Marian Heitbrink, Music Director/Organist St. John & Precious Blood, Letter of Retirement

Dear St. John and Precious Blood Parishioners,

I would like to inform all of you that I am retiring from my position as Music Director/ Organist effective December 26, 2023.

I have given much thought and consideration to my decision. While I have enjoyed my time at both churches, I believe that this is the right time for me to retire. I have been playing in churches since I was 12 years old and have had some amazing memories from Weddings, Anniversaries, Funerals, Masses, Ordinations, and First Masses.

My time at both churches has been full of growth, learning and understanding. I will miss the Choir Family, teaching the choir beautiful music for all types of events during the church year the most.

It is time for me to spend time with my beautiful family and a wonderful husband. Bob has always called himself the "Organist Widow". We are hoping to spend more time traveling and enjoying our family together.

I will be forever grateful for the congregations of both churches and the warm welcome I felt when I took on this position.

Sincerely, Marian Heitbrink, Music Director/Organist

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church & Precious Blood Catholic Church

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of all the parishioners and staff of St. John the Baptist and Precious Blood and our Marion Catholic Community, I would like to offer words of thanks and deep gratitude for the gift of music, ministry and service Marian Heitbrink has provided these last 13 years as Music Director/Organist. Marian told me that when she accepted the position offered by my brother, Fr. Gene, Marian agreed to 10 years. Zeal for the ministry, and perhaps Fr. Gene, may have helped prompt the other three.

Marian's love of music, joyfully praising God and walking with others in both the joys and sorrows of life has been a lifelong vocation and love. Marian has met with many engaged couples, sharing the joy and happiness of a wedding day. She has helped many young people experience the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation more deeply. And, she has walked with many bereaved families seeking to bring consolation, peace of mind and hope. Marian not only saw the gift of music as a way to praise and thank God, to find consolation and hope, but also a touchstone to the divine. She has recognized that sometimes it is a song, a verse or a melody that attunes us more closely to God.

Marian has given up many weekends and rescheduled many family gatherings to serve our faith communities, so it is fitting that she now has that time to spend more freely with family. We ask God's blessings and good health upon Marian and Bob in their retirement years.

We are reviewing the position responsibilities and how best to fulfill those responsibilities at St. Jon and Precious Blood. We will be advertising, conducting interviews with a committee and hopefully hiring this Fall

Please join me in thanking Marian for her many years of dedicated and faith filled service. Sincerely in Christ, Fr. Ken Schnipke, C.PP.S., Pastor