



Office of the Bishop

Diocese of Brownsville

April, 2010

My dear parishioners of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Raymondville, St. Patrick in La Sara, St. Anne in San Perlita and St. Francis Xavier Cabrini in Hargill,

I write to you in a spirit of faith and hope that the Lord provides for the needs of His Church. As you know, the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus have generously provided for the pastoral needs of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Raymondville, St. Patrick in La Sara, St. Anne in San Perlita and St. Francis Xavier Cabrini in Hargill, for nearly half a century. We are all deeply grateful to the Priests of the Sacred Heart for their pastoral care and dedication to the communities they have served in Willacy County.

Shortly after I was installed as the sixth bishop of Brownsville, Father Thomas P. Cassidy, SCJ, Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, wrote to me, informing me with sadness that their congregation would need to relinquish responsibility for the pastoral care of the communities they have cared for to the clergy of the Diocese of Brownsville.

It is always a difficult thing for a religious community of priests to leave a parish community they have served for many years. At times, though, the mission and resources of the community require them to make decisions about the future and about how best to serve the Lord and his Church in the days to come. Thus, although I am sorry the Priests of the Sacred Heart are leaving the parish, I well understand their reasons, and respect the integrity of their judgment. I am sure that all of you join with me in grateful prayer for the Priests of the Sacred Heart, for the success of their mission in the United States, and for an increase of vocations to their Community.

I am grateful to Father Cassidy and to Father MacDonald for taking the time to meet with me to discuss the communities' transition from the care of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, to the care of the diocesan clergy. The spirit of cooperation and consultation with which the Priests of the Sacred Heart have handled this necessary change has been exemplary, and as Bishop of the Diocese, I am grateful to Father Cassidy, to Father MacDonald and the entire community for the thoughtfulness with which they have approached this change.

As your bishop, I can assure you the parishioners that we are prepared to take up the responsibility for the continued pastoral care of the Catholic Faithful of Our Lady of Guadalupe its missions. Because we have time before the transition takes full effect, I anticipate visiting all of the communities served by the Priests of the Sacred Heart, helping you the parishioners celebrate with gratitude their legacy in Willacy County. I also anticipate consulting with you about the pastoral challenges facing the area. In the days to come, I will also consult with the priests of the Diocese of Brownsville in order to identify who will be able best to serve the parish and missions. I am confident that it will be possible to name a new pastor well before February of next year, so that the transition involving the parishioners, the Priests of the Sacred Heart, and the incoming clergy can take place in a smooth, unrushed manner.

I pray we will all take this time of change in Willacy County as a time of hope. The pilgrimage of life by which we make our way to the Lord is a pilgrimage we make together, trusting in the generosity of the Lord Jesus. Together, we will do all that is possible to insure that the life of faith, hope and charity continues to grow in the local community. I ask you to pray much to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for an outpouring of his grace into all of our hearts, that in all things the Lord might be glorified, and in all ways, his will be done.

With an assurance of a fervent remembrance in my prayers, and asking the Lord's blessing upon you all, I am

Sincerely Yours in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel E. Flores". The signature is written in a cursive style and includes a small cross symbol at the beginning.

Most Reverend Daniel E. Flores, STD
Bishop of Brownsville