



## **West Town Renew My Church Update: January 23, 2021**

### **Discernment Process**

St. Helen, Holy Innocents, Holy Rosary, St. Malachy + Precious Blood, St. Mark, St. Stephen King of Hungary and Santa Maria Addolorata Parishes engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) discernment process through the fall of 2020. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment team (GFDT), which was made up of members from each parish 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 communities, 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, capital needs and parish trends.

Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Lombardo are grateful to Fr. Cronin, Fr. Arrieta Correa, Fr. Baldonieri, Fr. Eyerman, Fr. Mantovani, Fr. Ibarra and the Grouping Teams 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 West Town.

- Effective July 1, 2021, St. Helen, St. Mark and Holy Rosary will unite as a new parish with a new name, one pastor and one pastoral team.
- St. Helen will be the main worship site for the newly formed parish and formally designated the parish church where the united parish's sacramental records will be kept.
  - The RMC Commission asks parish leadership to annually review the best use of Holy Rosary, with a final determination within three years. This may or may not include a regular schedule of Masses.
  - The RMC Commission also recommends the regular schedule of Masses at St. Mark cease no later than Ash Wednesday 2022 (March 2, 2022). Local leadership will set a specific timeline for this transition. Many new parish communities have discerned transitioning Masses sooner than the recommended date is prudent for the community.
  - There are no changes to St. Helen School.
- Effective July 1, 2021, St. Stephen King of Hungary will become a canonical mission serving the Hungarian community in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The mission will be administrated by the pastor of the united parish formed by St. Helen, St. Mark, and Holy Rosary.
- Effective July 1, 2021, Holy Innocents, Santa Maria Addolorata and St. Malachy + Precious Blood will unite as a new parish with a new name, one pastor and one pastoral team.
- Holy Innocents and St. Malachy + Precious Blood will be both be worship sites for the newly formed parish, with a Mass schedule to be determined by the pastor in consultation with parish leadership and may differ from their current schedule. St. Malachy + Precious Blood campus will be designated the parish church where the united parish's sacramental records will be kept.
  - The RMC Commission recommends the regular schedule of Masses at Santa Maria Addolorata cease no later than Ash Wednesday 2022 (March 2, 2022). Local leadership will set a specific timeline for this transition. Many new parish communities have discerned transitioning Masses sooner than the recommended date is prudent for the community.
  - There are no changes to St. Malachy School.

Regarding pastors, the Archdiocese of Chicago's Priests' Placement Board has begun its work to identify candidates. We hope the pastors can be named by mid-March, and possibly sooner.



## **Parish Structure Rationale**

- Some consideration was given to a three-parish scenario, however additional discernment led to the conclusion that three parishes would not be sustainable financially and one parish would be too difficult to manage for one pastor and pastoral team.
- Transitioning St. Stephen, King of Hungary to a canonical mission acknowledges it does not have the scale to be what we envision as a full parish in the future but allows it to retain its Hungarian identity.
- The union of St. Helen, Holy Rosary, and St. Mark provides a base for evangelization of the local neighborhood.
- The union of St. Malachy + Precious Blood, Holy Innocents, and Santa Maria Addolorata spans a relatively large geographic area, however they all have a shared history of Spanish language ministry. Maintaining two worship sites provides geographic coverage in this area of the grouping.

## **Next Steps**

Once pastors have been named, 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 new Mass schedule at each worship site, including the number of Masses in each language, will become effective with the formal union of the parishes. This will also be determined by the pastor in consultation with parish leadership in the coming months.

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.