



## Oak Forest – Midlothian - Posen Renew My Church Update: January 2022

### Discernment Process

St. Christopher, St. Damian and St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr Parishes engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) review and discernment process over the past few months. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment team (GFDT), which was made up of members from each community, met to review and discern the future parish structure for the area. Our deepest appreciation goes to the GFDT who prayerfully discerned the parish structure during this challenging time of the pandemic.

Based on their meetings and feedback gathered from the larger parish community, they submitted feedback to the archdiocese. The Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, which includes representatives from across the Archdiocese of Chicago, reviewed the feedback and other information, including financial summaries and parish trends.

Cardinal Cupich, Bishop Wypych and Bishop Perry are grateful to Fr. Paluch, Fr. Noonan, Fr. Ortiz and the Grouping Team who gathered together, and all who offered feedback through the recent discernment process.

### Outcome

In the past few weeks, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, the archdiocese's auxiliary bishops, and the archdiocese's Presbyteral Council met to discuss the Commission's recommendation. Based upon those discussions and prayerful consideration, Cardinal Cupich made the following decisions regarding the parish structure in this grouping.

- **St. Christopher and St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr will unite as a new parish with one pastor and one pastoral team, effective July 1, 2022.**
- **St. Christopher will serve as the parish church and sole location for the united parish's regular schedule of Masses.**
  - The specific timeline to fully transition Masses to St. Christopher will be determined by parish leadership in the coming months.
  - The united parish's Mass schedule will include both English and Spanish Masses.
  - The local community will discern possibilities for the new permanent name of the united parish, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit three to five options to Cardinal Cupich. A combined name is a possibility.
  - Fr. Robinson Ortiz will serve as pastor of the newly united parish. Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Wypych are grateful for the tremendous ministry and leadership of Fr. Paluch at St. Christopher. Fr. Paluch will receive a new assignment effective July 1, 2022.
  - St. Christopher School will continue as the parish school.
- **St. Damian will continue in its current structure.**

### Rationale

- Uniting St. Christopher and St. Stanislaus provides a stable foundation for serving English and Spanish speaking communities in Midlothian, Posen and the surrounding area. Uniting the parish at the St. Christopher site, versus maintaining two campuses, addresses the current financial situation by having affordable facilities that best support ministry.
- Additionally, St. Christopher has a larger campus to grow ministry, along with the school program which can continue to grow with the larger united parish community.
- St. Damian surpasses the structural benchmark established for the discernment process. Thus, remaining in its current structure is the most fruitful path forward into the next stage of renewal.

### Next steps

- The renewal process calls us to become a stronger, more sustainable presence for the future capable of reaching more people in their work of making disciples of Jesus Christ, building communities with one another and inspiring witness in the world around us.
- The newly united parish community will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. We know that this structural change is just the beginning of our journey of renewal.
- Renewal of our Church means that every Catholic, every searcher, and everyone who loves Jesus and his Church, will have to look anew at what it means to be Jesus' disciple and to live out that discipleship.
- Profound gratitude to all involved in the process to date, and prayers for all those who will take up the next phase of renewal, sharing faith and evangelizing those searching to know Jesus more deeply.