



September 28, 2017

Dear Members of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women,

I write to you with gratitude for all that the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women has done for more than 80 years here in the Archdiocese of Seattle. The generous response of the women invited by Bishop Shaughnessy to raise funds in support of seminarian education has been carried on by generations of women of faith. Over the years, the Council also raised funds for priestly aid. As of June 30, 2017 the Priest Support fund has \$595,208.19 and the Seminarian fund has \$1,443,330.58. These funds can only be used for the purposes for which they are designated.

With changing times and emerging new realities, most groups (whether they are secular or church organizations) experience change. They experience times of growth and times of contraction, periods of activity and those of relatively little movement, phases of group synergy and stages of fraction or conflict. These are all normal dynamics of human organizations. As we read in the first verse of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens."

In recent times, as you are no doubt aware, there have been serious conflicts and tensions in the Archdiocesan Council. As a result, I have decided to suspend the Council for a period of no less than two years. I believe this will provide some breathing room for all involved, as well as a period of healing.

I will be open to consider reactivating the Council again after two years have passed, provided there is sufficient interest and an adequate number of volunteers. I will also consider the group's ability to function in a manner that builds up the Body of Christ and the members of the organization in a healthy and Christ-centered manner.

I believe that you are all women of faith and I know that many of you have devoted a significant amount of time and energy in support of the Council. In particular, I would like to thank current president Suzanne Lindergren and past president Kathleen Tansey. They are both women of fine character and great faith and I am grateful for all they have done.

I realize that this news may be difficult for some of you to hear. Please be assured that I arrived at this decision after much prayer and consideration. In the long run, I truly believe that this is the best direction for the organization as a whole as well as its individual members.

Suzanne and other leadership will be working with Chancery officials to assure that bank accounts are closed and that any remaining funds are deposited centrally and retained in an interest bearing account, with use restricted to the future work of the Council. It is also important that any historical documents regarding the Council be retained by the Chancery Archives and Suzanne will be working with our staff to facilitate this effort. I ask that those of you involved in these aspects of the suspension please cooperate fully with the staff instructions and requests.

In closing, I would like to thank you again for your many years of dedicated and generous service. If you are interested, I would be happy to ask Angela to check our mutual schedules, as well as those of Bishop Elizondo and Bishop Mueggenborg, to see if we can find a time where one of us can celebrate Mass for you.

Please know that you are all in my prayers.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Rev. J. Peter Sartain  
Archbishop of Seattle