



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

July 29, 2021

Saint Catherine of Ossineke
Saint Gabriel of Black River
Saint Anne of Harrisville
Saint Raphael of Mikado

Dear Parishioners:

Due to circumstances beyond the control of the Diocese or Fr. John William, a backlog of applications and renewals at Homeland Security has prevented the timely processing of Fr. John William's VISA extension. Please know that the Diocese has done everything required to see that Fr. John's extension was handled properly and in a timely manner. Now, because of this situation, Fr. John is not able to do any form of public ministry from July 28, 2021 until Homeland Security completes their approval process. We have no way of knowing how long this may take. If Homeland Security becomes aware that Father has done **any** form of public ministry, it can jeopardize his status and it will put the Diocese at risk for his renewal and for future diocesan applications/renewals of international priests. Other dioceses are facing the same situation with their international priests.

While Fr. William will continue, at least for the time being, to remain in the rectory, there will be no weekday Masses at any of Fr. John's parishes until further notice. This weekend, the Saturday (July 31) 4:30 p.m. Mass at Mikado, the 9:00 a.m., Sunday (August 1) Mass in Ossineke and the 11:00 a.m. Mass in Harrisville will be celebrated by Fr. Larry Boks. Until further notice, Fr. Boks will be covering the Saturday 4:30 p.m. Mass at Mikado and the Sunday 11:00 a.m. Mass in Harrisville. For this service, we are very grateful to Fr. Boks and to Fr. Tyler Bischoff for adjusting their schedules to make sure Mass will be said for the faithful.

We ask your prayers for a timely resolution of this matter. We will keep you updated as to Fr. John William's status and, hopefully, return to the full service of all the parishes.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Rev. Walter A. Hurley
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord

cc: Rev. Larry Boks
Rev. Tyler Bischoff