

April 14, 2026

**Dear parish family of Holy Spirit, St. John the Baptist, and faithful of the Archdiocese of Seattle,**

A few weeks ago, you received news regarding my sudden absence from ministry. I know that this has caused confusion, concern, and pain. That has been difficult for me as well, as I care deeply about the trust we have built as a community. With the support of the Archbishop, I write to you today in a spirit of respect and sincere care.

First of all, thank you. Thank you for your incredible care and support. I have received dozens of letters and cards of encouragement expressing how my ministry has impacted your lives and the community. I have read every single one of them and have been deeply moved by the mercy and care you have shown me. Many tears of joy were shed as I read them. They are a testament to how much I have loved my years of priestly ministry.

As much as I love being a priest, I did fail in living one of the promises of my priestly life, and I was placed on administrative leave by the Archdiocese. While the matter did not involve any criminal behavior, it is something I have taken seriously and have been reflecting on deeply. I take full responsibility for my actions, and I am deeply and sincerely sorry for the impact they have had on those involved and on this community. I would never have wanted to be a source of scandal or leave so abruptly, especially in the middle of Lent and during our Partners in the Gospel process.

Please be at peace knowing that this is not a result of ministry or community needs. I was not burned out, nor disillusioned with my vocation.

What this moment has brought into clarity, however, is a deeper personal discernment regarding the integration of the celibate life, which in our Roman Rite is a discipline of priestly life. This has been part of my prayer and discernment for some time, and this experience has led me to face it more directly.

After prayer, reflection, and conversation with those accompanying me in this matter, I have come to a decision. With peace in my heart, and with the support of my family and the Archdiocese, I will be stepping away from priestly ministry.

I am incredibly grateful to the communities I have had the privilege to serve. You have given me the best seven years of my life. It has been an honor to walk with you in your joys, your sorrows, your faith, and to be welcomed into your homes. I am also humbled to have shared my gifts in ministry with you. Everything I offered came from a sincere desire to love and serve you. When I spoke of walking with you in your struggles, I meant it.

I will always carry the identity of having shared in the priesthood of Christ, even as I step away from active ministry. I will continue in a path of discernment, and I trust that God will continue to lead and guide me to serve with love in whatever new ways He opens before me.

To all our young men who looked up to me and are considering priesthood: continue your discernment and be open to that possibility with an honest heart. If that is where the Lord needs you, He will not disappoint.

As I move through this process, I will be under a formal Leave Agreement which includes provisions to support me during this transition, including financial and healthcare support. I will also continue to refrain from social media and direct parishioner and staff engagement. Thank you for your understanding during this time of limited communication.

Every pastor brings his gifts to the community, and I trust that what I was able to share with you will continue to bear fruit under the direction of your new pastor. I have great confidence that the parishes will continue to grow and flourish in the years ahead.

On a lighter note, the animals are doing well and seem quite happy that they get to see me more often.

Please continue to pray for me as I continue this transition and be assured of my prayers for you.

**In the love of Christ,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Juan Carlos Orozco". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal dashed line.

**Fr. Carlos Orozco**