

RENEW MY CHURCH



Dear Mary, Seat of Wisdom Family,

Over the past several weeks, the Renew My Church teams from the six parishes in our grouping have been meeting. Our grouping, as you may recall, consists of the following parishes: Mary, Seat of Wisdom (Park Ridge), Saint Paul of the Cross (Park Ridge), Saint Juliana (Chicago), Our Lady of Hope (Rosemont), Our Lady of Ransom (Niles), and Immaculate Conception (Chicago).

Having reached the halfway point of the Discernment and Decision phase of Renew My Church, the teams have received three different structural scenarios involving potential inter-parish changes. Today we are sharing those scenarios with you.

It is important to realize that there is no scenario that would close any of the six church buildings. What is being considered are other structural changes that may be necessary for the future health and stability of the Catholic Church in our area. In crafting the scenarios, the Archdiocese has two benchmarks that determine where changes may be necessary: An average weekend Mass attendance of 800, and yearly non-rental income of 750k+. Since not all parishes in our grouping meet those benchmarks, new structures must be considered. The three scenarios are:

Scenario 1: Our Lady of Hope becomes a second worship site of Mary, Seat of Wisdom or Our Lady of Ransom.

In this scenario, two current parishes fully unite as one parish and organization structure, i.e., one pastor, one pastoral team, one budget, and one set of financial accounts. The result of this scenario would be one parish with two worship sites.

Scenario 2: Our Lady of Hope becomes a mission of Mary, Seat of Wisdom or Our Lady of Ransom.

One parish becomes a mission of the other, i.e., sharing the same pastor and planning/budgeting together, but the mission retains separate organizational identity and separate financial accounts. A mission does not provide the range of ministries that a parish does, but rather focuses on specific populations or a specialized set of ministries. The result of this scenario would be one parish responsible for one mission.

Scenario 3: Our Lady of Hope remains a full parish with its own pastor.

All six parishes would retain their current structures. The Archdiocese has said, given that Our Lady of Hope does not meet the benchmarks, a strong rationale would be needed for this scenario to be considered.

In the coming weeks, the members of the three parishes involved in these scenarios will have the opportunity to offer feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each scenario. That information will be used to compile a feedback document that will be presented to Cardinal Cupich and the Renew My Church committee. Based on that feedback, local demographic trends, and future availability of pastors, they will decide which scenario will be used moving forward. That scenario will take effect on July 1, 2021.

As the pastors of the O'Hare Neighborhood Grouping, we invite all our parishioners to pray for one another, opening our hearts to how the Lord is inviting us to make disciples, build communities, and inspire witness.

In Christ we are,

Rev. Derek Ho, Mary, Seat of Wisdom Parish

Rev. Britto Berchmans, Saint Paul of the Cross Parish

Rev. James Wallace, Saint Juliana Parish

Rev. Wojciech Oleksy, Our Lady of Hope Parish

Rev. Matthew R. Bozovsky, Our Lady of Ransom Parish

Rev. Matthew Heinrich, Immaculate Conception Parish