

Next step coming for several groupings

Resources to be better aligned for faith communities

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Five parish groupings are set to become the first to merge into new, stronger parishes through the On Mission for The Church Alive! revitalization initiative.

On Mission seeks to better align parish resources to invest in vibrant

ministries and programs, bringing more people into relationship with Jesus. Key goals include recruiting, training and forming the next generation of lay ecclesial ministers to collaborate with clergy in renewing faith communities.

Leaders are focused on effective religious education and evangelization, especially in reaching out to youth and young adults.



Parish groupings in the final stages of the merger process are:

- Pittsburgh's North Side — St. Aloysius, St. Cyril of Alexandria, Holy Wisdom, Most Holy Name of Jesus, St. Peter, and Risen Lord parishes.

- Beechview/Brookline — St. Catherine of Siena, Our Lady of Loreto, St. Pamphilus, St. Pius X, and Church of the Resurrection parishes.

- Castle Shannon/Mt. Lebanon - St. Anne and St. Winifred parishes.

- New Castle area — St. Camillus, Christ the King, St. James the Apostle, St. Joseph the Worker, Mary, Mother of Hope, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. Vitus parishes.

- Greene County — St. Ann, St. Hugh, St. Ignatius of Antioch, Our Lady of Consolation, and St. Thomas parishes.

Parish assemblies are underway in Beechview/Brookline through Feb. 16. In the New Castle area, meetings are being held following Masses this weekend and next. Parish assemblies in the Castle Shannon/Mt. Lebanon grouping are expected to be scheduled in late February and early March. Dates also will be announced for the North Side and

Greene County groupings.

Following the assemblies and ongoing consultation with parish advisory councils, administrators will submit merger petitions to Bishop David Zubik this spring. He will make final decisions on the petitions after consulting with his pastoral staff and advisory councils.

Decisions on which church buildings will best serve the new parishes will be determined later.

After three years of prayer, study and consultation, Bishop Zubik placed the diocese's 188 parishes — which include 225 church buildings — into 57 groupings. Each grouping was assigned a clergy team and received interim Mass and confession schedules.

Leaders were given timelines of two to five years to merge into one new parish. Diocesan staff are working to customize the process to best suit the needs of each grouping.

Administrators are encouraging parishioners to attend Mass at various churches within their groupings, building relationships as parishes begin to work together.