



## **NRLSR Renew My Church Update: January 22, 2021 (North Riverside, Lyons, Stickney, Riverside)**

### **Discernment Process**

St. Hugh, St. Mary, St. Pius X and Mater Christi Parishes engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) discernment process through the fall of 2020. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment team (GFDT), which was made up of members from each parish 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 grouping structure during this challenging time.

Based on their meetings and feedback gathered from the larger parish communities, 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, capital needs and parish trends.

Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Manz are grateful to Fr. Marchwiany, Fr. May, Fr. Nemchausky, Fr. Castillo and the Grouping Teams who gathered throughout the past few months, and all parishioners 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 North Riverside, Lyons, Stickney and Riverside.

- **St Pius X will join a grouping with parishes in Cicero/Berwyn and continue their structural discernment later this year.**
- **Effective July 1, 2021, St. Hugh, St. Mary and Mater Christi will unite as one parish with a new name, one pastor and one pastoral team.**
  - **Fr. Tom May will serve as pastor of the newly unified parish.** The Archdiocese of Chicago's Priests' Placement Board will work with the newly unified parish and Fr. May to discern the best assignment of an associate pastor(s).
  - **Both St. Mary and Mater Christi will continue to host a regular schedule of Masses – the specific schedule to be determined by the pastor in consultation with parish leadership.**
  - **The Renew My Church Commission recommends the regular schedule of Masses at St. Hugh Church conclude no later than Ash Wednesday (March 2), 2022 and the entire campus be sold or leased.** Local leadership will determine a specific timeline for transition Masses. Many communities have discerned transitioning Masses sooner than the recommended date is prudent for the new community.
  - **St. Mary will serve as the administrative center for the united parish** and formally be designated the parish church where the united parish's sacramental records will be kept.
  - **The Mother of Mothers Shrine at Mater Christi will continue with no changes.**
  - **There are no changes to St. Mary School.**
  - The local community will discern possibilities for the new name of the parish, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit 3 to 5 options to Cardinal Cupich. Until Cardinal Cupich decides on a permanent name for the new parish, the new parish will have an interim name, using a combination of the three parish names.



### **Parish Structure Rationale**

- The RMC Commission has asked St. Pius X to transition groupings based on similarity of local area demographics east of Harlem Avenue. The Commission considered the scenario of St. Pius X and St. Hugh uniting as one parish but discerned it would not be sustainable. The Commission recognizes the challenge joining a new grouping and additional time for discernment represents for St. Pius X.
- Uniting St. Hugh, St. Mary, and Mater Christi as a new parish provides the opportunity to more effectively use resources and time for ministry across North Riverside, Lyons, and Riverside.
- Vitality and stability of the new parish will be bolstered by reducing the number of campuses and auxiliary buildings, making the new parish more manageable.
- Drawing down ministry and selling or leasing the campus at St. Hugh will significantly reduce expenditures on building maintenance for the short and long term.
- Success toward stability and vitality will depend on strong outreach to all parishioners, particular to parishioners of St. Hugh, with consideration toward ways to respect and honor the culture of St. Hugh and its ministries.
- The RMC Commission asks the newly united parish formed by St. Hugh, St. Mary, and Mater Christi to include an ongoing sensitivity to Hispanic traditions and cultural celebrations. At this time, the new parish is not expected to begin Spanish language Masses due to the number of priests available across the archdiocese able to effectively support Spanish language ministry and the availability of Spanish Masses both east and west of the new parish.

### **Next Steps**

St. Pius X will begin to connect to the parishes in Cicero and Berwyn. Specific timelines for continued discernment will be set in the coming weeks. The formal discernment process is likely to begin in late Spring and continue throughout 2021.

The united parish formed by St. Hugh, St. Mary, and Mater Christi will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. 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.