

Fr. Augie Gothman

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Church and School-Crookston
Historic St. Peter Church-Gentilly

" And when Jesus had said this, he said to Peter, "Follow me."

Dear brothers and sisters, the lines above are taken from the Gospel from Divine Mercy Sunday, the 21st chapter of the Gospel of St John. I thought they were just the place to start my reflections to you.

I'm not sure about you, but hardly seems only three and a half years or so ago that I came to Cathedral and to St Peter's (Labor Day, 2015). So much has happened in that time!

There have been so many wonderful experiences: baptisms, and celebrations of marriages, confirmations--so many of you sharing your lives with me, and me sharing my life with you. Also the other times--funerals and illnesses and moments when I was able to minister to your need; I feel I received much more than I gave.

But like St Peter, the first call any of us have is from Jesus to "follow him." You are aware that the number of priests of the diocese are struggling with health concerns, and one has reached age 70 and is retiring this summer. Bishop Hoepfner and the Assignments Committee asked for priests willing to take on a new challenge in ministry; knowing the need is great, I volunteered.

The plan is that effective July 1, I will be living in and serving the parishes of Saint Elizabeth in Dilworth, and Saint Andrew in Hawley as their pastor.

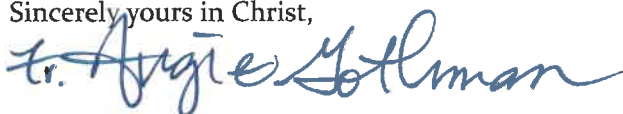
As I said, I have been truly blessed, so fortunate, to work with Father Vincent and all the staff at Cathedral and St. Peter's, and most of all, to be able to live a life of faith with all of you.

I told Bishop that "had all things being equal," I would have been most happy to remain at Cathedral and St Peter's indefinitely; but at this time, things are *not* equal. Being open to moving is one thing, the reality is another. With much prayer and deep conversations with family and trusted friends, I know I am doing my best to follow Jesus and live my call to ministry and service to the people of the Diocese of Crookston.

This is all brand new to me-- I got the news yesterday (Friday May 17), so I do not yet have any specifics about St Elizabeth's or St Andrew's. I have a lot of learning to do in the next 6 weeks and beyond, and as I know more I will fill you in. Since this news is so fresh, I am not aware what preparations are being made for July 1 and beyond here; Fr. Vincent will certainly share those details with you as we learn them.

As I said this is only an initial announcement to you, I will more specifics to share as I learn more. I would ask that you continue to pray for me, for Fr. Vincent, for all of our priests and for the whole church of the diocese of Crookston. Know that I pray for you every day.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr Augie Gothman