

A Decree Explanation

Dear Parishioners,

In this weekend's bulletin, you will see two decrees signed by Cardinal Cupich. A decree is a pronouncement or document that formalizes a decision within the Church. In this case, the decrees included here concern the decision for our parish structure to change as we progress through the parish grouping process within Renew My Church.

The first decree addresses our unification with St. Alphonsus. The second decree addresses adjusting territorial boundaries.

The first decree affirms what was announced November 8 and expands to state that St. Alphonsus and St. Patrick will form a new parish effective July 1, 2020, and will have an interim ("*ad interim*" as written in the decree) name. This means that the parish will be called Ss. Alphonsus and Patrick Parish until we propose a permanent name to Cardinal Cupich for his consideration and approval.

To be clear, Cardinal Cupich makes the final decision on the parish name (the name given to the people, not the buildings). However, the individual churches, the specific worship sites coming together, retain their names. For example, the church building will continue to be St. Patrick Church and as of July 1, will be St. Patrick Church of Ss. Alphonsus and Patrick Parish. Similarly, St. Alphonsus Church will be St. Alphonsus Church of Ss. Alphonsus and Patrick Parish.

When you read the decree, you will notice the decree states St. Alphonsus Church will be the parish church of the new parish. As noted in the original announcement from Nov. 8, this means that the sacramental records of the new Ss. Alphonsus and Patrick Parish, as well as the past sacramental records of each of St. Alphonsus Parish and St. Patrick Parish will be maintained at the offices on St. Alphonsus campus. For the current time, St. Patrick's records will remain at St. Patrick's offices, and we will update everyone when the records are fully brought together at the office on St. Alphonsus campus.

The second decree indicates that Ss. Cyril & Methodius will receive territorial boundaries. While people do not follow territorial boundaries as in the past, it was important for Ss. Cyril & Methodius to receive territory for the overall changes in Lemont, particularly for St. James becoming a mission of St. Cyril's, to work. The territory Ss. Cyril & Methodius will be assigned effective July 1 is currently part of St. Patrick's territory.

Neither decree addresses the Mass schedule for the new parish. The Mass schedule is not an item addressed in a decree and is a priority topic for our work in the transition period. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months as we consider the most appropriate schedule once the new parish forms July 1.

Until then, let us hold fast to the Lord's promise that He is with us always, and trust in the fact that He is at work in a special way within our faith community and is creating something new for all of us.

Certainly, the process of renewal is an emotional one. For many of us, it is a time of significant change. So, let us also keep each other and our neighbors in prayer as we continue our journey forward.