

Bishop Sullivan has sent a letter to the people of St. Regis parish about our pastor. I assure you the matters addressed in this letter came as a surprise to me this week as I'm sure they will for you. The letter is dated April 11, 1989. "Dear. . . ."

I am a bundle of emotions right now, as I'm sure you all are, too. St. Regis is a big parish. We have a school, an over 50 club, an outreach to the central city, programs and organizations too numerous to mention. It's difficult for me to imagine a greater honor than to ~~continue working in this parish,~~ *become your pastor,* and I hope this arrangement is all right with you. For the last ³ ~~two and a half~~ years I've been in residence here while working for the Center for Pastoral Life and Ministry. Most recently I've been living in an apartment nearby. Although it's difficult for me to leave my work at the Center, it feels good to focus my attention on the parish.

Judging from Bishop Sullivan's letter, Father Reardon clearly needs our prayers. Bishop Sullivan and Father Reardon have both made difficult decisions, and I'm sure they can count on our support.

Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd and my sheep listen to my voice." We sheep will continue to listen for the voice of Christ and follow it with all our hearts.

Finally, I wish to echo Bishop Sullivan's thanks to the leadership of this parish. The word on the streets about St. Regis is that it "runs itself." And it looks that way. But no parish runs itself. It takes leaders. And we have them in abundance. You celebrated a beautiful Holy Week. You conducted the annual parish drive. You have buried the dead, comforted the bereaved, and taught our children. I have the highest regard for the staff, faculty, and leadership of this parish. And you should be proud of them, too. They have guided us with confidence, competence, and care.

My nephew Bryan is going to make his first communion here this weekend. He used to live in St. Regis. I asked why he wanted to come back here today, and he said, "I like the people and I feel at home in the church." Not because his uncle is a hotshot. This is what St. Regis is about: We are people at home with our faith. I ask your support, and the ~~help~~ *guidance* of ~~Almighty~~ *the Good Shepherd* God, as we ~~continue to~~ build our family strong.