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Greetings in the precious name of Christ!

Dear Stella Maris Parish Family:

It is with lots of love, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit that I am sharing these reflections with you. In the early weeks of Covid 19, I did gain strength from these lines of St. Paul, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. We do not lose heart". (Romans 8:38-39).

As we were getting ready to celebrate Easter, I came to realize the real pain of separation from a loving community of believers. As I was struggling to make sense of what is happening around us and in our beloved Nova Scotia, I was reminded by a good friend of mine that, "The Holy Spirit is not in isolation and Jesus cannot be restrained by a virus," Even though our Good Friday is going to last for a while, I was assured that there is going to be Easter, and Jesus is risen indeed!

To speak from my heart, I do miss the Community of Stella Maris, especially the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist in which we gave glory and praise, cared, prayed and loved each other.

God blessed me with a heart that wants to care, celebrate and be there for each of you! These lines from Scripture made me humble and grateful. "**There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ... All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.**"(1 Corinthians 12:4).

In the midst of this pandemic Fr. David and I have been gathering for Rosary followed by Mass using Facebook live. We started using the digital platforms for communication and consultations. The Parish Leadership Team (which was formed before Covid 19) has been meeting regularly to move forward the faith for Stella Maris in Mainland South. Greg and I want to say **A very Big Thank you** to the members of our new parish for their stewardship of time and talent for Stella Maris.

We appreciate that not everyone has access to internet, Facebook or zoom. In addition to digital communications and our phone ministry, we'd like to keep you up to date on happenings here at Stella Maris through mail as well. Feel free to mail us back.

The Holy Spirit is reminding us everyday that His church is not a building; it's the people. "We, though many, are one body." (1 Corinthians 12) I have been deeply reflecting and praying over our vision for Stella Maris parish: **Stella Maris, a growing community of missionary disciples, led by the power of the Holy Spirit, is a beacon of Hope and Love committed to witnessing and sharing God's mercy and presence.**

To fulfill this vision and preserve our church's legacy for the future, we have started the process of consolidation. This consolidation is to Renew, Refocus and Revitalize our Church in Mainland South, so that we will be a beacon of Hope & Love. The attached questions and answers and financial information provide more background information, but essentially over the next year our community will be coming together at one Stella Maris site in Spryfield. Our communities will unite to transform that site into their church!

There will certainly be sadness as we transition to one location because of the rich history and sense of community at each church. Greg and I believe the Holy Spirit will be there with us throughout this time of transition, comforting us and granting us the graces we need to unite into one stronger parish; One Body in Christ. This is His church and I believe all of us love the Church more than a specific building. The Holy Spirit will not abandon us. I have deep faith in the Holy Spirit. He has bold plans for Stella Maris. Not lukewarm plans, but bold plans. Joy filled, missionary, loving plans.

I hope and pray that you will all join us in this process with prayers, love and sacrifices to create one Stella Maris Parish. Peace and blessings to you all.

Come Holy Spirit.

Father Jose

By consolidating our resources we can
Refocus, Renew & Revitalize