

To: St. Joseph Parish, Board of Education  
Doug Brock, President  
From: Ruth E. Ard, D.R.E.  
Date: 8 February 2010

I hereby notify the St. Joseph Parish (Marion, Iowa) Board of Education that I will retire from my position as Director of Religious Education, effective at the end of my current contract. There will be no need to discuss offering another contract, because I will not renew my contract, even if it were to be offered.

I thank the parish of St. Joseph and the three pastors I have worked for and with. I am grateful to Msgr. John McClean for the confidence he showed in me when he hired me in 1986, first part-time as CRE for high school religious education, then as Co-DRE (1988) with Mary Hauschildt. I acknowledge the humility Mary showed when she later suggested that we assume our respective titles of CRE and DRE in line with Archdiocesan descriptions.

I thank my most-valued and esteemed colleagues in Religious Education and on the parish staff for what has been an extremely rewarding 24 years here at St. Joseph. Thank you, also, to the teachers and staff of St. Joseph School who have enriched me, as I shared a space for office and for our mutual ministry of catechesis. When I think of probably 2500 or more children and teens and their parents, 300 or more catechists and at least half that number of classroom aides, with whom my life and ministry have intersected in these years, I recognize that I have been greatly blessed.

The programs for which I have been responsible will continue, and for at least some time, may still bear an imprint of my work. But, new leadership will bring new ideas, and in freshness, the Church in this corner of God's kingdom will flourish. The Holy Spirit is ever at work on behalf of God's Church so there will be many to follow who will share my passion and enthusiasm for learning and teaching and bringing others to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. That is what has insured that the Church endures and helps fulfill what Jesus has promised: that He will be with us "to the end of time."

There will always be fond memories for me and a special place in my heart for St. Joseph Church, Marion, Iowa. It has given me much; I have tried always to make sure that what I have offered in return has been just and equitable, as well as generous in the ways of faith. I know that it is time for me to retire; 22 years as DRE is sufficient. I welcome this new stage of my life. It is with some sadness at what I leave, but great joy at what the future holds, that I offer my notice of resignation, effective July 1, 2010.

May you, and all those who carry on, know the grace and peace of Jesus Christ in your ministry to the people of St. Joseph and to the universal Roman Catholic Church,

  
8 Feb 2010