



**FRATERNITAS SACERDOTALIS
SANCTI PETRI**

April 11, 2011

Dear Faithful of the Houston Area:

I am writing to announce that the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (the Fraternity) is planning to establish a new apostolate in the Houston area as early as this summer. His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal Di Nardo has given his permission to establish a parish in the Houston area staffed by the Fraternity. This is a great blessing since all the sacraments would be administered using the liturgical books of 1962. A beautiful 40 acres property is being donated for the purpose of establishing this Fraternity run parish and we are making the necessary arrangements for the title transfer. The land is located near the intersection of Fairbanks North Houston and Breen Road in the northwest quadrant of the city inside the beltway. We considered purchasing an existing church property but the initial cost for this is much greater which would delay our arrival in the area, and we would still have the cost of altering the facility for the Extraordinary Form of the Mass.

I recently made a trip to Houston to meet with a group of professionals assembled by Mr. Jerry Tipps, the architect, in order to facilitate the transfer of the land that Miss Betty White is donating to the Fraternity for the purpose of a parish for the Extraordinary Form of the Mass. I am sorry I was not able to spend more time in the Houston area to meet with the faithful, but the arrangements were made at the last minute and I could only be away from the Carmelite Monastery here in Elysburg, PA for a short period of time.

The communication of information until now has been limited concerning the proposed arrival of the Fraternity in the area. Certain questions needed to be resolved before any dates could be set. The main issue that needed to be resolved was the logistic problem of access to Miss White's property. The property is surrounded by developments on all sides, and the roads through these developments are not wide enough to satisfy the 911 requirements. Furthermore, the people in these developments would probably raise serious objections to our project due to the increased traffic through their neighborhood, particularly on Sunday mornings. My superiors also wanted a more direct access to the property, since we have experience elsewhere with parishes tucked away in neighborhoods, making it difficult for the faithful to find the parish. Parking and ease of access are important for Fraternity parishes since most of the faithful have to travel a good distance to attend Mass. This property will still be tucked away in a neighborhood; however, we are working with the developer to the north to exchange a sixty foot wide strip of land on the east side of his property in an undeveloped section for a portion on the west side of Miss White's property. Until we were morally certain that it was going to work and that all parties involved were agreeable to the swap, we were reluctant to get everyone's hopes up too much. I asked for your prayers for this project, and in this instance, God has answered them favorably. Please continue to pray as we try to finalize this transaction.

I had given an update in a previous letter concerning the work that was being done to acquire the property and I mentioned that we received written permission from His Eminence Daniel Cardinal Di Nardo to establish a parish in Houston. We are thankful to him for this permission. Until now the work to determine the feasibility of building on this property has been *pro bono*, and we are very grateful for the generosity of those involved. Moving forward, however, the work load is going to increase and the services of more professionals are going to be required. The next step of the process will require a survey and preliminary work by our attorney. Once that is done there will be more concrete negotiations with the developer to the north for a land swap. This will enable us to have our own

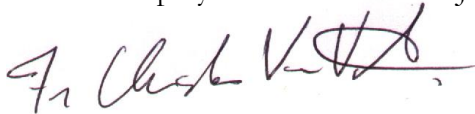
driveway with direct access from Breen Road without going through the neighborhoods. Next, there will be a series of studies or investigations to satisfy the regulatory requirements of Harris County, the City of Houston, and to determine the engineering requirements to build on this land. These will include a study of the traffic flow along Breen Road, a Phase I environmental study, preliminary architectural drawings and the geotechnical studies. Needless to say, all these steps are necessary and they will be costly.

The funding for this project is going to be raised in the Houston area since it is for the benefit of those living there. The Fraternity will pay for the rent of the rectory for the first year and also cover the initial expenses of purchasing liturgical appointments and furniture for the priest residence. Thanks to a few generous donors, we have enough to begin the process. More funds are going to be needed in the months to come. If the fundraising goes well, then the work can proceed at this stage without delay and cost less money in the long term. This initial work for the land swap and for all the permits needed to develop the property will have to be raised as the work proceeds. Once the land is in the Fraternity's name, then we can begin the construction phase. Again the funds will have to be raised locally, but once half the funds have been raised for each of these phases, we may be able to borrow the other half from the Fraternity to expedite construction.

It all seems so far down the road and the process is quite daunting; however, if we all cooperate and contribute not only financially, but with our prayers, time and expertise, the project can move along smoothly and the community will grow very naturally and be unified in serving God through this new parish. We are building this parish for God's glory so we and future generations can worship here.

I am very much looking forward to arriving in the Houston area so we can develop the drawings for the facilities on the property and begin construction. I visited the Missions in San Antonio last fall with Mr. Tuffly Ellis. I think we can build something in the Texas Mission style that would be very nice and suitable for a Traditional Latin Mass Community. The one thing that will be necessary before all this can happen is that we raise the money necessary for the land swap now, and receive pledges for the future construction phases. These are troubled times with wars, economic troubles and natural disasters around the world. A project like this can unite us in a common goal, develop something necessary for the future and be of great consolation despite the global turmoil at this time. Thank you to those who have been very generous already, enabling us to begin the process. Our present goal is to raise \$300,000.00 for the land swap and preliminary engineering for the project and at present we have raised over \$80,000.00. Please consider a generous donation so the project can advance smoothly without delays. Donations can be sent to the Fraternity bank account at the Bank of Houston-Medical Center (see address below). May God reward you.

In union of prayers in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,



Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP
Chaplain, Carmelite Monastery

Donations can be made out to: The Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter
Mail donations to: The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter
C/O Bank of Houston-Medical Center
4120 Bellaire Blvd
Houston, Texas 77025