



September 15, 2026

My dear parishioners,

Next week we will celebrate the Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle. Matthew—tax collector, apostle, evangelist, patron of public officials (government workers), and the patron of our cathedral parish. It is a time each year when we come together as a community to praise the Lord, to thank Him for all He does for us, and to remember all the people who make up this local church. Together we are the people of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus, a community of faith.

### **A Dream of Renewal**

Thirty-one years ago, **Cardinal Hickey asked me to join him in renewing the life of the Cathedral Parish.** Yes, there was a need to renew the physical plant. This dream led to the complete restoration of the cathedral. But the Cardinal's sense of renewal was broader. His dream, his hope, was to see a Vatican II renewal in liturgy, music, faith formation, social justice, community, and outreach. **And we would work for this dream together** with the Cathedral's parishioners, both English and Spanish-speaking.

And that is exactly what has happened over these 31 years. An amazing array of people from all over the DMV, from all parts of the world, have come together in this place to worship, to serve, to grow in faith, and to form a wonderfully vibrant and diverse community. And, yes, these people have made possible some remarkable improvements and enhancements to the cathedral itself and to the rectory and parish offices; but their—our—most important achievement is not measured in bricks and mortar. Without a doubt, **the most important achievement is this community of faith** we have become.

### **Grateful for the Journey**

As I look back on these years, and on the thousands of people who have made this Cathedral their home and given their all—day in and day out—to make us what we are, I can only be grateful. Profoundly grateful! In the words of Mother Teresa, we have "built something beautiful for God." And I do mean WE. **The credit belongs to every one of us** whose love for this place has prompted us to make it a focal point of our life of faith. How blessed I have been to make this journey of faith in such great company. As a young man being ordained right here in this cathedral back in 1968, I could never have even dimly imagined such grace, such goodness, such joy!

And so now, my friends, I am reminded of the words of Ecclesiastes. **For everything there is a season**, a time for every activity under heaven:

*A time to be born and a time to die.*

*A time to plant and a time to harvest.*

*A time to cry and a time to laugh.*

*A time to grieve and a time to dance.*

*A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.*

*A time to be quiet and a time to speak.*

*A time to love and a time for peace.*

And yes, there comes a time when you know, **now is the time to hand over the role of shepherd.** Now is the time to let a younger leader bring new energy to this parish community. Now is the time to bring a fresh approach to ministry. Now is the time to start anew the dream Cardinal Hickey shared with me 31 years ago.

### **The Time Is Right**

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad. **A new beginning in July 2027.** I will have been here for 32 years—the longest tenure of any rector of this Cathedral. All I want to do at this moment of my retirement is to **give thanks to God**, who has done remarkable things in us and for us, and **give thanks to you**, who have accompanied me "on the way." In a thousand different ways, you have shown me the face of Christ. What a "lucky chap" I am!

This has been the question I have heard over and over again: "When are you going to retire?" So, this announcement is not a surprise. "It's about time," you say. I knew I would know when the time was right. The time is right—July 2027! The Cardinal was gracious and reassuring: "Eighty-five is a good year!"

### **Until Then, We Celebrate**

Of course, **I am still here for now.** There is still a lot of work to do. I must downsize! I need to prepare for the new rector (an unknown at this time), prepare my new residence, and prepare for the retirement Mass and reception. **We must celebrate!**

You will always be a part of my life. You will not be forgotten. God Bless!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson  
Rector