



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

May 24, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ,

As the Archdiocese of Miami has just completed its 50th anniversary, I come to you today as your Archbishop to express my gratitude to each and everyone of you who has sacrificed, labored, planned, built, participated in the sacraments and enjoyed the goodness of our Catholic community for so many years. There presently are 128 Catholic parishes, missions and ethnic apostolates in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties serving nearly 800,000 practicing Roman Catholics. Today it is my wish to share with you my vision for the future of our local church.

Here in the Archdiocese of Miami our common bond with each other is the profession of one faith and the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. As your Shepherd in this very exciting and diverse community, it is my task – assisted by the dedicated priests of the Archdiocese of Miami – to provide for all your pastoral and spiritual needs.

There continues to be much growth in the Archdiocese of Miami, where some 1,500 joined the Catholic Church this past Easter. At the same time, these are trying times for all of us and certainly the parishes of the Archdiocese of Miami are not immune to the economic crisis that everyone in this country is facing. How can we continue to do Christ's work?

I have and will continue to reduce spending at the Archdiocesan offices of the Pastoral Center, as I oversee the spiritual, pastoral and charitable works done throughout the Archdiocese of Miami. However, I am concerned about some parishes where demographics and social and economic needs have changed and the parishioners have not been able for several years to meet their financial obligations. This includes paying employees' salaries, pension and health benefits and property insurance for parish buildings.

I will have to make some difficult decisions, including the possibility of merging some parishes. This would create one larger parish to serve all the Catholics in an area, in place of two parishes. This possible re-structuring will enhance the worship and spiritual life of our faithful, not restrict it. Decisions will be made in the near future at which time I will come back to you with that information.

Please pray for me as I reflect on the many needs in our Archdiocese. I am designating Friday, June 19th, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as a day of ecclesial solidarity throughout the Archdiocese of Miami. On that day, all parishes will have a period of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. I invite all the Catholic faithful to make this a day of prayerful unity in Jesus Christ for the good of the Archdiocese of Miami and all of our parishes.

May the Lord continue to bless you and your loved ones abundantly. With personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,

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Archbishop of Miami