



August 27, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are doubly blessed this year not only to celebrate the Year for Priests designated by the Holy Father, but also the 35th anniversary of our diocese. With prayers of thanksgiving, I invite you to join me on this year's Diocesan pilgrimage, "**Mary, Cause of our Joy and Mother of Priests,**" on October 10 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

A pilgrimage is a grace-filled opportunity to join together in prayer, both in gratitude for blessings received, as well as in petition for the continuing growth in holiness of our diocesan Church. In a special way, I ask you to pray for our priests, who have given their lives in service to God and to all of you through their ministry. As you know, the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is dedicated to Our Lady. I invite you and your families to come to seek her particular intercession for priests and for each one of our parishioners.

The day will begin at 9 a.m. with the Rosary, followed by time for confession, tours of the Basilica and a special reflection by Fr. David Thayer, S.S. Our day will conclude with the celebration of the Holy Mass at 1 p.m. Please see your parish bulletin or the diocesan Web site, www.arlingtondiocese.org, for more information about the schedule of events, transportation and the Basilica.

I look forward with much joy to seeing you in October. Until then, I remain

Faithfully in Christ,

+ Paul S. Loverde

Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde
Bishop of Arlington