

Dear Parishioners of St. Philip Parish:

A number of you have inquired as to Father Thomas Lee's status. The initial investigation regarding the allegations against Fr. has been completed and, in accordance with the Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, I am referring this matter to the Holy See. Under the Dallas Charter, the referral to the Holy See is not a determination of either guilt or innocence, which will be determined at a later stage. The referral to the Holy See means that the allegations raised enough concern that this next step in the process is necessary. In the meantime, the present restrictions on Fr. Lee remain.

After much thought, Fr. Lee has submitted his resignation as your pastor. In his letter to me, he indicated that since he has been away from the parish for six months, he believes that it would only be right to resign at this time.

Fr. Lee went on to say: "I have been pastor of Lyman since November 1985 – nearly 19 years. I have enjoyed my relationship with the people of that faith community and will miss them very much. I am 76 years old, already six years beyond normal retirement age. I trust that the parishioners will understand my actions at this time and know that I am trying to act in their best interest."

Thus, considering Fr. Lee's age, health, the need for recourse to the Holy See, as well as his own concern for your best interest, I have accepted his resignation. A new pastor will be assigned this coming June. In the meantime, Fr. Philip Michael Tracy has agreed to continue to serve your pastoral needs.

I know this has been a difficult process for everyone. I will keep everyone concerned in my prayers and hope that you will do the same.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Joseph J. Gerry, O.S.B.  
Diocesan Administrator