



*Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church*

*2700 19<sup>th</sup> Street South, Arlington VA 22204*

*703-979-5580; fax 703-979-5590*

*www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org*

June 1, 2009

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady Queen of Peace,

Thank you to all of you for the wonderful welcome you have given me during my first weeks here at OLQP! I particularly want to express my gratitude to Father Tuozzolo, the parish staff, the Parish Advisory Board, and the many volunteers who have gone out of their way to welcome and help me begin to become familiar with our people, our neighborhood, and the many ministries of our parish.

One matter that was brought to my attention immediately upon my arrival is the status of the Our Lady Queen of Peace Early Learning Center. As many of you know, Father Tuozzolo and the Early Learning Center Advisory Board have been reviewing the Center and its programs for the past six months, receiving feedback from parents, information from the Arlington County Department of Child and Family Services as well as a third-party assessment of the program. As a result of this review, the decision has been made to close the program to allow for both academic and structural updates.

I understand that this program, which is over 40 years old, plays an important role in parish life and allows us to answer the call to nurture and educate children. Part of our responsibility in running a child care center must be to provide the highest quality instruction and day care service possible. It is our sincere expectation and intention that this closure will allow us to revitalize both our facility, which is in need of renovations, and our academic program.

While I am new to the parish, this review began under Father Tuozzolo's leadership, and he fully supports this decision. The Early Learning Center Advisory Board, made up of parishioners and former parents, unanimously recommended this decision. We all agree that our first concern must be for the well-being and success of the children, and that this is the correct course of action.

The Early Learning Center will close on June 30, 2009. Approximately one third of the sixty students in the program qualify for assistance from Arlington County. These students will be placed in other Pre-School programs by the Arlington County Department of Child and Family Services. For those parents who will be looking for other care arrangements for their children, we have provided a comprehensive list of child care facilities in the area with openings.

After over 40 years, we must reassess our mission and goals, strengthen our services and enhance the program curriculum, and this type of restructuring, paired with the physical updates to the building, would make it impossible to continue operation during the transition.

I am hopeful that we will return to the child care ministry with a more proficient program and that, working together as a parish, we will continue to educate God's children. I will report back to the parish at the end of the summer as to the status of reopening the Early Childhood Center. During this time of transition, and, indeed, throughout my time here, I welcome you to write to me at [office@ourladyqueenofpeace.org](mailto:office@ourladyqueenofpeace.org).

Please pray for me as I continue to pray for you,

Father Timothy Hickey, C.S.Sp.  
Pastor, Our Lady Queen of Peace Church  
Executive Director, Queen of Peace Early Learning Center

*"I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me..."*

*--Matthew 25:35*