



POPE ST. JOHN XXIII PARISH

7025 Park Ave. South Tacoma, WA 98408

Phone: (253) 472-1360

Fax: (253) 475-6335

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Peace of our Lord be with each of you. As you know, our parish has been awaiting word from the Vatican about our request to relegate the Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary to profane but not sordid use. This was a decision we made after nearly two years of consultation with multiple committees, including our finance council, pastoral council and the building subcommittee.

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne accepted our proposal and wrote his decree last year. An individual filed a "recourse" against it, which means they are challenging the decree and the case went to the Vatican for review. Originally, the Vatican noted that there was a process error in the consultation. Specifically, the Presbyteral Council meeting was held as a hybrid meeting, which was a remnant of COVID practices, and should have been held in person. Because of this error, the case was sent back to us to repeat the consultation in person for the Presbyteral Council.

Once we received the response, we did not immediately hold a new meeting with the Presbyteral Council. Instead, we again spent time discerning our original decision and reached out publicly to groups to get their proposals for the church building. Unfortunately, none of these proposals provided a realistic plan that aligned with our vision for our parish.

Therefore, we again requested that Archbishop Etienne relegate the building to profane but not sordid use. He did so, and again, an individual filed recourse. This time, the Vatican, specifically the Dicastery for Clergy, reviewed our process, our proposal and the reasons why we are requesting this change, which included insufficient funds to fix and maintain it. They ruled that the decree issued by Archbishop Etienne is upheld.

Before we can take any action, we must wait a few months to ensure there is not a final recourse to the Vatican. We will continue to track this and share updates with you as soon as we have them.

Additionally, we have no new information about St. Rita Parish. Therefore, I share the same update as before: Parishioners appealed the decision to merge into Pope St. John XXIII Parish in 2022, which was rejected by the Dicastery for the Clergy at the Vatican. The parishioners have further taken their appeal to the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. This tribunal is the highest court at the Vatican, and we are awaiting their decision. I will let you know if we receive any word on this

In the meantime, I wish to express my gratitude to all our staff and lay leaders who are helping Pope St. John Paul XXIII Parish provide rich pastoral care to our community as well as outreach services to our neighbors. We are certainly still getting to know each other and adjusting to the changes of the past few years, but we must pause and thank God for all our blessings and gifts. We are bringing Jesus Christ to those around us, and for that, I am incredibly grateful.

Let us join together in prayer for our future – and the future of the Catholic Church in Western Washington.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Tuan Nguyen, D. Min, Pastor

Email: psj23parish@psj23.org

Website: www.psj23.org