

The rumors about my retirement are greatly exaggerated! Priests of the Archdiocese of Boston can retire at 75 - I turned 70 in April 2017. Here's what I wrote in the bulletin for the weekend of September 10. Although I think it's clearly stated, I suspect this is the source of the misinformation, which is making the rounds. Please note especially the information I have **bolded**.

*As you'll recall from previous letters, the archdiocese is in a process of bringing parishes together in collaboratives in which 2 or 3 parishes are served by one pastor and one parish staff. In this arrangement the parishes involved maintain their individual integrity - it's the relationship to pastor and staff that changes. This process is in its 5th year of phasing in collaboratives. Up until now, each new set of collaboratives has been announced in September with an effective date of the following June. This summer, however, the rest of the calendar of collaboratives was published and Holy Family Parish and St. Irene Parish will be in Phase 7, which means that in June of 2019 those two parishes will be served by one pastor and one parish staff. When parishes go into collaborative the sitting pastors are asked to offer a voluntary resignation to clear the deck for the appointment of a new pastor for the collaborative. Having submitted those letters, however, any of the sitting pastors could apply to be appointed as the collaborative's pastor. So in September 2018 both Fr. Donohoe of St. Irene's and I will submit those letters, effective June 2019. **At that time Fr. Donohoe will be 92 and I will be 72 and neither of us will be applying for the pastorate of the collaborative. (Unlike Fr. Donohoe, I hope to retire at 75 (!) and so after leaving Holy Family in 2019, I will assist in another parish until my retirement.***

It's my hope and plan to live and work in a parish (as an assistant, not as pastor) as long as my health permits, even beyond turning 75. I won't stop being a priest at 75 nor stop serving in ministry. I do, however, look forward to not sitting behind the desk where the buck stops and to having more flexibility in my schedule. I hope this makes things clear for everyone.

In the same letter last month I noted that when we moved out of our offices at 55 Church Street to temporary offices on the lower level of the church (for about 12-18 months while the rectory in Monument Square is refitted as parish office and meeting space), our mailing addressed has changed to

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*A prayer I wrote for my blog: [ConcordPastor.blogspot.com](http://ConcordPastor.blogspot.com)*

This morning, Lord, I want to offer you -just a little bit more... I want to offer you a little bit more than I usually do... I want to offer you a little bit more than I usually think is enough... I want to offer you a little bit more than I did yesterday, last week, last month, last year... I want to offer you a little bit more than I easily let go... I want to offer you a little bit more than what comes naturally to me... I want to offer you a little bit more than I would on my first impulse... I want to offer you a little bit more than what logic dictates... I want to offer you a little bit more than I'd keep for myself... I want to offer you a little bit more of my time for silence, for sitting still, for seeking your presence, for prayer, for just being with you... I want to offer you a little bit more of my time to seek out those in need, to reach out to others, to surrender myself to serve my neighbor today, this week, this month, this year... I want to offer you a little bit more of my heart, especially the hidden places I want to keep to myself... I want to offer you a little bit more of my dependence on you, your strength, your help, your grace, your mercy and joy... I want to offer you a little bit more of all I hold back, hold in, hold tight in my grip and am slow to let go... All this, Lord, is what I *want* to offer you this morning but to follow through I'll need to offer you a little bit more (maybe even a *lot* more) of my heart, my soul, my will, my mind, my dreams, my hopes and my love... So, even as I make this prayer, Lord, help me give a little bit more of myself to you and my neighbor, not counting the cost but finding the joy that comes from giving just a little bit more... Amen.