



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

7200 Stonehenge Drive • Raleigh, North Carolina 27613-1620 • (984) 900-3103

October 4, 2026

Dear Father Nguyen and my Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With heartfelt joy, I extend my warmest congratulations to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Southport as you celebrate the 85th anniversary of your parish.

From the earliest Catholic presence in the Cape Fear region to the household Masses hosted by devoted families in Southport, the story of Sacred Heart is a beautiful testament to perseverance in faith. Long before a parish church existed, Catholic families, missionary priests, and coastal communities helped keep the flame of the Gospel alive in Brunswick County.

I am especially grateful to the many priests, deacons, religious, lay leaders, benefactors, and families whose faithfulness has shaped Sacred Heart over the decades. Their witness is visible not only in buildings and records but also in the lives touched through worship, pastoral care, service, hospitality, and community life.

The return of the original 1941 bell is a fitting symbol of this holy continuity. It reminds the parish that while times, places, and circumstances change, the call to gather as the People of God remains constant. May that bell continue to speak of memory, gratitude, and mission for generations to come!

As you give thanks for all that God has done through Sacred Heart Catholic Church, may you also look to the future with confidence and hope. May your parish continue to welcome residents and visitors, form disciples, serve those in need, and bear joyful witness to Christ in Southport. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus bless you abundantly and guide your community in faith, hope, and charity.

In Christ,



† Luis Rafael Zarama, J.C.L.

Bishop of Raleigh