



March 9, 2024

Dear Parishioners of St. Anthony, St. Bernard, St. Joseph (Joliet) and St. Mary Magdalene Parishes,

Blessings and peace to you!

After a yearlong process, on January 25th, my decision to merge your parishes was published, and I know these past six weeks have been very challenging for you. There have been a wide variety of opinions, emotions, and reactions expressed over the decision to extinguish the existing parishes and form a new parish.

During this time, you have been anticipating the naming of the pastor of your new parish. After consultation with the Priest Personnel Board and prayerful reflection and discernment, I am pleased to announce that Fr. John Hornicak will be officially appointed on July 1, 2024 as your parochial administrator. Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish have stated publicly that they have sought hierarchical recourse against my decree. We are waiting confirmation from the Dicastery for the Clergy in Rome. When this matter is resolved, Fr. Hornicak will be appointed pastor.

I am confident in the abilities of Fr. Hornicak collaborating with the Holy Spirit, to bring your parish communities together in a spirit of unity and hope. I am grateful for his desire to lead and guide your new parish to a strong and vibrant future.

I will continue to pray for healing, peace, and unity for you and your community, and I ask you to pray for one another, also. While grieving our losses, we also look forward to creating a vibrant new parish community that will grow in faith and fellowship as members of the Body of Christ.

May God bless you today and always.

As I remain –

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks
Bishop of the Diocese in Joliet