



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 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 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.

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 Parish Scenarios:

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

- Ascension Parish and School
- St. Catherine of Siena – St. Lucy Parish and School
- St. Edmund Parish
- St. Giles Parish and School

Please note the scenarios do not propose changes for any of the schools. Some scenarios may require discussion about school governance / relationship to parish, but no changes are proposed to school structures or programs.

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.

Some scenarios refer to **canonical missions** which are communities of the faithful in a particular church that are not designated as parishes because of their smaller size or a need to serve a particular ministerial function. They are “sponsored” by an adjacent parish (or the Archdiocese in the case of ethnic-focused missions) but have some control over their budgets and ministries. Missions can provide a range of pastoral services such as baptisms, weddings, funerals, and catechetical programs themselves or in conjunction with the sponsoring parish.

As we review the scenarios, it is important for all of 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 parish meeting to learn more and share your feedback and input.



Initial Parish Scenarios for Discernment

As noted on page 2, **the scenarios do not propose changes for any of the schools.** Some scenarios may require discussion about school governance / relationship to parish, but no changes are proposed to school structures or programs.

Scenario 1: 3 parishes

Ascension and St. Giles each remain in their current structures.

St. Edmund and St. Catherine – St. Lucy (SCSL) unite in one of three ways:

- Scenario 1a: One canonical parish with Mass at both sites.
- Scenario 1b: One canonical parish. All Masses at St. Edmund. SCSL Church closes.
- Scenario 1c: St. Edmund remains the canonical parish. SCSL becomes a canonical mission of St. Edmund.

Scenario 2: 2 parishes

Parish 1: Ascension and St. Catherine – St. Lucy unite in one of three ways:

- Scenario 2a: One canonical parish with Mass at both sites
- Scenario 2b: One canonical parish. All Masses at Ascension. SCSL Church closes.
- Scenario 2c: Ascension remains the canonical parish. SCSL becomes a canonical mission of Ascension.

Parish 2: St. Edmund + St. Giles unite as one parish with Mass at both sites.

Scenario 3: 2 parishes

Parish 1: Ascension, St. Catherine – St. Lucy, and St. Edmund unite in one of three ways:

- Scenario 3a: One canonical parish with Mass at all three sites
- Scenario 3b: One canonical parish. All Masses at Ascension + St. Edmund. SCSL Church closes.
- Scenario 3c: SCSL becomes a canonical mission of a united Ascension + St. Edmund Parish.

Parish 2: St. Giles remains in its current canonical structure.

Scenario 4: All four parishes unite under one pastoral leadership team

Scenario 4a: Formally unite as one parish

- As with the first three scenarios, SCSL Church could remain open as a worship site or close.
- One of the churches would need to be designated the parish church where the sacramental records are kept.
- This scenario would pose a challenge for school governance.

Scenario 4b: Structure as one pastoral team (an “in solidum team” in canon law) while keeping the parishes separate entities. If this were to be pursued, it would need to be on an experimental basis.

Alternative Scenario 5: 2 parishes

Parish 1: St. Giles and St. Catherine – St. Lucy unite in one of three ways:

- Scenario 2a: One canonical parish with Mass at both sites
- Scenario 2b: One canonical parish. All Masses at St. Giles. SCSL Church closes.
- Scenario 2c: St. Giles remains the canonical parish. SCSL becomes a canonical mission of St. Giles.

Parish 2: St. Edmund + Ascension unite as one parish with Mass at both sites.

Parish Data:

| Avg. weekend Mass attendance (October Count) | | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Year | Ascension | SCSL | St. Edmund | St. Giles |
| Oct. 2019 | 1,010 | 197 | 506 | 1,085 |
| Oct. 2018 | 1,100 | 213 | 450 | 1,115 |
| Oct. 2014 (5-yr) | 1,383 | 334 | 663 | 1,281 |
| Oct. 2009 (10-yr) | 1,697 | 337 | 779 | 1,384 |
| Oct. 1999 (20-yr) | 1,890 | 334 | 952 | 1,564 |
| Sacraments and Funerals (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019) | | | | |
| Year | Ascension | SCSL | St. Edmund | St. Giles |
| Baptisms < 7 yrs old | 64 | 10 | 26 | 85 |
| Weddings | 12 | 2 | 10 | 21 |
| Funerals | 39 | 16 | 28 | 46 |
| Church seating capacity | 820 | 800 | 450 | 750 |
| Financial Data | | | | |
| Fiscal Year 2019 revenue | Ascension | SCSL | St. Edmund | St. Giles |
| Collections | \$1,168,097 | \$312,055 | \$638,883 | \$1,429,976 |
| Total church operating revenue (inclusive of collections) | \$1,334,948 | \$382,488 | \$736,544 | \$1,761,859 |
| Additional rental income | \$1,428 | \$42,957 | \$91,125 | \$30,355 |
| Fiscal Year 2020 revenue | Ascension | SCSL | St. Edmund | St. Giles |
| Collections | \$1,212,133 | \$285,832 | \$601,598 | \$1,151,502 |
| Total church operating revenue (inclusive of collections) | \$1,372,914 | \$363,110 | \$728,829 | \$1,433,042 |
| Additional rental income | \$2,276 | \$51,583 | \$97,500 | \$31,515 |
| Savings and Debt with the archdiocese as of July 31, 2021 | | | | |
| Savings | \$126,175 | \$161,023 | \$79,769 | \$2,741,275 |
| Church debt | - | \$2,095,936 | \$606,085 | - |
| School debt | - | \$317,960 | \$256,820 | - |