

*“In Christ, All Things Are Made New”*

“I deeply regret that denying a Catholic Funeral for John McCusker at the Immaculata has resulted in his unjust condemnation and I apologize to the family for the anguish this has caused them.

To help rectify this situation, insofar as it can be, I will preside at a Mass for the family, in memory of John, at the Immaculata.

In consideration for the family, I will not be available for any further public statements on this matter.”

With these words, Bishop Brom has modeled, for the entire Church of San Diego, an example of humility. Reflecting upon his decision and the reaction of his decision by the Church and the wider community, he acted on behalf of the common good, and reached out to the family in a spirit of reconciliation.

As a Church, we should be grateful for Christ’s spirit of reconciliation that was alive and well in the conversation between Bishop Brom and the McCusker family.

During this past Holy Week, this event has provided a most profound example of how things can be made new when people, in cooperation with each other, live Christ’s spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

We should, in a very special way, keep the McCusker Family and Bishop Brom in our prayers, thanking God for the example they have set for the Church and the wider community.

In all that I have read regarding this situation, the best bit of advice has come from Rebecca Moore, a professor of Religious Studies at San Diego State University, when she said, “A funeral does not make a statement about the morality of the deceased, but rather it makes a statement about the mercy of God.”

Be assured that here at the Church of St. Thomas More, that advice will be taken seriously, and that the spirit of those words will guide our pastoral practice in regard to funerals.

As we begin this Easter Season, may we seriously reflect upon the graciousness and the courage of the McCusker Family and Bishop Brom who trusted in Christ’s spirit of reconciliation and allowed Christ to “make all things new.”