



St. Frances of Rome and St. Mary of Celle Renew My Church Update: Sept. 20, 2021

Discernment Process

St. Frances of Rome and St. Mary of Celle Parishes engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) review and discernment process over 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 structure during this challenging time of the pandemic.

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 Birmingham are grateful to Fr. Stein, Fr. Morales and the Grouping Team who gathered, and all 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.

- **St. Frances of Rome and St. Mary of Celle will unite as one parish with two worship sites, one pastor and one pastoral team. The parish will be known as St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds Parish.**
 - Both churches will continue to host a regular schedule of Masses. The specific schedule will be determined by the pastor in consultation with parish leadership.
 - St. Frances of Rome will formally be designated the parish church where the united parish's sacramental records will be kept.
 - As noted above, the united parish's name will be St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, in alignment with the grouping team's preference for the new parish name to incorporate elements of each legacy parish's name.
 - There are no changes to St. Frances of Rome School.
 - The Archdiocese of Chicago's Priest Placement Board will continue its discernment of a candidate to recommend as pastor of the newly unified parish. More information will be shared when it is available.
 - Additionally, the RMC Commission asks the parish to continually review its structures in collaboration with Bishop Birmingham and his vicariate staff team.

Next steps

- 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.
- The newly united parish community, will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. We know that this structural change is just the beginning of our journey of renewal.
- Renewal of our Church means that every Catholic, every searcher, and everyone who loves Jesus and his Church, will have to look anew at what it means to be Jesus' disciple and to live out that discipleship.
- Profound gratitude to all involved in the process to date, and prayers for all those who will take up the next phase of renewal, sharing faith and evangelizing those searching to know Jesus more deeply.