July 7, 2021

To the Parishioners of Saints Joachim and Anne,

I hope you are all enjoying this summer season as we return to the activities that were taken for granted before the Pandemic. Now that the mandated restrictions that began in March of 2020 have been lifted, we have been able to reopen our three churches. It has been especially gratifying to see so many of you returning to our liturgies.

As you know, our obligation as Catholics to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days has been reinstated. As before the pandemic, this obligation is waived for those experiencing reasonable circumstances that restrict their ability to attend, as well as for those who are ill or in danger of becoming ill. For more information, the statement from the Bishops of Minnesota provides authoritative clarity about this obligation.

I also wanted to let you know that Archbishop Hebda has advised me that there is still no date set for the conclusion of your pastor's leave of absence. Considering this uncertainty, and after discussions with the Archbishop, I have determined that this is an opportune time for me to step down. It has been a privilege to serve you and I look forward to continuing to celebrate liturgies here on occasion.

In my place, Archbishop Hebda has appointed Fr. Al Backmann as your new temporary administrator. Some of you may remember Fr. Backmann: he provided some assistance to Fr. Lundgren before he was named pastor here. I am confident that you will be in good hands as Fr. Backmann and Fr. Quail shepherd the Parish of Saints Joachim & Anne during the remainder of Fr. Lundgren's leave of absence.

Please pray for all our priests as we pray for all of you. May God bless you on our shared faith-journey to our Father's Kingdom!

Christ's Peace,

Fr. Douglas Ebert