



Blue Island, Posen, Robbins and St. Walter Renew My Church Update: March 9, 2021
Updated April 21, 2021

Discernment Process

St. Benedict, St. Donatus, St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr, St. Walter Parishes and the St. Peter Claver Mission engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) review and discernment process during the past few months. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment team (GFDT), which was made up of members from each community, met to review and discern the future parish structure for the area. Our deepest appreciation goes to the GFDT who prayerfully discerned the parish grouping structure during this challenging time.

Based on their meetings and feedback gathered from the larger parish community, they submitted feedback to the archdiocese. The Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, which includes representatives from across the Archdiocese of Chicago, reviewed the feedback and other information, including financial summaries and parish trends.

Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Perry are grateful to Msgr. Lyle, Fr. Cadavid, Fr. Kokose, Fr. Mezydlo and the Grouping Team who gathered throughout the past few months, and all parishioners who offered feedback through the recent discernment process.

Outcome

In the past few weeks, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, the archdiocese's auxiliary bishops, and the archdiocese's Presbyteral Council met to discuss the Commission's recommendation. Based upon those discussions and prayerful consideration, Cardinal Cupich made the following decisions regarding the parish structure in this grouping:

- **Effective July 1, 2021, St. Benedict, St. Walter and St. Peter Claver Mission will unite as a new parish, with a new name, one pastor and pastoral team.**
 - Monsignor Dennis J. Lyle has been designated as pastor of the united parish.
 - St. Benedict will be the parish church where the sacramental records are kept.
 - Masses on Sunday will be held only at St. Benedict.
 - St. Walter will continue as a sacred space and will host a Saturday Vigil Mass. The church may additionally be used for school Masses, funerals and other special occasions.
 - St. Peter Claver's Gospel Mass will be incorporated into the style and schedule of Masses at St. Benedict Church and the site will remain available for occasional events.
 - As announced in January, St. Benedict and St. Walter schools will unite for the next school year as one school with two campuses.
 - The local community will discern possibilities for the new name of the parish, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit three to five options to Cardinal Cupich.
- **St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr** will join the St. Christopher and St. Damian grouping to continue discernment to the west.
 - Fr. Kokose will receive a new assignment in another parish effective July 1, 2021. A priest administrator will be assigned to St. Stanislaus to lead the parish through the continuing discernment.
- **St. Donatus** will remain in its current structure.
 - Fr. Cadavid will continue to serve as pastor.



Parish Structure Rationale

- St. Benedict, St. Walter, St. Peter Claver Mission:
 - St. Benedict has sufficient capacity to truly unite as a new parish.
 - St. Peter Claver Mission community members are excited to bring their Gospel Mass to a wider audience. Details of this transition will be determined by parish leadership, e.g., incorporating elements of the Gospel Mass into regular Masses or establishing one Mass time dedicated to the Gospel Mass as part of the parish's Mass schedule.
 - St. Walter church will remain available as sacred space. This will allow the school access to a sacred space for school Masses and the parish access for funerals and special occasions. Additionally, formally closing St. Walter Church would not save the united parish significant expenses.
- St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr:
 - St. Stanislaus' discernment with parishes to the west addresses the geographic barrier of the train tracks between Posen and Blue Island on Western.
 - Additionally, St. Christopher and St. Stanislaus have a history of working together, e.g., St. Christopher's Knights of Columbus helped St. Stanislaus begin its Hispanic Knights of Columbus and families from St. Stanislaus went to St. Christopher School after St. Stanislaus School closed.

Next Steps

- Parish leadership and parishioners will discern possibilities for the name of the new parish, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit their considerations to Cardinal Cupich for his decision on the permanent name of the new parish.
- The RMC staff will work with St. Stanislaus to begin planning for discernment with St. Christopher and St. Damian.
- The parish communities will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. The renewal process calls us to become a stronger, more sustainable presence for the future, capable of reaching more people in their work of making disciples of Jesus Christ, building communities with one another and inspiring witness in the world around us.