock and disappointment to many. This is not an easy decision, and I am saddened that it must be made, but the life, renewal, and administration of the parish should not be hindered by my current health concerns.

I want to make it clear that my resignation as pastor is not an indication of vocation questions or some impropriety. There is no one to blame. The decision to resign is freely mine made in consultation with the provincial, my local superior, a spiritual director, and a counselor. Each has supported me in prayer, listening, and the recommendation that I need to attend to my personal health.

A new pastor has been named by the provincial and appointed by the archbishop. He is Father John Paul Walker, O.P. He is 51 years old and 20 years a priest. He has previous experience as a pastor at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, CT, and campus ministry at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. Father will arrive the first week of May and preach at all the weekend Masses of May 7-8.

With Father John Paul's approval, I will remain at St. Gertrude through June to support the transition of leadership and to assist in the parish as needed. My love for the parish has not waned and I am grateful that I can remain with you for the near future. Please pray for me.

I ask you please to pray also for Father John Paul and for the parish. We all know that change and transition are never easy. With God's grace, the parish will have all the help it needs to persevere into a future that belongs to Christ.

Let us love one another and pray for each other,

Father George P. Schommer, O.P.

