

Dear S. Braley,

I hope this letter finds you doing well. I want to thank you for your letter on the Archdiocese planning and to respond to some of the points you made.

Let me start with your concern about diversity and divisiveness. We concur with you on the points that as you so well stated, "Diversity is a characteristic that many applaud. Division and segregation are characteristics that many deplore." We agree that we want to treat all as children of God. As part of Atlanta's growth we have attracted many people to our thriving region. Northern diocese that once had an influx of many immigrant peoples and tongues found that over time the separate ethnic communities have come together, so that the separate Polish, Italian, and Irish parishes have now melded together and most now say common masses in English, while still celebrating their national identities. Over time, it is likely that all of the different groups in our Archdiocese will in many ways assimilate. But currently we have numerous groups, Vietnamese, Korean, Indonesians, Black Francophone and Latino, many of which have a need to use their native tongues for worship. Like the apostles with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we recognize the need to celebrate with them and to proclaim Christ's loving message in their native tongue. Our intent is to continue to grow and support the many wonderful people within our church while continuing to emphasize our unity. We are planning accordingly to celebrate our diversity while bringing us into unity.

On your second point, we agree that the archdiocese should be very prudent in stewarding resources. Your suggestion of providing a survey to registered parishioners in the archdiocese was something we also thought important. We did such a survey over a year ago, utilizing telephone, web and face-to-face methods. It was open to all to participate and I hope you took the opportunity to respond. The results of the surveys are still being used today to guide our decisions. But as you probably know, such surveys can be expensive since a broad set of people need to be contacted to achieve a representative sample given the typically low response rates of individuals. So in further refining our work, we are also surveying the pastors, priests and deacons as "clients" of our services and leaders of their parishioners. This was done very efficiently through the web and achieved very high response rates. The current survey will be used along with the broader parishioner survey to further focus the Chancery on the parishes and parishioners needs. I hope that you will consider this prudent stewardship of our scarce resources.

I welcome your input "regarding how the archdiocese uses the funds I donate." Feel free to send me your thoughts directly.

I thank you for expressing your perspectives and also thank you for your contributions to your parish and the Catholic Church in Georgia. God bless you.

Sincerely,

Salvador Arias

Archdiocese Planning Office

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