March 30, 2026

Dear Ascension Family:

Ascension is a wonderful parish, with many opportunities to be transformed by God's grace through study of His word and religious formation, through prayer and liturgy, through generous service, and in observing the Lord's primary command to love in imitation of Him. But, administratively and pastorally, Ascension demands much from a pastor. It has been my conviction that the parish would be better served by a younger man with better health, more vigor, and who can better relate to young families and youth.

Therefore, after having reached the age of 70 last year, considering my physical limitations, and with a desire that the good people of Ascension be best served, I placed my office of pastor at the disposal of the archbishop. Last Friday, Archbishop McKnight accepted my resignation from the office of pastor and granted my request to retire from parochial administration.

Effective immediately, Archbishop McKnight has appointed me as Parochial Administrator of Ascension until such time as a new pastor is duly appointed. As Parochial Administrator, in accord with the Code of Canon Law, c. 540, I will be bound by the same obligations and have the same rights as a pastor. I will not however, embark on any new major building projects or similar things, that are not already underway, and that would prejudice the rights of a new pastor. I presume that Archbishop McKnight will appoint a new pastor around July 1st, but he may choose to act before then.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve for the past five years as pastor of Church of the Ascension and am appreciative of your deep faith and commitment to Christ and His Church. I am confident that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Archbishop will appoint a wonderful pastor to shepherd the parish in the years ahead. Please pray for the new pastor and for the parish in this time of transition.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life,

Fr. Gary

Fr. Gary Pennings
Parochial Administrator