

## **A message about parish incorporations**

Dear parishioners of St. John the Baptist:

In line with many other Catholic dioceses, the Archdiocese of Detroit is in the process of filing paperwork with the State of Michigan to separately incorporate all parishes in the archdiocese. As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, this means that our parish will now be a separate nonprofit religious charity that receives associated tax benefits.

Parish incorporation has been encouraged by Church law for many decades. Creating non-profit parish corporations is the civil law structure that most simply and effectively ensures that the rights of parishes regarding church property guaranteed under Church law are respected. It also better reflects our theology of Church, in which we are all called by our baptism to exercise the mission of the Church on the local level.

The pastor will serve as the President of the corporation on the board of directors. The board also includes Archbishop Allen Vigneron, represented by the Archdiocese's Chancellor, who is a canon lawyer and serves as the Archdiocese's primary record keeper; the regional bishop, now Bishop Gerard Battersby; and a parish representative, from one of the parish leadership bodies, representing all parishioners. Legally, the board must meet at least once a year and file related paperwork with the State. Most of this paperwork will be taken care of by the archdiocesan Chancellor.

This change in legal status will not have a substantial or noticeable impact on the normal daily operation and administration of our parish. As pastor, I will continue to be the administrator and spiritual leader of the parish, consulting with the parish staff and leadership councils as required and remaining accountable to Archbishop Vigneron.

I wanted to inform you, the people of the parish, of this transition, since you make up our parish family and share in the stewardship of the goods that belong to St. John the Baptist parish. Any questions may be directed to Julie Dull, our finance director, or myself.

Sincerely,

Father David Burgard