



Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Saint Cloud  
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February 20, 2025

*Parishes on the Prairie ACC*

Saint Francis de Sales, Belgrade  
Saint Donatus, Brooten  
Saints Peter and Paul, Elrosa  
Our Lady of the Angels, Sauk Centre  
Saint Paul, Sauk Centre  
Saint Alexius, West Union

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I want to share some additional information with you following the announcement last weekend of Father Greg Paffel's request for a leave of absence.

Yesterday, a Diocesan Response Team — comprised of Father Scott Pogatchnik, vicar general; Father Tom Knoblach, vicar for clergy; and Roxann Storms, diocesan victim assistance coordinator — met with leadership from the *Parishes on the Prairie* ACC to offer their support, provide accurate and up-to-date information about the situation, and offer direction to ensure that the good work of your parishes and ministries continue during this time.

I have appointed Father Tim Baltus to serve as parochial administrator of your ACC's parishes on an interim basis. Father Tim is a retired priest of the diocese with nearly 50 years of pastoral leadership. He will offer valuable support and guidance to ACC and parish staff, in collaboration with Father Mark Botzet, during Father Greg's requested time away.

I want to offer my presence and support to you as well, and I will join the Diocesan Response Team for an ACC meeting at **6:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 25, at the Padua Pub**. All parishioners are welcome to attend. This will be an opportunity for us to address questions you may have as we are able. Father Tim also will attend the meeting to introduce himself and explain his role during this interim time.

I continue to keep all of you in my prayers.

Yours in Christ,

+ *Patrick M. Neary, C.S.C.*

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Bishop, Diocese of Saint Cloud