



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
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NEWS

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**Bishop David Zubik Accepts Proposal, Establishes Personal Parish
for the Black Catholic Community in the Diocese of Pittsburgh**

As a follow-up to a listening session on February 23, 2020, Bishop David Zubik is pleased to announce the establishment of a personal parish for the black Catholic Community in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, under the title of Saint Benedict the Moor Parish, effective July 13, 2020. Clergy assignments for the new parish will be forthcoming.

A personal parish is a parish that responds to specific spiritual needs often related to a particular culture or an extraordinary need. In the case of a personal parish, anyone who desires to be a part of that Catholic community is welcome to join.

When Bishop Zubik visited Saint Benedict the Moor Church in February, he celebrated Mass with parishioners, then listened as they shared the importance of their 130-year history of presence and ministry to black Catholics in the Hill District and throughout the Diocese, while also navigating the same systems of disadvantages that black Americans faced in the Pittsburgh region, the nation, and the Catholic Church.

“Along with their sincere enthusiasm and passion for their Catholic faith, I heard and felt their desire to have their unique spiritual and cultural needs met,” said Bishop Zubik. “I want to raise awareness of the need to walk with our black sisters and brothers as they continue to enrich and be an integral part of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Catholic Church Universal.”

Bishop Zubik called for the formation of a small Task force of clergy and parishioners who worship at Saint Benedict the Moor to develop and present recommendations to him that addressed their concerns.

In submitting the proposal for a personal parish, the Task Force report stated, “This is not a call for separatism but instead for a pledge of commitment to the Church and to share in her witnessing to the love of Christ.”

Since then, all Canon Law requirements to advance the proposal have been satisfied, including the presentation of a formal petition by the Pastor and members of the Parish Finance Council, and approval by the Diocesan Priest Council and Vicars General.

“I am committed to the needs of black Catholics in our community. I invite everyone to join me in this effort. We need to work together to make sure that black citizens from all walks of life are treated with the same respect that God intends all of us to have,” said Bishop Zubik.

Barring any COVID-19 restrictions, Bishop Zubik plans to celebrate Mass at Saint Benedict the Moor Church on Sunday, July 12, 2020.