

**BISHOP'S OFFICE**  
PASTORAL CENTER  
40 NORTH MAIN AVENUE, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12203  
FAX (518) 453-6795 · TELEPHONE (518) 453-6611

November 3, 2013

Ms. Annette Brooks  
Parish Life Director  
St. Gabriel's  
3040 Hamburg Street  
Schenectady, NY 12303

Dear Annette and My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

For more than six months, you and the other members from the parishes of St. Madeleine Sophie and St. Gabriel Pastoral Planning Group have been deeply involved in further developing your pastoral plan. As with Called to Be Church, the goal has been and continues to be, to ensure the continuation of the life and presence of Jesus Christ, within and among us, thus enabling us to fulfill the Gospel mandate to, "Go forth and proclaim the Good News to all nations."

By this communication I am informing you that I have made a decision regarding the initial plan you submitted to me. I have the deepest appreciation for your dedicated service. I realize that you will need to continue to work on the plan to assure the Mission of Jesus is being fulfilled.

Although neither of your parishes will close, the ongoing focus for both parishes must be to continue to deepen inter-parish relationships so that prudent stewardship of spiritual and temporal resources can help to ensure the continued vitality of the mission and ministry of Jesus in your parishes. Your plan called for one pastor for St. Madeleine Sophie and St. Gabriel.

The reality of one pastor for two parishes will mean that the parishes, although canonically separate will be acting as if they are one. It will be necessary for you to continue to participate with the other parishes in the deanery since some of the linkage, like Christian outreach; will involve all parishes in Schenectady County Deanery.

The plan is accepted as submitted with the following modifications:

Both parishes remain open.

**Staffing:** The one parish leader model (priest pastor) is to be in place by February 1, 2014. In the interest of efficient use of the pastor's time, there should be a combined pastoral council and combined finance council at the end of one year.

All paid staff will work in one location with a volunteer or stipend staff person available at the non-office site a few days a week to address simple administrative tasks (e.g. Mass requests.)

A determination should be made as to whether the position of pastoral associate for pastoral care would be full time or part time. The diocesan Human Resources Office can help with this assessment and the development of a job description.

Transition assistance (career / ministry counseling) and benefits as required by the Diocese should be provided for the person in the parish life director position which is being eliminated.

**Finances:** All bills, including diocesan bills must be kept up to date.

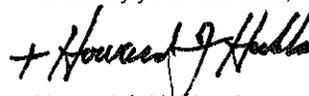
**School:** Although St. Madeleine Sophie School is a ministry of the parish both parishes should embrace this mission and be afforded transparency with regard to its general well being and status.

**Buildings:** A thorough review of parish needs and building conditions will be conducted with the assistance of the Office of Real Property. Consideration will also be given to value for potential sale of unneeded / unused buildings. The use of one rectory as residence and one rectory as business office is affirmed.

Let us all go forward, then, bearing in our minds and hearts the words of that popular hymn ... "Do not be afraid, I go before you always." With this divine inspiration and our own good will, all things can work unto good.

With every best wish, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Howard J. Hubbard  
Bishop of Albany