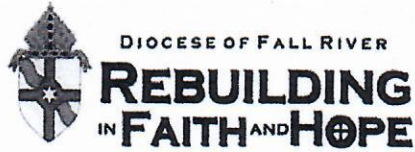


*“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for wholeness...
to give you a future full of hope.” Jeremiah 29:11*



April 25, 2019

He is Risen!

Dear Parishioners of St. Mary, St. Joseph-St. Therese and Our Lady of Fatima:

This past Thursday, your three parishes kicked-off a strategic planning process. Although this planning is still in the early stages, I am writing to share with you a change in clergy leadership. This year, six priests have requested and have been granted retirement as of June 26, 2019. As a result, I have had to make the difficult decision of asking Fr. Philip Hamel, pastor of St. Joseph-St. Therese, to accept a new assignment.

I realize that this news comes at a very challenging time because your planning has just begun; however, know that we remain faithfully committed to the planning process and look forward to your recommendations. We continue to be grateful to Fr. Lacroix and Fr. Raposo for their leadership and pastoral care to these three faith communities.

Fr. Daniel Lacroix has accepted the additional responsibility to serve as pastor of both St. Mary and St. Joseph-St. Therese, beginning June 26, 2019. Fr. Raposo will remain pastor of Our Lady of Fatima, while working in collaboration with Fr. Lacroix.

I am counting on this planning process to identify new ways that these three parishes in such close proximity will build bridges and establish new partnerships for a stronger future.

Please join me in thanking Fr. Hamel for his years of serving as pastor to St. Joseph-St. Therese.

We will optimize these next several months by completing the strategic plan so that this tri-parish community may begin to transition from planning to implementation.

Let us continue to work together to build the “future full of hope” that Jeremiah foretold – in New Bedford and beyond!

May God bless us on this journey of *Rebuilding in Faith and Hope!*

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edgar M. da Cunha".

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.
Bishop of Fall River
