

Dear Mary, Queen of Peace Community,

After a great deal of prayerful discernment, I have decided to leave Mary, Queen of Peace. I have accepted the position of Pastoral Assistant for Administration at St. Teresa of Calcutta parish in Woodinville, WA. My last official day at MQP will be September 25. A farewell get-together will be held at MQP after the 11:00am Mass on Sunday, September 26. I might also be back after that day to help with the transition in various ways.

I have been working at Mary, Queen of Peace for nearly 17 years, which is 35% of my life thus far. In many ways, my whole identity and rhythm of life have been defined by the MQP community. A part of me has felt that, if the community would have me, I wouldn't mind working at MQP until retirement. But another part of me feels that God is calling me in a new direction. There is a lot of other life out there, and I think God is inviting me to experience new things and to serve in new ways. As much as I will miss MQP, I am also very excited by this new opportunity in my life.

For me, the best part of MQP has always been the amazing community that makes the parish such a wonderful place to be. I have made so many connections here over the years, and I will really miss working with all of you. I have been involved with many things in the parish, and I realize that my leaving will, in the short term, leave some gaps. At the same time, I know that the Holy Spirit will raise up new people and will provide for the needs of the community in new and exciting ways. Although this chapter is ending, even now the page is turning to a new part of the story, which will be well worth experiencing. So buckle up, because the adventure continues for all of us.

In my nearly 17 years at MQP, I have experienced a lot of changes. I served under three popes, three archbishops, and three pastors. The world at large also changed greatly. When I first came to MQP in 2004, I had not yet heard of Facebook, and I had never sent a text message.

I too changed in many ways over these years. Three thoughts especially crystallized in me after my three trips to Medjugorje, where many believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary has been appearing for 40 years, under her title of the Queen of Peace. I would like to leave you with these thoughts as I make my transition.

1) The Blessed Virgin Mary called me back to the Marian devotion of my younger days. I learned that the best way to center my life on Christ is to entrust myself to the protection of our Holy Mother, the Queen of Peace.

2) I have, over the years, sometimes had a restless spirit, searching for the right spiritual solutions. My experiences in Medjugorje taught me that what I most need has been right there before me the whole time - the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, all the sacraments, the prayers and spiritual practices of the Catholic Church. I had to go halfway across the world to learn that what truly fulfills me is waiting for me back at home.

3) Through Medjugorje, I learned to embrace the Cross. We will all be visited in life by some profound suffering that we cannot escape. But, paradoxically, when we embrace our Cross

for Christ, we find abiding peace and profound joy even in the midst of our suffering. That, I believe, is at the heart of our faith.

I want to thank all of you for the many opportunities to serve this community and for the many connections I was able to make over the years. For the times I might have ruffled some feathers, as I surely have done sometimes over almost 17 years, I sincerely apologize.

Living in Bellevue and working in Woodinville, I won't be too far from MQP, so our paths are sure to cross again in different ways. In particular, I hope some of you will still be joining me on future pilgrimages. (In fact, we still have some spots for the Passion Play Pilgrimage to Germany and Austria in September, 2022, in case you're interested. Sorry about the shameless advertisement! :-))

Working at MQP has been a great honor and a source of incredible blessings in my life. As I leave, I want to wish all of you an abundance of blessings through the prayers of the Queen of Peace. May the Holy Spirit anoint each of you this day and always. May the light of Christ fill your heart and bring you abiding peace. I will continue to keep the Mary, Queen of Peace community in my prayers, and I ask you to pray for me and my family as well.

In the words of ABBA, thank you for the music!

God bless you.

In Christ;
Zoltan