



## **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, but much more will be shared in our next parish meeting. Please come to learn more and share your feedback and input.



### **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 that show potential models of how our parishes and schools could be configured in the future. These initial scenarios have been developed accounting for data such as demographics, Mass attendance, financial and facility 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.

### **Additional Information and Definitions for Reading the Initial Scenarios:**

The next page includes the initial scenarios for our grouping, which consists of:

- St. Hugh Parish
- St. Mary Parish and School
- Mater Christi Parish
- St. Pius X Parish

Key data for each parish are also listed on the next page.

Reading the scenarios, it is important to distinguish between the words parish and church.

Parish = The People, Community, Organization

Church = Building; the sacred space in which we worship

A united parish has one 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.

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. In either case, the church buildings retain their names. So Church B would still be Church B even if it becomes part of Parish A.

When a parish would have two churches, one of the churches would be designated as the parish church where the sacramental records would be kept.

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.



#### **Your input is needed**

Again, these initial scenarios are conversation starters only. **No decisions have been made.** We are asked to provide feedback on the initial scenarios from the Archdiocese and propose alternative scenarios and configuration models.

**Please come to our next parish meeting to learn more and share your feedback and input.**

**Initial Parish Scenarios for Discernment**

**Scenario 1:** 1 parish, 4 churches

All four parishes unite to form a new united parish, continuing to use all four campuses.

- St. Mary would serve as the administrative center for the united parish and formally be designated the parish church.

**Scenario 2:** 1 parish, 3 churches; St. Pius X joins a grouping to the north and east to continue discernment.

*Parish 1:* St. Hugh, St. Mary, and Mater Christi unite as one parish, continuing to use all three campuses.

- St. Mary would serve as the administrative center for the united parish and formally be designated the parish church.

St. Pius X would discern its future structure with the parishes in Berwyn and Cicero to the north and east. That area is scheduled for its discernment process in 2021.

**Scenario 3:** 2 parishes, 4 churches

*Parish 1:* St. Mary and Mater Christi unite as one parish. Both churches continue to hold a regular Mass schedule. St. Mary is designated the parish church.

*Parish 2:* St. Hugh and St. Pius X unite as one parish. Both churches continue to hold a regular Mass schedule. One of the two churches would be designated the parish church.

The two united parishes would share one business and facility operations staff.

**Parish Data:**

<b>Avg. weekend Mass attendance (October Count)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Hugh</b>	<b>St. Mary</b>	<b>Mater Christi</b>	<b>St. Pius X</b>
Oct. 2019	390	960	422	459
Oct. 2018	387	1,011	456	496
Oct. 2009 (10-yr)	336	1,090	673	431
Oct. 1999 (20-yr)	504	1,406	958	578
<b>Church seating capacity</b>	300	371	280	400
<b>Annual church operating revenue, excluding rental income</b>				
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>St. Hugh</b>	<b>St. Mary</b>	<b>Mater Christi</b>	<b>St. Pius X</b>
Operating revenue, excluding rental	\$229,758	\$1,052,123	\$345,611	\$554,156
Rental income	\$13,594	-	\$96,600	\$49,251
Total operating revenue (does not include extraordinary income such as bequests)	\$243,352	\$1,052,123	\$442,21	\$603,407