



June 26, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I hope this letter finds you all doing well, rooted in faith, firm in hope, and active in charity.

As it was announced back in May, the effective date of Fr. José Noriega's assignment as pastor of St. Mary Parish, as well as my new assignment as parochial vicar, is Wednesday July 1st. We both have already received our appointment letters, and the changes will be effective on that day. Since the date is approaching quickly, I wanted to offer you some important updates and information.

The Coronavirus pandemic has taught us many things: flexibility, creativity, and patience, just to name a few. So, as we wait for the new pastor, Fr. José, to arrive, God continues to call us to grow in these virtues. International travel is just beginning to be restored, with many restrictions still in place. Fr. Noriega is diligently working with the American Consulate in Madrid to obtain the necessary visa to be able to travel to the United States. (The recent executive order banning work visas through the end of December 2020 does not impact clergy visas.) At this time, we do not have any confirmed dates for his travel, but trust in God's providence that he will arrive as soon as possible.

However, starting this Wednesday, the parish won't be without leadership. Canon Law already provides that when the Pastor cannot exercise his pastoral function, "the parochial vicar is to assume the governance of the parish temporarily" (Can. 541 §1). Therefore, in coordination with Fr. José, and with the knowledge and direction of the Archdiocese, I will continue with the administration of the parish till the arrival of the new pastor. The duties and authority of the administrator are basically the same as the pastor. Nothing changes in the life of the parish.

I would like to add that the last six years as pastor have been filled with joy at seeing all the good work God has accomplished through our collective efforts. I am truly grateful to be able to continue to serve this faith-filled community and have great hope that God will guide us through this transition and bless us in many ways.

I want also to thank you all for your patience and understanding during this time. All of the DCJM and the parish staff here present will continue to support your needs throughout this transition. I hope that you are able to enjoy a time of rest with your families this summer and I look forward to seeing you at St. Mary soon.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Javier Nieva", is written over a light blue circular stamp. The stamp contains the text "ST. MARY CATHOLIC PARISH" around the top edge, "ESTABLISHED" above the year "1901", and "LITTLETON, COLORADO" around the bottom edge.

Fr. Javier Nieva, DCJM