



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP • Diocese of Duluth

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May 19, 2018

Dear Parishioners of Holy Family/McGregor and Our Lady of Fatima/McGrath,

As many of you are aware, over the past six years, we have been implementing a Diocesan Strategic Plan which was the result of consultation with lay representatives and pastors of every parish in the Diocese. The plan takes into consideration four important challenges: the availability of priests and deacons, changing demographic trends, infrastructure and the health of parishes and clergy. The plan has allowed us to continue to work in the Lord's vineyard and good fruits are being seen around our diocese.

For McGregor, McGrath and Aitkin:

With a desire to implement the remaining parts of the plan, the time has come for Our Lady of Fatima/McGrath to merge into Holy Family/McGregor and Our Lady of Fatima to close. St. James/Aitkin will then cluster with Holy Family/McGregor. I thank Fr. Nediakala for his work with the parishes at Holy Family/McGregor and Our Lady of Fatima/McGrath. I also thank Fr. Forsman for his work with St. James/Aitkin as well as undertaking the process to complete the plan for these parishes.

In consultation with your pastor, these changes are being announced this weekend, May 19-20, 2018, the Feast of Pentecost. I ask your support for your pastor and your transition teams, that with the help of the Implementation Handbook, a smooth and faith-filled transition may take place for the benefit of all.

As our Diocese moves toward completion of the implementation of our Diocesan Strategic Plan, I am grateful for your prayers, understanding and assistance. As the Lord said to his first disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches...if you remain in me you will bear much fruit" (John 15:5). In company with the Lord, I am confident that the fruit of your work will be abundant and lasting for your parish and for our Diocese.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Paul D. Sirba  
Bishop of Duluth