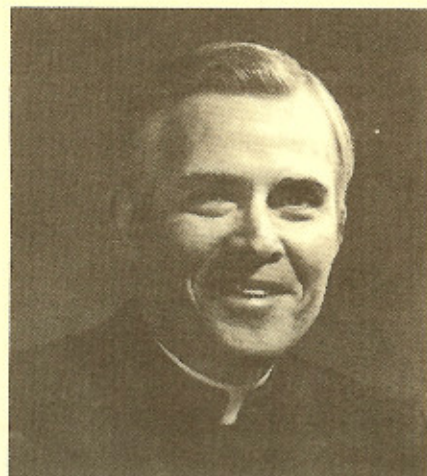


F. Joseph Gossman
Bishop of Raleigh



Office of the Bishop

October 9, 1987

Reverend Gerald L. Lewis
St. Raphael the Archangel Parish
5801 Falls of the Neuse Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609

Dear Father Lewis:

You have finally come to the day of dedicating the new church building of St. Raphael's. I congratulate you and your people for this extraordinary achievement. It is yet another sign of the continued growth of the Catholic Church in eastern North Carolina. And it marks the beginning of a new chapter in the life of the parish community of St. Raphael. Your building is an object of beauty and magnificence.

From our history of small rural communities struggling to provide a church in isolated sections of the state, we have now come to this day when we are dedicating a major house of worship.

I congratulate your people, not only for their support of your new church, but also for their dedication and for their willingness to reach out to many of our smaller parish communities. The people of St. Raphael's are well known for their generous support of the Church's work in our missionary diocese.

I also congratulate and thank the family of St. Raphael's for so warmly opening the doors of your parish buildings to the local community. You have enriched not only your Catholic people, but all of the community around you.

St. Raphael's has for many reasons been a blessing to north Raleigh. May it continue to be so. May the dedication of your new building signify in yet greater ways the depth of your people's faith in, and love of, God. I send you and all your people my very best wishes.

Sincerely in the Lord,

F. Joseph Gossman
Bishop of Raleigh