

Parish merger delayed

Based on the pastoral needs raised by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cardinal Cupich has asked pastors in parishes scheduled to unite as a result of Renew My Church decisions to delay the formation of the new parish from July 1 to an unspecified date.

The decision to create a new parish from St. Henry, St. Margaret Mary, and St. Timothy has not changed. The parishes will merge. But the Cardinal is open to delaying the date when this will happen, because he wants to ensure pastoral needs at the affected parishes are met.

As pastors, Fr. Phi (St. Henry), Fr. Tirso (St. Margaret Mary), Fr. Drazan (Blessed Stepinac Mission) and I met with Bishop Bartosic and Fr. Malave from Renew My Church and agreed it would be best if the creation of the new parish were postponed. The date when it will happen has not yet been set. It likely will align with the date when priest assignments are made in the archdiocese. Priest placement decisions usually occur on July 1, because it is the first day of the new fiscal year, but the Cardinal is very likely to delay them so that priests can be with their current communities for an appropriate time after all churches can re-open.

In short:

- ♦ St. Henry, St. Margaret Mary and St. Timothy will still become a new parish.
- ♦ That will not happen July 1. The new parish will form sometime after that date.

In February, it was announced that regularly scheduled Masses at St. Henry and St. Timothy would cease by Ash Wednesday, 2021. It was also said the specific timeline would be up to local leadership, and that is still true. Specific timelines will be discussed by the community's leadership when that leadership once again can meet in person.

I will keep you updated as more details are decided. We are grateful to Cardinal Cupich for making sure the timeline is appropriate for our local needs.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "m Baptista", enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Fr. Jose Baptista, s.f.x., pastor