

St. Patrick Church

Moving Towards Healing and a Vibrant Catholic Community

October 22, 2005

To All Parishioners,

As we individually, as families and as a Catholic community begin to move into a time of healing and hope, it is clear that our hurt, doubt, anger, confusion and need for pastoral care are real, reasonable and relevant. We will move forward together towards living as a vibrant, faith-filled Catholic community in the Hudson area.

As many of you are aware, we are taking a proactive approach through the organization of a Team of Elders and professional resources in the area of parish reconciliation, renewal and transition. Dennis Cheesebrow of TeamWorks International, Inc and Tom Ellis of The Center for Grief, Loss and Transition have agreed to guide us in a process of parish healing and renewal. In collaboration with the Team of Elders and Pastoral Council, parishioners will be provided the information, services, opportunities and the processes need to move forward as a parish.

This past week, the Leadership Team met for an organizational meeting and to provide Dennis and Tom with information and insight into the individual and collective needs of our parish community. As they begin to formalize a process proposal for us, information and services are being provided this week for our school and parish staff.

In our 1st meeting, the Leadership Team developed 7 Key Messages for communication to the parish.

Key Messages:

- 1 Dealing with anger, hurt, doubt and hopes at the individual and community level is hard work and takes time
2. We are blessed with excellent pastoral leadership and a Catholic community of deep faith

3. As a community, we will be dealing with issues beyond Ryan Erickson and our timeframe is a couple of years not weeks or months

4. We are entering the process of healing at the individual and community levels on a journey to a healthy and vibrant Catholic community, not alone but in concert with the Diocese and those accountable

5. As a Parish Leadership Team, we are also accountable for the process of healing and vibrancy

6. There are many parishioners who are hurting at this time and we need to assure that no one will be left outside or behind in the process of healing while calling for and end to the "camps" within our parish that lead to division

7. We need to care for our pastor, Fr. John as he is called to care for us

Tom and Dennis have encouraged all of us to:

- Reflect and raise our own awareness of facts, feeling and how we are making sense of the events of the past few years in our parish.
- Realize that complex grief is a natural human response to the stressors of life, many of which we do not control.
- Increase our awareness of other's situations and be open to caring for, sharing with, and listening to each other with compassion, honesty and without high levels of judgment.
- Take time to ask others how they are doing and be willing to spend time listening and sharing.

Will will continually update the parish as to information, processes, learning, opportunities and progress in the coming weeks.