



Evergreen Renew My Church Update: January 2022

Discernment Process

St. Bernadette, Most Holy Redeemer and Queen of Martyrs 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 Wypych are grateful to Fr. Pazdan, Fr. Hyland, Fr. Marren and the Grouping Team who gathered together, 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.

- **Queen of Martyrs and St. Bernadette will unite as one parish with one pastor and one pastoral team, effective July 1, 2022.**
 - **Queen of Martyrs will be designated the parish church where the united parish's sacramental records will be kept.**
 - **Additionally, the RMC Commission recommended that within the next two years the parish's regular schedule of Masses fully transition to Queen of Martyrs Church and conclude the regular schedule of Masses at St. Bernadette Church. The specific timeline will be determined by parish leadership in consultation with archdiocesan leadership.**
 - **Fr. Benedykt Pazdan will be the pastor of the newly united parish.**
 - **Queen of Martyrs School will be the parish school.**
 - The local community will discern possibilities for the united parish's new permanent name, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit three to five options to Cardinal Cupich. The interim name of the united parish will be Queen of Martyrs and St. Bernadette Parish.

- **Most Holy Redeemer Parish and School will continue in its current structure.**

Both parishes will engage in the next phases of the renewal process with a commitment to evangelization and deepening the discipleship of all parishioners.

Rationale

- Through the discernment process there was recognition that continuing three parishes would not be sustainable. There was spirited discussion about different scenarios that could result in two parishes or in all three current parishes uniting as one new parish. The RMC Commission agreed with the Grouping Team's discernment that a two-parish structure provides the best structural foundation for moving into the next phase of renewal. Most Holy Redeemer in its current structure and a united Queen of Martyrs and St. Bernadette result in two parishes that surpass the structural benchmarks for sustainability set forth in the RMC process.
- The RMC Commission has recommended concluding Masses at St. Bernadette in two years to allow significant transition time, while recognizing the united parish's human and financial resources will be most effectively stewarded by focusing activity on one campus.



Next steps

- All the parish communities will continue to the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. Specifically, with the support of the Evangelization team of the Archdiocese, your parishes will continue to build the new reality, focused on deepening discipleship, and supporting disciples in becoming missionary disciples for the work of evangelization.
- We know that this structural change is just the beginning of our journey of renewal. The renewal process calls us to become a stronger, more sustainable presence for the future, capable of reaching more people by sharing our discipleship in Jesus Christ, building communities with one another and inspiring witness in the world around us.
- 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.