

7-3-2022

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

I am writing this letter to you as a personal one. It is with a very heavy heart that this weekend I am announcing to you my resignation as pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. This decision has come from several years of prayer and struggle. I wish to assure you this is not a result of any bad experience with you or any other assignment I've had. Quite the contrary! You have brought me so much joy during my short time as your pastor.

*What does this mean?* We were told in seminary, "Nemo dat quod non habet" (One cannot give what one doesn't have). The Lord has made it very clear to me that at this time in my life, I do not have the spiritual and psychological strength to be a pastor and leader in the Church. I feel I would be doing the parish a great disservice if I continued to "run on fumes", as it were. "Burn-out" is a term we often hear attributed to people in high-powered busy careers, but that term was first coined in a survey concerning Catholic priests. This is no surprise to me. I have been a priest for 12 years and they have been both joyful and challenging all at the same time.

*What's next for me?* After speaking with both Bishop Tobin and Bishop Evans, I have been given a 6 month leave of absence from active ministry. This does not mean I am "leaving the priesthood". We believe once a priest, always a priest. It does mean I am taking some time to better understand myself and the role God has called me to. I will be leaving St. Francis and working in the world of education for the foreseeable future; something I have always felt called to do even in the context of the priesthood. When the 6 months is concluded, I will meet with the bishop once again to discuss what God has in store for me.

*What's next for you?* I will conclude my tenure as your pastor on Monday August 15<sup>th</sup>. A temporary administrator will be named to handle the day-to-day business and spiritual care of the parish. At some point in the near future a new pastor will be named.

This will undoubtedly be a time of transition once again and I sincerely apologize for any distress or inconvenience my decision will cause. I ask for your prayers for me and for the priests who will continue to serve you. My parting bit of encouragement to you is: continue to give yourselves to Jesus Christ and this parish. Dream about what it could be, not just be content with what it is.

I'm sure that most will think I'm crazy for leaving such a loving and faithful community, but I feel strongly that I must take care of myself so I can in turn take care of others well in the future. I am grateful to my family and friends for their support. Be assured of my prayers for you.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Fr. Young*