



Christ the King, St. Barnabas, St. Cajetan, St. John Fisher, St. Christina Renew My Church Update: May 2022

Discernment Process and Outcome

Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Wypych are grateful to the parish leaders who gathered as Grouping Feedback and Discernment Teams (GFDT) over the past months, as well as all the parishioners who offered feedback through the discernment process. Based on their meetings and feedback gathered from the larger parish community, the GFDTs 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.

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 these parishes:

- **All five parishes and schools will embark on dedicated evangelization efforts, while remaining in their current structure, with the following modifications:**
 - Each parish and school will retain its identity.
 - As of July 1, 2022, Fr. Ken Budzikowski will serve as pastor of both St. Cajetan and St. John Fisher. An associate pastor will be assigned to work with Fr. Budzikowski.
 - As of July 1, 2022, Fr. Jim Donovan will continue to serve as pastor of St. Barnabas.
 - As of July 1, 2022, Fr. Larry Sullivan will continue to serve as pastor of Christ the King.
 - In the future, St. Barnabas and Christ the King are expected to share the same pastor. The effective date when the two parishes are expected to share a pastor is to be determined each year based on pastor placement needs across the archdiocese.
 - As of July 1, 2022, Fr. Tom Conde will continue to serve as pastor of St. Christina. St. Christina is expected to remain staffed by a full-time pastor into the future.
 - Each parish will make a financial commitment to evangelization which will include parishioner training, engaging school families, accountability to the archdiocese and building an evangelization team.
 - As proposed by the GFDT, an Oversight Council of lay parishioners will be created to guide shared ministries, maintain accountability across the parishes and ensure efficient use of all resources.
 - Because this is a new model in RMC, the Oversight Council will start smaller and focus on four parishes: Christ the King, St. Barnabas, St. Cajetan, and St. John Fisher.
 - The four parishes involved in the Oversight Council and St. Christina will all engage evangelization efforts with support of archdiocesan teams.
 - This structure and progress will be reviewed within three years by the archdiocese's Presbyteral Council.

Rationale

- The RMC Commission and Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council both expressed significant concern about the low Mass attendance despite the large Catholic population in each parish. However, both advisory groups recognized the challenges that would be posed by formally uniting any of the parishes and appreciated the plan for shared ministry and an Oversight Council for accountability made by the GFDT.
- The GFDT recognized that there will not be sufficient priests available for each parish to have a full-time pastor in the future and believed using this moment to proactively address this reality was prudent.
- While this configuration (one pastor/two parishes) is not a typical RMC parish leadership model, it was deemed highly suitable for this grouping. Lay leaders, working collaboratively with their pastor, are willing to assume responsibility for the evangelization of these communities. A shared pastor with strong lay leadership provides an opportunity to test this model within the archdiocese.
- Pastoring two parishes will necessitate commitment from the pastor and parishioners to ensure collaboration and communication across both communities, with an emphasis on continued evangelization to the neighborhood. Cardinal Cupich has asked the parishes sharing a pastor to be attentive to opportunities to combine meetings, such as Parish Pastoral Council meetings, to avoid meeting overload for a shared pastor.



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.
- We know that this moment is just the beginning of our journey of renewal. All the parishes will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to 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. A foundational element of renewal is reclaiming our identity as disciples of Jesus.

FAQ's

1. How will sharing a pastor affect sacraments or events other than Mass like baptisms, First Communion, funerals, etc.?

Sacraments will not be affected and will be scheduled as they usually are, either by calling the rectory or going through the appropriate preparation prior to being conferred in a group.

2. Will Mass times be impacted?

With the configuration decision now confirmed, the pastors and parishes are encouraged to review their schedules in support of an area-wide ministry vision. Through the discernment process, the possibility of priests rotating ("pulpit sharing") once a month was noted as a potential way to encourage relationship building across the parishes.

3. Will parish office hours be impacted?

Office hours are determined by each pastor after consultation with parish leadership and staff. It is most likely they will not be affected.

4. What does this mean for parish finances?

Financial accounts remain separated by parish. Each parish is expected to make a financial commitment to evangelization. When parishes share a particular ministry, each parish is expected to contribute financially to that ministry.

5. What does this mean for parish leadership councils (e.g., Parish Council, Finance Council, School Board)?

Each parish retains its distinct Finance Council, and each school retains its distinct School Board. When parishes share a pastor, the Parish Councils may come together over time with representation from each parish.

6. Will parish or school names change?

No. Name changes happen in cases where two or more parishes formally unite under church law. This situation is different in that the parishes remain separate entities, while sharing a pastor.

7. Are there any changes to the schools?

No. There are no changes to school operations or identity. Each school's finances will remain separate. The schools are encouraged to work together in helping children and families grow in faith and are expected to participate in parish evangelization efforts.

8. When parishes share a pastor, where will the pastor, and associate pastor if there is one, reside?

Those decisions will be made by the pastor and associate pastor, keeping in mind that it is in the best interest of priests to live in community whenever possible.

9. What will be reviewed by the archdiocese's Presbyteral Council within three years?

The most important considerations will be progress and continued commitment to evangelization including 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.