

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the summer of 2010 Bishop Guglielmone asked me to become administrator of Our Lady of the Rosary parish. An administrator (as opposed to pastor) is a temporary appointment of a priest to be in charge of a parish. The appointment as administrator was made because the Vatican had asked that married men (who were ordained under the special pastoral provision) should not be put in charge of parishes. This guidance was given so that the married men would have a more financially secure position as a hospital, school or prison chaplain. Nevertheless, Bishop Guglielmone was assured that our situation would be secure and so asked me to step in.

The first five years presented many challenges. Happily, Bishop Guglielmone also ordained and appointed Fr. Ballard as deacon to serve at OLR.

At the service of dedication for our new church in 2016 Bishop Guglielmone announced that I was to be appointed as pastor. For this appointment he had to obtain special permission from Rome. I have been amazingly blessed to serve as administrator and pastor now for almost fifteen years. During that time, we have seen the Lord lead us and provide wonderful answers to prayer.

In addition to the new church being completed, the old church has been renovated to provide the Guadalupe Hall and the four classrooms we have needed to upgrade our parish school to provide a K4-12 education for our families. When the Vietnamese members of OLR left to establish Our Lady of La Vang Church we lost 1/3 of our people. Since then, our numbers have bounced back and OLR parish and school are larger than ever.

The blessing of growth we have enjoyed can be attributed to a number of factors: first, the demographics are good. Upstate South Carolina is a beautiful place to relocate to with lots of opportunities, a safe place for families and plenty of resources. Secondly, we have been blessed with a wonderful parish and school staff who are smart, well qualified, hard working and full of faith and love for the Lord. The growth would also not have been possible except for the stable, loyal, prayerful and generous parishioners. I have often “bragged” about OLR’s depth of feeling for the faith, the beautiful worship, the generous giving and the hard work shown in our school and parish ministries—in catechesis, evangelization, pro-life work and outreach to the needy.

As we move forward into 2025—through Lent, Paschaltide, and then the rest of this church year to Advent, I encourage each one of you not to become indifferent or to take our beautiful parish for granted, but to work and pray even harder to proclaim joyfully our Catholic faith in our words and our works, in our homes, in our private lives, in our workplaces, our school and beyond.

God has more plans for Our Lady of the Rosary parish! Let’s keep up the good work!

Your Pastor,  
Fr. Longenecker