

August 18, 2011

Dear St. Bernard's Parishioners,

I know the past several weeks have been difficult for us all. During this time, I have heard from so many of you. Your perspectives and faith have helped and inspired me.

It seems just yesterday that we had welcomed Father Ed into our parish family. At that time, we were feeling sorrow for the loss of Father Flower. Many were deeply saddened by his passing and we were faced with asking ourselves many questions about what would come next. We emerged from our sadness and began to move forward. The parish accomplished many great things by coming together. That is what we must do again.

I know we are all feeling a wide range of emotions with the accusations, arrest and legal proceedings over the past several weeks. These are the times that test our faith and our resolve.

Many have expressed concern for Father Ed, the young man making the allegation and for our Archdiocese as they manage through the process. We have no idea of the outcome or when the situation will be resolved. For us, there is little to do but pray for the best outcome for all. It is my hope that regardless of outcome, that healing and forgiveness may follow in time.

It is at this time that I ask for your support for the parish to stay strong and vibrant. We all have a tremendous amount of love, care and respect for our parish family and we need to support each other and our new Temporary Administrator Father Donahue and Parochial Vicar Father Cretella.

I know that we will all move forward and that we will continue to grow together as a parish family and that our faith will endure.

Moving forward, the parish council, ministries and committees and parish as a whole will heal, will continue to plan their activities and we will continue our parish life. We welcome Father Donahue and Father Cretella and we look forward to your spiritual support and prayer with us.

I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to Archbishop Mansell and Monsignor Schmitz for their leadership, response to this situation and to our needs.

God Bless,

John Paddock

Parish Council President