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All Saints 2015

Dear parishioners of St Paul's, Dover,

I thought it important to write to you now that Fr Peter has moved into semi-retirement and you are awaiting the appointment of a new parish priest. I say 'semi-retirement' since Fr Peter has now moved out of the presbytery but is still taking on as much pastoral and sacramental care of the parish as he can. All the same, not having a resident priest, and being in a period of transition, can be an unsettling time for a parish and I know it can start to feel adrift, so it is with that in mind that I put this letter together.

Given the current situation, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Fr Peter, not only for his years of service in Dover, but also for continuing to support the parish despite his own state of health. I would also like to thank all parishioners, with particular mention of Theresa and Keith Wells and Deacon Barry, who have done so much to support Fr Peter and keep the parish heart beating.

Being at the far end of the Diocese I know there can be a temptation to feel semi-detached, or even worse, forgotten by the wider Church. Let me assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. The situation in Dover is a priority for the Archbishop and his Council. At this particular time, however, demand for priests is outstripping supply, and working out the transfer of priests across the Diocese can be a rather drawn out process since it necessarily involves moving several priests at the same time.

So I crave your patience during this period and ask you to continue praying and working for the good of the parish. I hope to be able to inform you soon about your new parish priest as St Paul's begins a new chapter in the Catholic life of Dover.

With every blessing,

Fr Paul

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