



Dear parishioners,

This letter is to let you know about an important event that will be happening in our parish this spring. I ask for your prayers and support as we seek ways to strengthen our parish at this important gathering.

You may have noted Bishop Ricken's challenging question in the Jan-Feb issue of the "On Mission" magazine. It states "How would God like me to grow this year?" In his message he asks a very important follow up question:

- How would you like me to change and live differently?

At our Pastoral Council meetings, we regularly talk about ways to move our mission plan forward. At the heart of this discussion is improving our communications up and down and throughout the many committees and groups that carry out or live the mission of our church. Earlier this year it was suggested that we plan an event that brings together all the members of the parish that serve in a leadership role. The purpose of this gathering is to share information and find ways to further our parish mission and deepen our faith.

More details about this event are included on the back side of this letter.

I look forward to meeting all parish leaders in one setting and to hear their suggestions as we go forward on our faith journey here at Stella Maris Parish.

Yours in Christ.

Fr Tom Farrell

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr Thomas Farrell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Dear friends in Christ:

We have so much to be grateful for here in Northern Door County. I continue to learn about the good works of our committees and groups as they go about sharing their faith in the communities we serve. One of the most impressive things I have observed is the many people who volunteer and step up to help our church and others in this community and beyond.

From a bigger perspective, in the (almost) 5 years since I have been here, we have emerged from COVID and managed to live with it; many new parish members are getting involved with our parish; we were successful with our One-by-One capital campaign, and we are making progress with our Mission Planning objectives.

We want to build on this momentum and get new insights and perspectives that we can use to further our parish's mission, deepen our faith, and spread the good news.

At each of the bi-monthly Pastoral Council meetings we discuss the parish mission plan and look for ways to move it forward. With six church sites spread across eight communities the Pastoral Council relies on our commission liaisons to provide information to me and this communication link works pretty well throughout the year. However, it doesn't replace the occasions where I can sit with and get a first-hand view of the important role our committees and groups play in living our mission.

Earlier this fiscal year it was suggested that we plan an event that brings together all the members of the parish that serve in a leadership role. This includes our council members, our trustees, all committee chairs and group leaders and the parish staff. At this event (scheduled for May 22 at our Sister Bay site) we plan to discuss the state of the parish (membership, attendance, finances, and the status of our Mission Planning objectives). Given that this is a forward-looking event, our intent is to encourage and enable our committee leaders to play a lead role in discussions about how we are living our mission, our mission planning progress and how to improve communications to help our church align better with the needs of our parish's members and guests.

Many of us have attended church in locations beyond Stella Maris's boundaries and have witnessed beautiful acts of our faith, perhaps some of these ideas can be adopted here. If you do not serve in a leadership role, please don't hesitate to provide your ideas to any individuals that serve in a leadership role in our parish.

I look forward to meeting all our council, committee and group leaders in one setting and to hearing their suggestions as we go forward on our faith journey here at Stella Maris Parish.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Tom Farrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Fr Tom Farrell