



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

July 13, 2021

Dear Parishioners of Saint Gerard Majella,

I know that your parish seems to have had more than its share of transitions, and today finds you in the midst of yet another one. I am excited that Father Charles Lachowitz will be soon serving as Pastor of St. Gerard Majella. He is one of our finest, and for that reason, I have asked him to stay on as one of my two vicars general while serving your parish. While Father Lachowitz will not begin as Pastor until September 8, 2021, I have named him Parochial Administrator, effective July 1, 2021. Although he is not yet onsite, and will be taking some well-deserved vacation and time to transition from his full time work as Moderator of the Archdiocesan Curia, he has already assumed responsibility for overseeing the parish.

I must share some news regarding Father Joseph-Quốc Thiện Vương. Some concerns regarding financial irregularities have arisen and require further investigation. The concerns have already been reported to law enforcement by the Archdiocesan Office of Ministerial Standards and Safe Environment, the office that will be overseeing the inquiry on my behalf. Father Joseph-Quốc Thiện Vương has taken a voluntary leave of absence while the investigation is being conducted. As a result, he will not be available to engage in any public ministry at St. Gerard's or elsewhere until this matter is resolved. This is a standard, precautionary measure to ensure that a fair and thorough investigation may be conducted. I ask that no one prejudge this situation or presume that any misconduct has occurred. The investigation will determine what has happened, and we will let you know the outcome.

I am very much aware of the diversity of your parish, and was delighted to see the growth in your parish's service to the Vietnamese community. Knowing of the pastoral needs of that community, I want to take this opportunity to thank Father Tan Phong Le for his recent assistance. As many of you already know, Father Phong is from the Diocese of Can Tho in South Vietnam and has presented a letter of good standing from his bishop to serve in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. He has completed all of our ministerial requirements and has my permission to serve at St Gerard Majella. I am most grateful to him and his bishop. I am also grateful to the other priests who have been filling in lately and will continue to do so for the next few weeks.

Thank you for your patience during this time of transition. Please be assured of my prayers for you and your families.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis