

Update on Merger Process

What is new?

Summer greetings, brothers and sisters. This summer, we have been busy planning for next year to serve you better and more effectively. Great things are in store for you. Stay tuned. We are also launching two new initiatives that I believe will strengthen our Catholic community. We are launching a comprehensive youth ministry program to engage our high school students beyond the traditional faith formation program. We aim to involve our younger parishioners and draw them closer to Christ. Additionally, we are establishing the foundation for an Intercessory Prayer Ministry (Healing Ministry) within our parishes. We have a dedicated core team that meets and plans for this ministry for our Catholic community. Soon, we will be inviting you to participate. These two new initiatives build on the already vibrant spirit of our community. Our goal is to unify and strengthen our Catholic community across the eight parishes.

Where are we in the merger process?

As we proceed with the merger, we are in the process of submitting the letter of intent to merge to Archbishop Grob, who will consult with various administrative bodies within the archdiocese for approval. I appreciate all your support and strong dedication to building a vibrant Catholic community in Racine, which will help shape our city's future.

How are we doing on our journey?

We started by focusing on building a strong and vibrant community. All of you have experienced this vibrancy and sense of community. We also adjusted the Mass schedule to make Sunday Masses more vibrant. This change helped us increase overall attendance at weekend Masses. We went from 2800 people attending 21 Masses to 3200 attending the 16 Masses we now have on the weekend for the eight parishes. Currently, we are working on establishing a solid administrative structure that will support our efforts in evangelization and help us keep our vibrancy. Following our merger, the proper administrative framework will be in place to ensure we remain a strong community.

What would happen to our money?

Regarding the funds, all Love One Another donations given to each parish will be used for the specific purpose you donated. These monies are restricted for each building and site. Additionally, all restricted donations and funds allocated for buildings at each location will remain restricted to that location. The funds designated for programs such as serving the poor, education, faith formation, and evangelization will be combined to create a more substantial impact in our efforts to reach out to those in need and bring people closer to Christ. Of course, the regular monthly donations will be used to keep all our programs and services running smoothly and effectively, serving you better.

How will we keep track of your money?

We will implement a division-based accounting system to track which sites generate specific revenues and which expenses are incurred at each location. This type of accounting will help us be responsible stewards of all your gifts. We recognize your generosity and aim to maximize your stewardship. Our goal is to stay faithful to the mission entrusted to us by the Lord: *Make disciples of all nations* (Mt. 28 19-20). Your generosity will enable us to maintain our strong Catholic presence in Racine.

Who will decide?

The parish structure is overseen by two trustees who represent the community and assist the pastor with managing the parish. There are two consultative bodies: the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council. The Pastoral Council assists the pastor in the evangelization effort and provides guidance on pastoral care matters for the community. It has several committees that support all evangelization initiatives. The Finance Council advises the pastor on financial decisions and assists in managing the parish's temporal goods. It also includes a Buildings and Grounds Committee that guides decisions about the parish's infrastructure needs. This team will advise me and support me in making informed decisions about our future. After we merge, we will ensure fair representation of all sites among this group of faithful servants. I assure you we will be diligent stewards of your gifts and make the best decisions for the sustainability of our Catholic community in Racine, maintaining its vibrancy.

Once again, my main task and priority as your pastor is to care for your souls and guide you on our journey to Heaven. Therefore, all decisions will be made with this in mind: **the salvation of your souls.**

Blessings, Fr. Juan M Camacho