



DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

Office of the Bishop

November 16, 2008

Dear Parishioners of St. James Parish,

In imitation of the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd who “calls his own sheep by name and leads them” (Jn 10:3), the Church has always placed great value on presence and stability in its assignment of pastors.

I am very aware that for more than six years now, due to circumstances that, for the most part, have been beyond the Diocese’s control, the status of the pastorate of St. James Parish has been a source of unease for many of you. This past April, Monsignor Cashman’s term as pastor expired. Although the charges against him are still being tried, even if he is found to be innocent it does not seem realistic for him to resume leadership of the parish after being absent for a such a long time. I had hoped his trial would have been concluded late this summer or early this fall, and so out of respect for his past service to the parish I refrained from taking any action for more than six months. (I earnestly hope that the trial will be concluded by the end of this year or very early next year.)

With the parish planning to embark on a year of festivities to commemorate your 150th anniversary, I believe it appropriate and important that the parish have a working, resident pastor once more, and so I am appointing Father Cicerale the fourteenth pastor of St. James Parish, effective the First Sunday of Advent.

I am grateful for Father Cicerale’s caring and gentle leadership since I asked him to assume the challenging responsibility of administering your parish in Monsignor Cashman’s absence, and I have every confidence that he will continue to pastor you in this same way. I ask your continued prayers for Monsignor Cashman’s well-being and for the swift and fair conclusion to his trial. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude for your continuing patience and your ongoing commitment to making the St. James community a place where the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and lived out.

With prayerful good wishes, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,

Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski
Bishop of Metuchen