



Prot. N. 2020 RMC-9

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

"Likewise, parishes which are too small should be united insofar as the situation demands it and circumstances permit." St. Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *motu proprio*, *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, n. 21, (1), August 6, 1966

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 nearly 20% since 1970, from 3,366,957 to an estimated 2,705,994 in 2018. The archdiocese has many vacant, old, and underused parochial buildings and fewer priests to pastor our faith communities.

According to the US Census Bureau, the Archdiocese of Chicago had an estimated total population of 5,881,250 in 2018. The 2018 *Anuario Pontificio* indicates our archdiocese had 345 parishes serving a Catholic population of 2,512,000: an average of 7,281 Catholics per parish. According to the same source, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles had a total population of 11,519,517, with 287 parishes for a Catholic population of 4,362,000: an average 15,199 Catholics per parish. For the Archdiocese of New York, the figures are 2,656,987 Catholics in 294 parishes: an average 9,037 Catholics per parish. A good number of our parishes were founded in the first half of the last century or earlier. Many were established for national, linguistic, or ethnic groups that no longer live in the archdiocese or in the neighborhoods where they once flourished.

Too many of our parishes have been unable to support themselves and have been receiving financial subsidies from the archdiocese. Between fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2019 these subsidies amounted to \$160,014,332.00, including \$40,039,909.00 to 115 parishes, and \$119,974,423.00 to 93 Catholic schools. This was entirely due to the generosity of the faithful of the archdiocese and other donors. We cannot continue this level of financial support for parishes and Catholic schools, especially while the number of those contributing to the support of their parishes increasingly declines. Our hope is that our parishes will become more vital, that is, active centers of Christian discipleship, evangelical mission, scholarship, and charitable outreach. To achieve this hope, the parishes must have a growing or stable membership and the ability to support themselves whenever possible.

Five years ago, inspired by the experience of St. Francis of Assisi before the cross of the ruined church of San Damiano, and by the Holy Father's dream of "a missionary option ... capable of transforming everything" (Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 27, November 24, 2013), I announced the inauguration of *Renew My Church (RMC)*, a multi-year, intentional process aimed at obtaining and preserving the vitality of our parishes. It has



Prot. N. 2020 RMC-9

Decree

May 8, 2020

Page 2

been my intention that every parish of the Archdiocese of Chicago will join with some of its neighbors and plan together for the future. Careful planning will create a menu of possible options for future vitality. We are identifying parishes likely to be reconfigured through pastoral coordination with neighboring parishes, divisions, unions, and other significant alterations.

This decree concerns two neighboring parishes in the City of Waukegan in Lake County, Illinois: St. Anastasia Parish (established 1926), 624 Douglas Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60085, and St. Dismas Parish (established 1963), 2600 Sunset Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60087. For several months in 2019 the pastoral leadership and lay representatives from these parishes met in an RMC grouping to consider their future vitality. The Grouping Team presented a Community Engagement and Planning Feedback Summary to the Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, a group formed by lay and ordained representatives from across the archdiocese. The Commission proposed that St. Anastasia Parish and St. Dismas Parish be extinguished as separate juridic persons and united to form one new parish, with St. Anastasia Church to be designated the parish church.

The proposal is supported by the data and arguments mentioned herein or attached to this decree. Significant is the 23% decline in regular Sunday Mass attendance for St. Anastasia Parish over the last five years and a 5% decline in Sunday Mass attendance in St. Dismas Parish over the same period. The most recent figures available indicate an average Sunday attendance of 706 worshippers at St. Anastasia, 58% of whom attend Mass celebrated in Spanish. At St. Dismas Parish the average Sunday attendance is 944 and all the Masses are celebrated in English. For St. Anastasia Parish the attendance is below the 800 generally needed to sustain future viability for a parish of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Moreover, recent figures for annual parish operating income, \$484,722.00 for St. Anastasia and \$616,520.00 for St. Dismas, are both below the \$750,000.00 minimum required to sustain a parish. These realities coexist with a continuing decline in the number of priests available to pastor our parishes.

THEREFORE, know that I, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, according to the norms of canon 50, canon 127 §§1 & 3, canon 166, and canon 515 §2, of the Code of Canon Law, having before me the proposal of the Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission that St. Anastasia Parish and St. Dismas Parish, both in the City of Waukegan, be extinguished as separate juridic persons in the Church and united to form a single new parish, convened the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago on January 27-28, 2020, at Mundelein Seminary of the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois. There, after hearing the Presbyteral Council, receiving its vote of 34 for and none against the Commission's proposal, but modifying the proposal to designate St. Dismas Church to be the parish church in place of St. Anastasia Church, and invoking the Holy Spirit, I accepted the Presbyteral Council's advice and now

decree the following



Prot. N. 2020 RMC-9
Decree
May 8, 2020
Page 3

1. Effective July 1, 2020, St. Anastasia Parish and St. Dismas Parish, both in Waukegan, Illinois, are extinguished as separate juridic persons and united to form a single new parish to be called, *ad interim*, SS. Dismas and Anastasia Parish;

2. The missions of the former St. Anastasia Parish and the former St. Dismas Parish will be subsumed completely into the mission of the new SS. Dismas and Anastasia Parish;

3. Each and all the parishioners of the present St. Anastasia Parish and the present St. Dismas Parish are to be fully and equally parishioners of the new SS. Dismas and Anastasia Parish;

4. The territory of the new parish will be the combined territories of St. Anastasia Parish and St. Dismas Parish; namely the territory within these boundaries:

Start at York House Road and C&NW Railroad Tracks,
East on south side of York House Road to CNS&M Railroad (North Shore Line),
South along west side of CNS&M Railroad (North Shore Line) to Blanchard Road,
East on south side of Blanchard Road and extension of Blanchard Road to Lake Michigan,
South along Lake Michigan to extension of Gillette Avenue,
West on extension of Gillette Avenue and north side of Gillette Avenue to County Street,
South on west side of County Street to Center Street,
West on north side of Center Street to Chestnut Street,
South on west side of Chestnut Street to Edwards Street,
West on north side of Edwards Street and north side of extension of Edwards Street to Pine Street,
South on west side of Pine Street to Route 132 (Grand Avenue),
West on north side of Grand Avenue to C&NW Railroad Tracks,
North along east side of C&NW Railroad Tracks to York House Road.

5. The churches of the former St. Anastasia Parish and of the former St. Dismas Parish will become churches of the new SS. Dismas and Anastasia Parish, retaining their titles, and St. Dismas Church will be designated the parish church of the new parish;

6. Subject to the intention of founders and donors, and with due regard for any acquired rights, the goods and patrimonial rights of the former St. Anastasia Parish and those of the former St. Dismas Parish, together with any obligations with which they may be burdened, will become those of the newly established SS. Dismas and Anastasia Parish (see canon 121);

7. Unless otherwise determined by professional staff of the Archives of the Archdiocese of Chicago, the sacramental records and other materials relevant to historical research and concerning the former St. Anastasia Parish and the former St. Dismas Parish will be collected and maintained at the campus of St. Dismas Church;



Prot. N. 2020 RMC-9

Decree

May 8, 2020

Page 4

8. The documents given to the Presbyteral Council on this matter, together with the minutes of the Council meeting of January 27-28, 2020, will be attached to this decree; and

9. Notification of this decree will be given immediately to the pastoral leadership of St. Anastasia Parish and St. Dismas Parish, and to the parishioners of the two parishes. Notice is to be made on the archdiocesan website and through the parish bulletins or other suitable means available to each parish.

Before hierarchical recourse (appeal) 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 8th day of May, A.D. 2020.
From the Archbishop's Office,
Chicago, Illinois


Archbishop of Chicago




Chancellor

Attachments



THE DATA SUBMITTED TO THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL OF
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND THE MINUTES OF
THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 27-28, 2020,
WILL BE ATTACHED TO THIS DECREE AND, WHEN READY,
AVAILABLE THROUGH THE OFFICE FOR CANONICAL AFFAIRS

