



Diocese of Pittsburgh  
2900 Noblestown Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15205-4227  
Phone: 412-456-3010 • Fax: 412-456-3185  
E-mail: dzubik@diopitt.org • Website: www.diopitt.org

Office of the Bishop

May 22, 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Our Lady of the Angels and Saint Maria Goretti Parishes:

It is my prayer that the promise of Easter, realized in our Lord's Resurrection, has filled your hearts and homes with much joy. As we look to Pentecost, may your faith continue to grow and be strengthened by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

As you may recall, on April 12, 2015, I called all the faithful of the Church of Pittsburgh to journey with me in the *On Mission for The Church Alive!* initiative so that we could focus the resources of our parishes on mission and ministry. Since that time, the faithful of our diocese have prayed and planned about how best to serve God and his people through vibrant parishes and effective ministries, hoping that all people might come to learn, love and live Jesus more.

In October 2018, as part of the *On Mission for The Church Alive!* planning process, the parishes of Our Lady of the Angels and Saint Maria Goretti became part of a Parish Grouping. Brother (Father) John Harvey, OFM Cap., was appointed as pastor/administrator of this new Grouping 113 that would eventually be merged into a new parish. After a period of discernment, and my recent decision regarding the use of church buildings at Saint Maria Goretti Parish, Grouping 113 is now ready to embark on the final stage of the merger process.

In December 2021, when Father John Harvey turned 75, he submitted a letter of resignation to me, as required by Canon Law. At that time, I asked Father John to remain as pastor/administrator so as to help complete the relegation of a church building in Bloomfield. He willingly accepted my request to finish the relegation process, while steadfastly continuing to provide ministry and care to the faithful of Bloomfield, Garfield and Lawrenceville. I have the greatest respect and gratitude for Father John Harvey who has faithfully and diligently served you in the midst of many pastoral challenges.

Today, I must share with you that we are now at a crossroads regarding the future of Grouping 113. After much consideration, prayer and discernment, in the best interest of the entire Grouping 113, I will appoint a diocesan priest as administrator of both Our Lady of the Angels and Saint Maria Goretti Parishes. He will be responsible for completing the merger process and bringing together your two parishes. At the same time, I have asked the Capuchin Provincial to recommend a Capuchin parochial vicar to work side by side with the new administrator. It is my intention to announce both appointments at the same time. I believe these assignments will create a unique opportunity and partnership by which to provide robust and flourishing pastoral care to you and the local communities in which your parishes reside. I can assure you that the new administrator will embrace the notable past and the ongoing presence of the Capuchin Community in Lawrenceville.

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In addition, I do wish to note that historically Saint Augustine Church is the place for major Capuchin celebrations, professions, ordinations, funerals and more. I assure you that none of that history will change. The new administrator understands the unique and longtime relationship of the Capuchins to Saint Augustine Church and the people of Lawrenceville. He will honor that long tradition.

Allow me to assure you that even with the change of a pastoral assignment to Saint Maria Goretti Parish and, in particular, Our Lady of the Angels Parish, a parish which has long been served by the Capuchin Community, I remain committed to strengthening the deep bond that exists between the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Capuchin Community. I am inspired by the evangelization efforts of Capuchins everywhere but especially by the ministry in Lawrenceville and other parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. I have no other desire than to see their work continue to grow and thrive.

Over the coming days and week(s), I will complete all the necessary details required of me in announcing new assignments. Your parishes will soon receive another letter in which the names of the priests serving your parishes will be announced. Also, I am pleased to inform you that I have asked the Capuchin Provincial that Father John Harvey continue his priestly ministry as a retired priest in another parish of the diocese so that other faithful parishioners can benefit from the gifts and talents which Father John so graciously shares.

With your faith in Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit, I invite you to warmly embrace this new pastoral partnership, and even more importantly, to welcome and serve each other as you complete the merger process.

Grateful for our continued efforts together in being *On Mission for The Church Alive!*, and for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Zubik". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend David A. Zubik  
Bishop of Pittsburgh

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