



Dear parishioners and friends of the Church of Saint Paul,

Last summer our youth staff and I reluctantly cancelled our two scheduled mission trips to North Dakota based on a need for safety and adult support. Since then I have been seeking guidance in prayer and in discussion among our staff as to the possibilities of a mission this year. What seems clear is that we are not prepared to lead a summer mission to North Dakota from St. Paul's in 2017. The biblical image that seems most fitting to me is of Jesus in the temple at age 12 (Luke 2:41-52). For him it was a time to be engaged at home, growing in wisdom, age and favor. His mission to the world was waiting for the fullness of time.

As in this biblical image, I think we are presently in a time of prayer and discernment, seeking where our strength is. Every mission event represents the whole body of Christ in our parish, all contributing in their own way to a work of love that is guided by the Holy Spirit.

I am not closing the door to missions from COSP to North Dakota in 2018 or beyond as long as we are prepared in advance with spiritual and logistic support. I have asked my staff to organize a task force among interested parishioners to evaluate other possibilities for this summer and in the future. I ask that you join my staff and I in prayerfully seeking our Lord's wisdom and direction.

*Fr. Jim*