

**Farewell Celebration**  
**Retirement – Monsignor Michael Hess**  
**Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**Remarks**  
**Bishop Richard Pates**

I am very happy to be with Monsignor Mike Hess as he concludes his active priesthood and moves into deserved retirement which I am sure will be filled with much activity.

By way of explanation, I am recovering from recent vocal chord surgery which temporarily impairs my voice. I am grateful for the “voice” to communicate these brief remarks of gratitude to Monsignor Hess.

Monsignor is a gifted man who has dedicated his life in generous service to our Des Moines Catholic community in order that God’s companionship and presence in our lives might be experienced.

His last two assignments particularly illustrate his legacy. He became President of Dowling High School at a crucial time in its history. He guided the school out of a serious storm. Today, we are very much aware of the stature and effectiveness of Dowling Catholic High due in large measure to the renewed foundation Father established for the school.

Monsignor’s last 15 years as Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish have contributed to a strong vital community alive in the Spirit. Under his guidance, the school is flourishing with a full student body.

Particularly timely during this period of U.S. Church history is the outreach that Sacred Heart Parish has rendered to the Hispanic community. In recent years, in coordination with Fathers Paul Cuong Hung Nguyen and Fabian Moncada the Hispanic pastoral ministry has expanded dramatically. It is a testament in the United States to what is called Shared Parishes leading to one parish.

Heartfelt gratitude is expressed to Father Mike not only on behalf of the parishioners of Sacred Heart but the broader diocesan community. Father, you have made a difference. Our prayers and best wishes are with you as you begin retirement. May your drives be long and straight and your putts deadly.