



Renew My Church: Parish Conversation to Discuss our Future

As Jesus Christ calls us to constantly renew His Church, we must be prepared to lend our voice and efforts to the possible ways in which we bring about that needed renewal. Included here is a summary of where we are today. We will continue to keep you updated as discussions continue and how you can provide feedback to the process.



Process Overview

Renewal requires envisioning, planning, and new means to bring Jesus Christ to others. There are nearly 100 groupings of parishes and schools across the Archdiocese engaging in a process to address necessary questions of structure, how to work together across communities within each grouping, and to establish a strong foundation for vitality through focused evangelization and faith formation efforts. Supporting our parishes with the best structures enables us to breathe renewed life into our efforts to *make disciples, build communities, and inspire witness*.

Initial Scenarios

To initiate discussion, the Archdiocese has offered a set of initial scenarios on page 2 that show potential models of how our parishes could be configured in the future. These initial scenarios have been developed accounting for data such as demographics, Mass attendance, and financial conditions. The scenarios reflect input from archdiocese staff, vicariate leaders, and local pastors.

These initial scenarios, which will be shared in detail at our next parish meeting, are conversation starters only. **No decisions have been made.** The Grouping Feedback & Discernment team may propose additional scenarios they believe merit discussion as long as they would be viable.

These scenarios will be evaluated against a set of criteria determined using data across the Archdiocese for how a structure would support vitality and ensure viability, such as:

- **Ministerial and spiritual needs of the parish:** To enliven the work of evangelization, formation, worship, and pastoral care in today's time and culture, parishes ordinarily will build a strong a staff team to support the pastor. Staff teams will be professionally trained and justly paid. To support this staffing and basic operations, such as paying utilities, parishes generally will need operating revenue of \$750,000 or more (excluding rental income).
- **Parishioner count and Mass attendance:** Based on the number of pastors expected to be available across the Archdiocese in the future, a minimum of 800 parishioners attending weekend Mass is generally needed to be assigned a full-time, resident pastor. In addition, parishes need enough people power (i.e., parishioner count) to support vibrant ministries.
- **Pastoral manageability:** It is critical that our structures support our pastors and pastoral teams to focus as much time and energy as possible on ministry. These structures need to be realistic to manage, considering potential travel between campuses, sacramental coverage, and administrative, facility, and ministerial needs.
- **Parish financial stability and facilities:** Parish financial stability and adequate, accessible and safe facilities with capacity for growth and affordable ongoing repair/maintenance.
- **School quality and financial stability:** The school should be best positioned to provide the very highest quality of faith formation and academic quality in a manner that is financially sustainable. A key measure is the **potential to enroll a minimum of 240 students in PK-8**, considering area demographics and parish student population.

Note on Foundational Principles in relation to the challenges posed by COVID-19

The foundational principles written above remain the benchmarks against which to consider the viability of structural scenarios. Parish data will need to be compared against the foundational principles considering both pre-COVID data (i.e., Fiscal Year 2019 financials and October 2019 Mass attendance) and how COVID has impacted the financial sustainability of each parish and potential scenario. What is important is how those financial implications affect the future. Short-term financial challenges should not significantly influence decisions. However, where it is clear the effects will continue into the future, that reality will need to be included in evaluation of each scenario.

Initial Parish Scenarios for Discernment

Based on the average weekend Mass attendance of each parish compared to the foundational principles listed on page 1 (minimum of 800 October Count for parishes moving into the future), **the initial scenarios propose focusing upcoming discussions on St. Bernardine and St. Luke uniting as one parish. How would the two communities unite as one parish with a common vision for the future? How would each current parish community enrich each other to accomplish that vision? What is the best use of facilities to accomplish a common vision?**

What does it mean to be a united parish?

Organizationally, a united parish has one pastor (and possibly an associate pastor), budget, staff, Finance Council, etc. – but may have multiple churches. The assets of each parish uniting as one parish become the assets of the united parish. Parish leadership discerns how best to use those united assets to accomplish the vision of the united parish.

What happens to parish names in a united parish?

A united parish may take the form of a new parish with a new name (Parish A and Parish B form New Parish C) or Parish B becoming part of Parish A, retaining Parish A's name. When a new parish with a new name is formed, the new parish's name could be a combination of the former parish names (E.g., SS. Joseph and Francis Xavier) or a new patron for the new parish.

Whether uniting parishes form a newly named parish or retain one of the parish's names, the church buildings retain their names. So Church B would still be Church B even if it becomes part of Parish A. An example: Sacred Heart Church of Divine Mercy Parish and St. Philip the Apostle Church of Divine Mercy Parish.

What about how the churches would be used?

The Renew My Church Commission will seek feedback from the Grouping Feedback & Discernment team (GFDT) on **two initial scenarios**:

- (1) What would a united parish look like **continuing to use both churches** for a regular liturgy and ministry schedule?
- (2) What would a united parish look like **if all Masses moved to one location at St. Luke?**

The GFDT will be asked to offer feedback on how each of those two scenarios does or does not address local mission needs, the structural criteria listed on page 1, manageability for a pastor and staff team, and any considerations for impact on school ministry. The GFDT may offer alternative scenario(s) in addition to the two listed above.

What about the school?

St. Luke School is an important ministry of St. Luke Parish and should be considered an important ministry of the future parish configuration to come from this grouping. No changes to the school structure or program are being proposed through Renew My Church.

Where can I understand more about each of our parishes to put the scenarios in context?

Some very basic data about each parish is listed on the next page.

As we review the scenarios, it is important for all us to do so prayerfully keeping in mind that the spiritual and structural renewal to which we are called to foster are connected. The best and most effective and efficient stewardship of our resources (structural renewal) can allow us to invest more into the ministries that directly work toward making disciples, building community and inspiring witness (spiritual renewal).

Just as Jesus asks us to pray always, He also invites us to trust always. Together, we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to determine how Our Lord will use existing structures to create new ones that bring more people into relationship with Him.

Parish Data:

Avg. weekend Mass attendance (October Count)			
Year	St. Bernardine	St. Luke	Combined
Oct. 2019	339	602	941
Oct. 2018	351	627	978
Oct. 2014 (5-yr)	354	866	1,220
Oct. 2009 (10-yr)	511	928	1,439
Oct. 1999 (20-yr)	898	1,408	2,306
Sacramental Data (year ended June 30, 2019)			
Baptisms (<7 yrs old)	10	39	49
First Communions (<18 yrs old)	11	61	72
Confirmations (<18 yrs old)	3	75	78
Weddings	2	17	19
Funerals	19	37	56
Children's Formation / Education			
Religious Education PK-8 ('19-20)	42	262	304
St. Luke School		2020-21: 260 2019-20: 296	
Financial Data			
Fiscal Year 2019 revenue	St. Bernardine	St. Luke	Combined
Collections	\$295,706	\$879,313	\$1,175,019
Total church operating revenue (inclusive of collections)	\$394,604	\$1,055,559	\$1,450,163
Additional rental	\$107,355	\$11,939	\$119,294
<i>Total operating revenue</i>	<i>\$501,959</i>	<i>\$1,067,498</i>	<i>\$1,569,457</i>
Parish Savings			
Savings as of July 2020	\$976,162	\$3,020,375	\$3,996,537
No debt in either parish.			