

STATEMENT TO ST. MARY'S PARISH

Good morning. Let me introduce myself for those of you who may not know me. My name is Lynn Trantow. In 2009, Msgr. John Steiner appointed me as a member of the St. Mary's Parish Council, later that Parish Council elected me as its chair.

Five weeks ago a petition came to our attention which was publicly disseminated by e-mail to some calling for the removal of our Pastor, Fr. Victor Blazovich. This petition was also made available to the media and others outside of our parish community. As this publicity has had an impact on the reputation of our parish, our school and our pastor, the Parish Council considered it important to take some proactive measures to assess the situation and do everything possible for the good of all involved.

Your Parish Council leadership created a process to gather information and to formulate a response in a timely manner. Part of this process included engaging an independent moderator whose presence was approved by the Council. This process also involved a four hour listening session with those who took responsibility for this petition, as well as a listening session with Fr. Vic. Because of the public nature of this document, we decided it would be best to inform Bishop Cupich of the steps we were taking and update him on our progress.

After considering all the information gathered from these sessions, we want you to know that your Parish Council leadership found no reason to support the public petition for Fr. Blazovich's removal.

These conversations, however, have provided us with the opportunity to confirm current practices and explore new ways to advance our life as a parish community. Our conversations revealed areas of potential growth within all the various aspects of our parish community.

In order to achieve this growth, your Parish council will be working with Fr. Vic and we will call on the resources of the diocese as needed. Part of this process will include events in which all members of the parish may participate. This may include such things in the future as town hall meetings, focus groups, surveys, workshops and other means in order to assure inclusivity, accuracy, and openness. Fr. Vic has assured us that he fully supports these measures and he is personally committed to doing his part to improve the situation.

As we move forward towards implementing our parish's consistent desire for good communication, good liturgy, and good leadership, we do so relying on your prayers and participation, as well as the pastoral leadership of Fr. Vic.

Let me conclude with a prayer from today's Epistle: "To him who can strengthen you, ... to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Thank you.