

**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

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May 11, 2016

Dear Parishioners of Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish and Members of the Latin Mass Community,

For several months now, the Diocese has been looking for ways to strengthen Saint Stephen's Parish. During this time, with the help of the priests assigned to the Cathedral of Saint Catharine of Siena and other priests from throughout the Diocese who assisted with Masses in the extra-ordinary form, the liturgical and spiritual life of the parish have been able to continue.

After consultation with members of the Latin Mass Community and with members of the parish who came forward with the good of the parish and the salvation of souls in mind and with the Council of Priests, my staff began a discussion with the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter, a community of priests dedicated to the celebration of the extra-ordinary form of the Mass and to the spirituality embodied in the rites of the Church found in the liturgical books issued under the authority of Saint John XXIII in 1962.

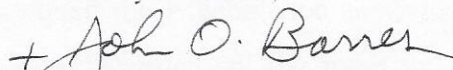
With those discussions concluded, I am happy to inform you that on July 1, 2016, the Priestly Society of Saint Peter will be entrusted with the spiritual and temporal care of Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish. The Fraternity will nominate a pastor for the parish in the near future. Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish will remain a parish of the Diocese of Allentown, under my direction. The new pastor and his successors will follow the directives of the Diocese of Allentown in administering the temporal goods of the parish. He will also assume the responsibility for the payment of the outstanding assessments owed to the Diocese and the subsidy owed to Sacred Heart Regional School of which the parish will remain a part.

The most notable change will be that celebration of all Masses will be in the extraordinary form and the celebration of the sacraments will follow the liturgical books in use in 1962. The change in the Mass schedule, from some in English to all in Latin, may be seen as a burden to some. However, unification of the parishioners around a common celebration of the liturgy and the pastoral guidance provided by the priests of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter offer the best hope for a self-sustaining and vibrant parish.

All parishioners of Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish will retain their membership in the parish and all those who are now part of the Latin Mass Community will also become members, even if they are not of Hungarian descent or even from outside of the territory of the Diocese of Allentown. However, those members who wish to avail themselves of Mass in English are free to attend Mass or join the parish in whose territory they reside.

I look forward to welcoming the priests of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter to Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish and the Diocese of Allentown. It is my sincere hope that with a unified congregation, which will bring together both the young and the old, those of Hungarian descent and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds, those with families and those who may live alone, that Saint Stephen of Hungary Parish will begin to thrive and to become a source of hope and energy for the evangelizing mission of the Church.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John O. Barres". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a small cross symbol at the beginning.

Most Reverend John O. Barres  
Bishop of Allentown