

Dear Parishioners of St. Augustine,

On June 10, 1973 the Most Rev. John Russel established the Parish of St. Augustine in Chesterfield County. Today, on the 45th anniversary, we announce that the Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, the 13th Bishop of Richmond, after much prayer and consultation, has appointed both of us to provide the pastoral care of the parish “in solidum.” Ours will be the first parish of its kind in the history of the Diocese.

To care for a parish “in solidum” means that neither priest is the sole Pastor of the parish. We both share the rights and obligations of a pastor. Fr. Marlon has primary responsibility for the care of the Hispanic Community. Fr Wayne has primary care of the English-language community and Administration. But decision are made together, as one. Practically speaking, this means that the first answer you will often get from either of us is that we need to talk to the other before making a decision. But this kind of consultation should not be unique.

When Bishop Knestout first arrived, he spoke of the three keys to leadership: **communication**, **consultation**, and **collaboration**. We too would hope that these three words would guide our leadership of this community at every level.

In five short years we will celebrate our 50th anniversary. In preparation for that celebration, we, your priests, in collaboration with the deacons, staff, pastoral council, finance counsel and all of you, will form and execute a five-year plan. The first step of the process will be two listening sessions. There will be one in English on Sunday July 15 following the 8:30 AM mass and a second in Spanish on Sunday July 22 following the 1:15 mass.

The Second Vatican Council’s Pastoral Constitution of the Church opens with the words “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties...” These listening sessions will be an opportunity for you to express your joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties. In order to plot a course we must know both: our point of departure and our destination, where we are and where we hope to be.

Our new bishop has offered us a new opportunity to be a shining example of what a parish can be when people work together. In a world divided we can be a sign of unity, an example of community built not on uniformity but on oneness of faith, hope and charity.

May God bless us as we begin this new adventure together,

Rev. Wayne L. Ball,
Pastor

Rev. Marlon A. Portillo Muñoz
Pastor