



+May 3-4, 2025

*To the Parishioners of the
Catholic Churches of Whatcom County*

Dear Friends,

I am happy to greet all of you in the name of the Risen Lord Jesus!

Today, I write to inform you that your parish family will be entering a time of transition of parochial vicars beginning July 1, 2025. I am pleased to announce that, after consultation with the Priest Personnel Board, I have appointed Father Gerardo Rodriguez, CMF, as a new parochial vicar. He is a priest of the USA-Canada Province of Claretian Missionaries and comes to us from California. He will join current vicars, Father Tyler Johnson, who will continue as chaplain to Viking Catholic, and Father Stephan Arockia Doss Thomas, HGN. I am also pleased to share that a second Claretian Missionary, Father Manuel Villalobos, CMF, will be in residence in the parish family.

Father Rodriguez and Father Villalobos are wonderful men who will diligently and faithfully serve you in both Spanish and English. Be assured that they will receive all the necessary support and assistance from the Archdiocese of Seattle, your pastor, Father Jeffrey Moore, and the wonderful parish family staff to ensure quality pastoral care for your parish family.

At the same time, I want to personally thank Father Francis Thumbi for his generous service and leadership these many years as pastor in Blaine, Lummi, and Ferndale and as your parochial vicar this past year. I ask you to please keep Father Thumbi in your prayers as he moves forward in responding to God's call in his new assignment as parochial vicar of Christ Our Hope Parish, Immaculate Conception Parish, and St. James Cathedral in Seattle.

Times of transition can be challenging, especially as we prepare to say goodbye to a familiar presence and welcome priests. However, if embraced in an open and positive way, this can be a time of blessing for the entire parish and the Catholic Church of Western Washington. I am confident that will be the case as you welcome Father Rodriguez and Father Villalobos to your parish family. As always, I remain,

In the Heart of Christ,

Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle