DIOCESE OF RALEIGH
Office of the Bishop
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October 13, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Peace be with you. I greet you with these words of the Risen Lord knowing that this has been far from a peaceful time for you and Immaculate Conception Parish. And yet, I repeat, peace be with you.

The sudden resignation of your long-time pastor, Fr. John McGee, came as a surprise that causes hurt, confusion, and many questions. Many of those questions cannot be answered as the investigation into alleged financial irregularities is only just beginning.

When Fr. John resigned, the Oblates of Saint Francis de Sales also informed me that they do not have a priest to replace him. Like many religious communities, the Oblates have experienced a decline in vocations and are not able to maintain the same level of ministry. This means that the diocese must look elsewhere for a priest for your community.

After prayer and looking for the best priest available to meet your needs, I am pleased to share that Fr. Arokiadass Arpudam, H.G.N. ("Fr. Dass"), currently the Parochial Vicar at Saint Brendan the Navigator in Shallotte, has agreed to serve as the new administrator of your parish beginning Thursday, October 15th. Fr. Dass is a kind and faithful priest, a member of the community of the Heralds of the Good News, who has been well loved at his assignments in our diocese. I know you will find in him a gentle shepherd to accompany you in this time.

The words with which I opened this letter, "Peace be with you", were the greeting of Jesus to his disciples gathered in the Upper Room after his death. Now as then, the Lord Jesus comes into the midst of our sadness and confusion and offers us His peace. May that peace be with you always as we pray for one another and seek the path forward with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In Christ,

+ Luis Rafael Zarama, J.C.L.
Bishop of Raleigh