

MICHAELMAS HOUSE: PILGRIMS REST

1586 29TH AVENUE

VERO BEACH, FLORIDA 32960

19th June, A.D. 2026

Friday after the Third Sunday of the Trinity Season

TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF THE WESTERN GULF COAST:
Beloved in the Lord,

From the day this appointment was first set before me, you have been much in my thoughts and in my prayers, and it has been a joy to look forward to serving among you and to coming to know your clergy and people. This is not, therefore, the letter I had expected to write to you, and I begin with an apology for the hopes and expectations this communication will disappoint.

When Dean Julian Dobbs, who is serving us as Acting Archbishop, asked me to serve as Interim Bishop of the Western Gulf Coast, I counted it an honor and gave my glad and ready consent. This appointment was suggested and blessed by your Bishop Ordinary, Bishop Clark Lowenfield, a friend and colleague of many years.

Circumstances have developed since I first said yes to this appointment which no longer make it possible for me to fulfill that commitment, and for this I am deeply sorry. Indeed, the Lord's peace I had at first about the assignment has now been taken away. I would not draw back at so late an hour were I not persuaded that it is both right and necessary to do so.

I am convinced that the Lord will provide what you need in this coming interim. A faithful and younger bishop will be raised up to lead you through this season of reflection and healing. Though it does not always appear so in the moment, His Word stands sure, "for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). Scripture assures us that this will prove true for you, as it has proven true for me again and again throughout my long life and more than fifty years of ordained ministry.

Please forgive me for the disappointment I have caused you, and for the measure of uncertainty that now attends your path forward. Know that I will pray earnestly for you. Please bid a fond farewell to Bishop Clark. Then hold fast to the assurance the Apostle Paul gave in one of his earliest letters, “He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

With Godly Affection,

+ Archbishop RB

THE MOST REVEREND ROBERT WILLIAM DUNCAN, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS – SEVENTH BISHOP OF PITTSBURGH (RETIRED)