

“Of this and that”

For priests and pastoral administrators

From Bishop Hurley

I continue to be grateful for the warm welcome and personal support in the time that I have been here serving the diocese as Apostolic Administrator. I have participated in many meetings and events and hope I have in some way made positive contributions to the life of the diocese. I have visited about twelve parishes for Mass on the weekend followed by a meal with the pastor or pastoral administrator. It has been a great opportunity to visit with people and pray with them. I have had about thirty of the priests to the house for dinner and informal conversation. These evenings have been most enjoyable and will continue as will the parish visits. Thank you to all.

I thought it might be useful to update you on a couple of items that may be of interest to you.

Welcome Scholarships

Today I am announcing Welcome Scholarships that will be available to any family (Catholic or non-Catholic) currently not registered in a Catholic School. The scholarships are available to families who enroll in any one of our Catholic schools that have a tuition charge. It is intended as a one-year grant. It is not based on need but is intended as a way to promote our schools and encourage increased enrollment. “Come and see!”

The grant will be \$1,000.00 for a high school student Grades 9-11; \$750.00 for Grades 1-8; and \$500.00 for Kindergarten. The forms to apply for these grants will be available on our website and grants will be made by the Diocese of Saginaw Office of Catholic Schools.

The Scholarships will be funded by a grant of \$100,000 from the Wolohan Family Foundation and matching funds from the Diocese. I am most grateful to the Wolohan Family Foundation for this gift to support our schools and help increase school enrollment.

It is my hope that these Welcome Scholarships will promote our schools and increase enrollment.



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Grants to Agencies

These bitterly cold days have made us much more mindful of the needs of many of the agencies in the diocese that provide food, shelter, help with heating costs, and refuge from the cold. These days have made us more conscious of our responsibility as a church to respond to the needs of the poor. With this in mind the Diocese of Saginaw, in the name of all, is making a series of grants to support the needs of the homeless and the marginalized. The agencies that will receive grants are:

City Rescue Mission (Saginaw County) \$5,000
Good Samaritan Rescue Mission (Bay County) \$5,000
Catholic Family Services (Saginaw) \$5,000
Sacred Heart Mission (Gladwin County) 2,500
Vassar Ministerial Alliance (Tuscola County) \$2,500
Isabella County Restoration House (Isabella County) \$2,500

These and other agencies serve admirably the people of our communities. These gifts are an expression of our gratitude for their work.

Clergy Appointments

As you know Father Bill Rutkowski has been appointed Rector/pastor of the Cathedral, in addition to his duties as Vicar General and Director of Seminarians.

I have appointed Father Steve Gavit as chaplain at Saginaw Valley State University effective immediately. This appointment is in addition to his appointment as Pastor of St. Dominic Parish, Saginaw, effective immediately.

Father Patrick O'Connor has been asked to provide pastoral oversight on a temporary basis to Our Lady of Peace Parish in Bay City while Father Edwin Dwyer awaits a new placement. This appointment is effective February 8, 2019.

There has been a certain organized controversy regarding these changes and I thought you might find this useful to have a copy of the letter that has been mailed today to all parishioners at Our Lady of Peace in Bay City. (attached)

Traditional expressions in the Liturgy

It is clear to me that there is a need to make available on a regular basis to the people of the diocese in a central location a more traditional celebration of the Liturgy (greater use of Latin and practices that have often been identified with traditional forms of the liturgy). It is not a matter of reversing the challenges and opportunities made possible by the Second Vatican Council. Traditional practices can enrich our liturgies. It may be useful to provide a central location that embodies traditional practices in a way beyond what many parishes find acceptable and enriching in their prayer life. The challenge is always to find the balance. This is an issue I hope to address without delay.



Records Return

Tuesday of this past week, we received back from the Attorney General's Office numerous files that were outside the warrant presented by the Attorney General's Office in the fall. We were also advised that we will soon be receiving similar materials taken that were outside the spring local warrant. I am grateful that these matters are moving forward as we look to the future. I want you to know that we will cooperate in every way with law enforcement in any investigations that have been taken or might be in the future. I have been in discussion with local officials and found this useful.

Diocesan Review Board

In addition to the present members of the Diocesan Review Board, I have appointed two additional members to the Board: Steven Kin of Midland, and Ilene Dowling from Bay City. They join Bruce Thill, Mary Pat Bagrosky, Father Bob Byrne, Tom McIntyre, and Judy Vondette as board members. Their professional skills and experience in matters relating to the work of the Board, will continue to strengthen our commitment to address the issues of misconduct that come before us from time to time.

Judge Michael Talbot

During the time that Bishop Cistone served as our bishop, he appointed Judge Michael Talbot, whom I highly respect, to assist him as a delegate. I am grateful for the service that Judge Talbot provided to Bishop Cistone and to the Diocese. Since my arrival in October, I have been handling personally the matters that Bishop Cistone had delegated to Judge Talbot. I will continue that practice during the time I am here.

Until next time-----



Bishop Walter Hurley





**OFFICE OF THE
APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR**

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February 1, 2019

To Our Lady of Peace Parish members

Dear Friends in Christ,

For some time now I have been aware of a number of issues, particularly with the Liturgy, that have divided the parish community at Our Lady of Peace Parish, Bay City. This is a serious concern in that our worship should draw us together, rather than divide. It is important that we seek ways to unite the parish in our common mission of being evangelizing disciples and grow in our relationship with Christ, each in our own way.

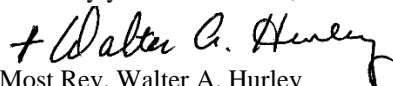
On January 28 and again on January 29 I met with Father Dwyer to discuss divisions within Our Lady of Peace. This meeting was preceded by earlier meetings with our Diocesan staff, including Father Bill Rutkowski, Vicar General and Father Peter Gaspeny, the Regional Vicar. I asked that Father Dwyer step away from the parish for a brief period while a senior priest serves in an interim basis and Diocesan staff evaluate how best to resolve the situation. He declined my request. Unfortunately, my office is now receiving faxes, emails, letters and telephone calls based upon inaccurate accounts of our conversations. I do not want the parishioners of Our Lady of Peace Parish to become disheartened by the controversy.

At this time, therefore, I have withdrawn his present assignment as Parochial Administrator, effective February 8, 2019. The Diocese will have responsibility for his salary, benefits and housing as he awaits a new assignment.

- 1) For the time being I have asked Father Patrick O'Connor, one of our senior priests, to provide pastoral oversight of the parish.
- 2) Father Steve Gavit, the pastor of St. Dominic Parish in Saginaw, who served in the ministry at Saginaw Valley State University for many years, has been assigned to provide pastoral care to the University community. Of course, students and young people may worship where they wish and I would hope they would always be welcome in all of our parishes.
- 3) Members of the Diocesan staff will be asked to review the various issues at Our Lady of Peace and make some recommendations to me. From the correspondence and meetings that have taken place, I have some familiarity with the various issues, in particular as they relate to the worshipping community and parish governance.

These are challenging times for all our Catholic people. I am conscious of the deep faith and commitment of our people to the church and to their parishes. I ask for your prayers and understanding as we seek a resolution to the challenges you face as a parish and we all face in the Church. In the midst of it all, we continue to be confident that God is walking with us.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,


Most Rev. Walter A. Hurley
Apostolic Administrator