



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP
1011 FIRST AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10022

September 2, 2010

My brothers and sisters in Christ, Parishioners of Saint Charles Borromeo:

Last Summer I had the joy and honor of visiting with you for Sunday Mass, and then meeting with you for a couple of hours.

The faith, beauty, reverence, and happiness of that Holy Eucharist, the graciousness of your hospitality, and the honesty and charity of our meeting, are still fresh in my mind.

At the conclusion of that visit, I promised that I would get back to you with some answers to questions that were bothering you. Sorry it has taken longer than I expected, but I am now able to do so.

For one, you asked how Monsignor Harris was doing. His letter to you, enclosed herein, should help answer that.

Two, you wondered if proper procedures had been followed, assuring your pastor of fairness. My review of his situation, numerous conversations with him, consultation with those involved, and meeting with our independent Review Board -- which had scrupulously reviewed his case -- convinces me that he has been treated fairly.

Three, you asked if Monsignor could ever return as your pastor. The answer is, no. He will never again publicly function or present himself as a priest. As you can see from his correspondence, he acknowledges this.

Finally, you wondered about the next step. You told me that it would help immensely just to know if Monsignor Harris was going to return so that, if he is not, the parish could bring to some resolution its healing process and move forward as the vibrant Catholic community of faith in Harlem for which it has been known. I hope that this letter helps.

I am immensely grateful to Father Philip, our priests, deacons, sisters, devoted staff and parish leadership, and you great people for continuing the parish's splendid tradition of worship, evangelization, education, welcome, outreach, charity, and works of justice, under trying circumstances.

Father Philip has been heroic, and has sacrificed plans his own bishop in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana as for him -- to complete his graduate studies in education -- for all of us. He is generously willing to remain as administrator while we begin our search for a new pastor.

I thank you for your patient love for Jesus and His Church, and reassure you of my own love and prayers.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of New York