



449/2009

The Reverend Robert T. Begin
St. Colman Parish
2027 West 65th Street
Cleveland, OH 44102-4394

Dear Father Begin,

This letter amends and supplements my letter to you of 12 March 2009 regarding the Vibrant Parish Life – Phase II plan of parish consolidation for the Diocese of Cleveland.

After much continuing prayer and discernment during the period of parish appeals, I have now come to believe that the needs of the Church and our Catholic community may be better served with both St. Colman and St. Stephen continuing as parishes. Therefore, I rescind my directive that St. Colman and St. Stephen merge into one parish and urge both parishes to comply with all the other directives of my 12 March 2009 letter, and that St. Colman address all the points listed below.

Many thoughts and comments were shared with me during the appeals process. A few of them were most prominent in my discernment process:

- I now have a more complete understanding of the extent of the social and community services at the parish and the outreach to diverse neighborhoods as well as the connection of these ministries with the Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy.
- There is a better understanding of the importance of the Lorain Avenue corridor and its demographics for the work of the Church.
- There is a better understanding of the parish finances. The finances are better than originally perceived although still quite challenged. There is an opportunity for St. Colman to become a more financially viable parish.

In recent years, there has been a trend of deficit spending that has reduced financial resources and limited the capacity of the parish to address all capital repair needs. As mentioned in the second paragraph above, the community may be better served with a continuing, vibrant and financially sound St. Colman Parish. However, it needs to be demonstrated with a greater sense of urgency that the St. Colman Parish community has a commitment to the future of its ministry in the city.

The following goals are critical for St. Colman Parish:

- The parish has recently been growing in households and in Mass attendance. It is important for this pastoral and liturgical growth to continue.
- The parish finances need to be strengthened with respect to balancing the operating budget and eliminating deficit spending. Additionally, emergency reserves and building preservation reserves need to be established for a more secure foundation for the future.
- The capital repairs for parish facilities need to be completed in the next four years and the facilities must be fully and efficiently used in support of the ministries and the parish. You are to work with Catholic Charities Facilities Corporation to develop an appropriate plan for accomplishing their identified repairs.
- The parish must remain dedicated to its outreach ministries while becoming a more financially viable parish. Resources must be found for both of these important goals.

In closing, your attention is directed to the reporting requirements of the 12 March 2009 letter, especially the 30 October 2009 and 30 June 2010 reports of progress toward the stated challenges of the 12 March 2009 letter, and now, the matters stated above in this letter. For St. Colman, there must be significant progress in the next four years in order to demonstrate the continuing viability of the parish.

I wish to thank the entire Catholic community for their thoughts and prayers during these past weeks of continuing discernment for the strengthening of the Church in our Diocese. May God's blessings be with you and your parish community.

Fraternally yours in Christ,



Bishop of Cleveland



Chancellor

1 May 2009

c: Fr. Franz, St. Stephen
Fr. Fallon, Sagrada Familia
Fr. Rasch, Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Fr. Yanus, St. Procop