



Prot. N. 2018 RMC-6

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

"Every effort is to be made that parishes, in which apostolic activity can be performed only with difficulty or less effectively because of the excessive number of the faithful or too vast a territory or for any other reason, be suitably divided or dismembered according to the various circumstances. Likewise, parishes which are too small should be united insofar as the situation demands it and circumstances permit." Blessed Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *motu proprio, Ecclesiae Sanctae*, n. 21, (1), August 6, 1966

Over the past several decades, many things have changed in this particular church. Changing demographics have affected the size and wealth of the Archdiocese of Chicago and the vitality of her parishes. This is particularly true in the City of Chicago itself, where the total population has decreased by more than 20% since 1970, from 3,366,957 to an estimated 2,736,000 today. We also have many vacant and underused parochial buildings, and, as elsewhere, fewer priests to pastor our faith communities. For the number of parishes we have, our human and financial resources are spread very thin.

According to the 2017 edition of *Annuario Pontificio*, the Archdiocese of Chicago had a total population of 6,390,000, with 351 parishes for a Catholic population of 2,497,000. In the same year, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles had a total population of 11,599,000 and 287 parishes for a Catholic population of 4,392,000, more than twice the number of Catholics per parish than Chicago. Also, many of our parishes were founded for national, linguistic, and ethnic groups that no longer live in the neighborhoods where their churches once flourished.

Too many of our parishes have been unable to support themselves and are receiving financial subsidies from the archdiocese. Between 2012 and 2016 these subsidies amounted to \$116,900,000.00, including \$27,600,000.00 in unpaid receivables at 106 parishes, \$36,800,000.00 in payroll advances and unpaid receivables at 90 Catholic schools, and another \$52,500,000.00 in grants to 92 Catholic schools. For the last fiscal year (2017) these subsidies increased by \$5,571,048.00 for parishes and \$12,606,861.00 for Catholic schools. Little, if any, of this money will be recovered by the archdiocese. The Archdiocese of Chicago cannot continue this level of financial support for parishes and Catholic schools. Parishes will become more vital, able to support themselves when possible. Above all, they must be active centers of Christian discipleship, evangelical mission, and charitable outreach.

Inspired by the experience of St. Francis of Assisi before the cross of San Damiano, and by Pope Francis's dream of "a missionary option ... capable of transforming everything"

(Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 27, November 24, 2013), I consulted widely and announced in early 2016 the inauguration of *Renew My Church (RMC)*, a multi-year process aimed at obtaining and preserving the vitality of our parishes. It is my intention that every parish of the Archdiocese of Chicago join with some of its neighbors and plan for the future. Careful planning will create a menu of possible options for greater vitality. It will also identify parishes likely to be reorganized through pastoral coordination, mergers, and other significant alterations, including closing churches no longer useful for divine worship.

From August 2017 through November 2017, the priests and lay representatives of St. Adrian Parish, St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish and School, and Queen of the Universe Parish and School, all located within an area of approximately six square miles in the Marquette neighborhood of the Southside of the City of Chicago, met as the Marquette Grouping for RMC. On November 16, 2017, the Grouping presented its Community Engagement and Planning Feedback Summary to the Standards and Recommendations Commission (see Submission of November 16, 2017, attached to this Decree).

After considering three separate scenarios and an alternative to the three, the Grouping Team chose Scenario A, which the Standards and Recommendations Commission then recommended for adoption. Under this scenario, St. Adrian Parish would join with Queen of the Universe Parish to form a single new parish, retaining both churches and keeping Queen of the Universe School open to serve the new parish. St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish would remain a separate parish, retaining its own parochial school.

Among the data informing the recommendation for the union of St. Adrian Parish and Queen of the Universe Parish are the following:

- The recommendation of Scenario A was the unanimous first choice of the Grouping and the Commission. The decline in the number of active parishioners and insufficient operating revenue at St. Adrian Parish, both at levels deemed below those needed for sustained viability, are the principal motivations for uniting the parish with its larger and more viable neighbor, Queen of the Universe Parish. Each of the three parishes of the Grouping serves the majority Hispanic population of the neighborhood; nonetheless, keeping St. Adrian Church open will allow continued service to the smaller African-American community now worshipping at that church.

Each of the two parishes has had its own clergy and lay staff, its own programming, and its own separate administration. Combining these elements will provide significant savings and other efficiencies as the parishes are joined together under a single pastor and a dynamic staff, all working together for the common good.

THEREFORE, know that I, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, according to the norms of canon 127 §§1 & 3, canon 166, and canon 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law, convened the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago on January 16, 2018, at the O'Hare Campus of DePaul University. There, the proposal of the Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission to alter the status of St. Adrian Parish, and Queen of the Universe Parish, both in Chicago, was presented to the Council. Having heard the Presbyteral Council at the same meeting, I now, after invoking the Holy Spirit,

decree the following:

1. Effective July 1, 2018, St. Adrian Parish and Queen of the Universe Parish, both in the Marquette neighborhood of the City of Chicago, Cook County, Illinois, will be extinguished as separate juridic persons in the Church and united to form a single new juridic person to be known as Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish;

2. The missions of the extinguished St. Adrian Parish and the extinguished Queen of the Universe Parish will be subsumed completely into the newly established Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish;

3. Each and all the parishioners of the two parishes to be extinguished will be fully and equally parishioners of the new Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish;

4. The territory of the new Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish will be the sum of the territories of the two parishes to be extinguished, namely the territory located within these boundaries:

Start at 67th Street (Marquette Road) and Kedvale Avenue,
East on south side 67th Street to C & WI Belt-Line Tracks,
South on West side of C & WI-Belt Line Tracks to junction with C & WI-Belt Line Tracks at 75th Street,
West on north side of C&WI-Belt Line Tracks to Pulaski Road.
South on west side of Pulaski Road to 77th Street,
West on north side of the extension of 77th Street (Keller Drive) to Cicero Avenue,
North on east side of Cicero Avenue to the extension of 71st Street,
East on extension of 71st Street to extension of Kedvale Avenue, and
North on extension of Kedvale Avenue and east side of Kedvale Avenue to 67th Street (Marquette Road).

5. The churches of the two extinguished parishes will be churches of the new Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish, retaining their own titles.

6. Subject to the intention of founders and donors, with due regard for acquired rights, the goods and patrimonial rights of the two extinguished parishes and any obligations with which they may be burdened, will be those of the newly established Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish (see canon 121);

7. The documents given to the Presbyteral Council on this matter, together with the minutes of the Council meeting of January 16, 2018, will be attached to this decree;

8. The sacramental records and other materials relevant to historical research concerning the two extinguished parishes will be commended to the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center of the Archdiocese of Chicago for safe keeping and suitable access; and

9. Notification of this decree will be given to the pastoral leadership of the two extinguished parishes and to their parishioners. Notification will be given through the parish bulletins, and generally on the archdiocesan website.

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Before hierarchical recourse may be taken against this decree, a petition to reconsider or amend the decree must be delivered to me within ten (10) useful days from notification of the decree (CIC cc. 1734, 1735, 1737).

Given this 11th day of June, A.D. 2018.
From the Archbishop Quigley Center,
Chicago, Illinois


Archbishop of Chicago




Reverend Mr. Daniel G. Welter, J.D.
Chancellor

Attachments

**THE DATA SUBMITTED TO THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL OF
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND THE MINUTES OF
THE RELEVANT MEETING OR MEETINGS OF THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL
ATTACHED TO THIS DECREE ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO THE OFFICE OF THE
CHANCELLOR OR THE OFFICE FOR CANONICAL AFFAIRS**