

*Saint Mary's
For 100 years
House of God
Home for everyone*



*Santa Maria
Por 100 años
Casa de Dios
Hogar de todos*

April 11, 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I have learned from you to love Saint Mary's Church. Your wisdom embracing ongoing transitions for so many years has helped to shape my optimism in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the community and reminds me to always look for God's will in every aspect of our shared ministry in Seattle.

A few years back, when our financial stability could no longer be guaranteed with income from the school building lease, our Councils started to discern where God was leading us. It has been over a year since we started an intentional effort to reach out to our neighborhood. This effort has helped us realize the need to embrace, in new ways, the call to be a missionary Church in South Seattle.

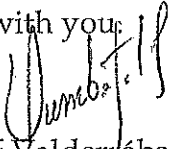
The letter we received from Bishop Mueggenborg about the Strategic Planning process underway across the archdiocese calls us to see the realities facing the Church today and the need to ensure parishes are thriving communities helping people grow closer to Christ. Bishop Mueggenborg also invites us to acknowledge that, sadly, we have seen a decline in parish engagement over the past few decades, here in our region and across the United States. Our communities have changed over the past few decades and we must change too.

Accordingly, the direction is that our parish will be merging with St. Therese and consolidated at the St. Therese campus. The Food Bank could stay here, where it has been for many years. This change could assist the Food Bank with additional space to grow and continue its important ministry. What is best for this ministry will be part of our conversation moving forward.

What absolutely will not change is our belief that Jesus Christ is always with us in many ways, especially in the Eucharistic celebrations and species. During this time of discernment on the new shape of our church in South Seattle, I assure you of our continued enthusiasm to further develop this belief and make the Eucharist available for all. I invite you to renew your commitment to Jesus in the Eucharist and pray for His guidance during this time.

With faith, hope, and love, we will be hosting a parish-wide online meeting on April 29th, 2021 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm, to share more about the Strategic Planning efforts, trends in the archdiocese, and the vision for our parish. It is my true belief that we will grow stronger as a faithful Catholic community when we examine the greater needs of the People of God in this region and work together to serve them.

Peace with you:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Olaf Valderrábano-Aguilar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "H" and "V".

H. Olaf Valderrábano-Aguilar
Pastoral Coordinator