



Journey *in* Faith

Trust. Transform. Together.

April 11/12 Parish Announcement Immaculate Conception Parish, Gilbertville

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This weekend, as we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, we hear in the Gospel how the risen Jesus comes to His disciples, speaks peace into their fear, and breathes His Spirit upon them. Even in their uncertainty, even behind locked doors, the Lord meets them with mercy—and sends them forth on mission. It is in that same spirit of trust in God's mercy that I write to you today.

Over the past year, our archdiocese has been engaged in the *Journey in Faith* process—a time of prayer, listening, and discernment about how we are called to live the mission of the Church in the years ahead. Thousands of you participated generously, sharing your hopes, concerns, and deep love for your parishes. I am profoundly grateful.

After much prayer and consultation, I have made decisions that will guide the next phase of this journey. The Archdiocese of Dubuque will be organized into 24 pastorates—groups of parishes working together more closely, sharing leadership, ministries, and resources so that we can strengthen our mission and better serve our communities.

Your parish, Immaculate Conception, will be in the Independence Area Pastorate.

The parishes of this pastorate will include

- Your parish
- Immaculate Conception Parish, Fairbank
- Sacred Heart Parish, La Porte City
- St. Athanasius Parish, Jesup
- St. Francis Parish, Barclay
- St. John the Evangelist Parish, Independence

- St. Joseph Parish, Raymond
- St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Parish, Eagle Center
- St. Patrick Parish, Winthrop

Your pastorate will be served by three priests. I have assigned Fr. David Beckman as pastor. Frs. Jeffrey Frieden and Douglas Loecke will serve as parochial vicars.

Weekend Masses will be held at:

- Your parish- three Masses
- St. Athanasius Parish, Jesup- two Masses
- St. John the Evangelist Parish, Independence- two Masses

Frs. Diehm and Goerend, as outgoing pastors and Fr. Beckman as incoming pastor will work collaboratively to create an interim Mass schedule that will be used July 15 through January 15. As soon as those Mass times have been set, they will be shared with your community.

Churches not used as weekend Mass sites can be used for weekday worship, faith formation, adoration, service to the community, weddings, funerals, and more. Whenever possible, the goal is to ensure these spaces continue to serve the mission of the Church in meaningful ways.

I recognize that this news may bring questions or concerns. Our parish communities are places of deep meaning, filled with memories of faith, family, and sacrifice. Change is not easy. Yet on this Divine Mercy Sunday, we are reminded that God meets us precisely in these moments—with compassion, with understanding, and with grace sufficient for what lies ahead.

Beginning this fall, each pastorate will enter into a process of discerning how to live and work together as one community in Christ. Although it will be a challenging task, I am confident that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this will be a time of renewal and growth for our archdiocese.

Entrusting this next step to the mercy of God, I invite us to move forward together—with hope, with courage, and with hearts open to the work the Lord is doing among us.

Walking with you on this *Journey in Faith*,

Archbishop Zinkula