

June 2, 2024

To the Parishioners of the Church of the Holy Angels, Dayton, Ohio

After 21 years, as your music director at Holy Angels, I, John Edelmann, have decided to retire. My wife Ute and I have decided that I'm ready to close the chapter of my life that requires me to dedicate my weekends doing regular weddings on Saturdays and a Sunday Mass at a parish.

In 2003, Fr. Dan Meyer contacted me to consider leading the music ministry at Holy Angels as the music director. I had been the music director of four area congregations by this time, having started my musical church career as part of the 12:45 pm Mass at the University of Dayton Chapel Campus Ministry (1983-86), St. Paul in Englewood (1990-94), St. Agnes in Dayton (1998-2003), and the Society of Mary, Province of the United States (2000-2008).

While at Holy Angels, I have had the good fortune to be involved with several important enhancements to the overall worship experience of the parish, including the sound system renovation in 2004, new hymnals (twice), the pipe organ restoration and maintenance effort (2005 to the present), and a redesigned sound system for the choir loft, including a digital wireless mixer. These improvements would not have been possible without the leadership and guidance provided by the dedicated pastors I have been privileged to work with these past 2 decades, including the Reverends Dan Meyer, Gregory Konerman, and now, Satish Joseph.

As a student at the University of Dayton (1980-1984), I majored in Systems Analysis and a minor in Religious Studies. As noted earlier, at the end of my sophomore year, I became a Campus music minister at a regular Sunday Mass, accompanying on the piano. After graduating, I would occasionally have the opportunity to play at Holy Angels (with my own keyboard in tow) for funerals and other events for family members of friends from the UD area, as I continued to assist at UD services. On one occasion, Dr. Ritter Werner (Holy Angels Music Director from 1982-1997) even let me play the pipe organ!

I was therefore quite surprised to be offered the opportunity to become the music director of the "church by UD", where I'd spent my undergraduate years.

When I was hired at Holy Angels in 2003, I received a Miami Valley Catholic Church Musicians (MVCCM) scholarship to secure four months of organ lessons. Prior to that, I had never had a single organ lesson, though as a student, I was a pipe organ enthusiast. And yet, by the end of October 2003, after having only a few Sundays under my belt, a parishioner told Fr. Dan that "... finally, we have a real organist." If they only knew.

June 30, 2024, will be my last Sunday at Holy Angels as your music director. I cannot begin to convey to the parishioners of Holy Angels what a fantastic and rewarding journey my 21 years serving as your music director has been. The steadfast dedication of the choir and others during all these years has been an inspiration as well.

In closing, let me state that I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to have nurtured the spiritual life of Holy Angels these past 21 years. As much as I will miss being a part of the musical life of the Parish, I realize that it is time to pass this special opportunity on to a new director. I trust that, with your support, they will continue the fine tradition of music ministry I strove to always provide.

With every good wish I am, sincerely yours as a minister of music,

John Edelmann