



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

Office of the Bishop
Fifty-five Joy Drive
South Burlington, Vermont 05403
Phone: (802) 658-6110

June 2, 2025

My dear family in Christ,

Having recently celebrated the first anniversary of my appointment as the 11th Bishop of Burlington (May 6, 2025) and having been very engaged in traveling around the diocese with pastoral visits, confirmation and other meetings, I thought it important that I provide you with an update on our Ch. 11 reorganization process. Specifically, I wish to inform you of some significant changes which will be occurring at the diocesan administrative offices at 55 Joy Drive in South Burlington.

Due to recent deficit diocesan budgets, the diocese has exhausted its unrestricted investments. This means that we must meet the financial obligations of the Ch. 11 process and our regular operational expenses with the funds we receive from the diocesan tax on parish ordinary income and the proceeds from the Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA). This amounts to approximately \$3 million dollars per year. A careful review of our present financial status made it clear we had to make changes to our administration to meet our financial obligations required by the bankruptcy process, especially the payment of legal and other administrative fees,

Thus, the difficult decision was made to initiate a reduction in employment hours for diocesan employees. Effective July 1, 2025, full-time employees will see a reduction in hours from 35 to 30 hours per week, with a commensurate reduction in salaries. This amounts to a 14% reduction in salaries. Senior staff members will experience a 20% reduction in salaries. Additionally, the diocese will pause its employer contributions to the 403b Retirement Plan managed through *Voya*. Full-time employees will retain the ability to make personal contributions to the plan and will retain their other benefits (health insurance, vision, dental, etc.). These changes will provide the diocese time to make additional changes to ensure that our reorganization is successful and provide a foundation upon which to rebuild our diocesan administrative offices in the years ahead.

Additionally, due to the reduction in hours, effective July 1, 2025, the diocesan offices will be closed for business on Fridays until further notice. This means that parishes and priests

will not be able to access the building or receive regular support on Fridays. In case of emergencies, senior staff and I will be available by cell phones.

I informed our staff last month to give them time to prepare for the changes. We also have encouraged employees to seek other possible employment opportunities because we cannot guarantee any position at this time. Our HR department has been assisting employees with updating resumes, cover letters and interview strategies to assist them in this time of transition. At this time, several employees have secured new positions and will be completing their service at 55 Joy Drive.

These changes apply only to employees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington. Vermont Catholic Charities and the parishes are not subject to these adjustments.

This is one of the most difficult decisions I have ever had to make as a bishop and priest. As I said to our employees, because I have worked with them for many years, they are like family to me. Please pray for these dedicated co-workers in the vineyard as they make decisions which are in the best interest of them and their families.

As more information becomes available, I will do my best to keep you all apprised of our progress.

God alone suffices.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. McDermott", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Most Reverend John J. McDermott
Bishop of Burlington