

Final Decisions on Parish Mergers & Closures | FAQs

In all, how many parishes are merging? What is the total number of parishes and worship sites remaining as the result of today's announcement?

The total number of worship sites will be 118 adjusted from the current 196 worship sites in our eight counties.

What helped influence changes from the original recommendations?

When we first announced our initial recommendations in May, we welcomed parish families to present alternative plans to the diocese. We experienced open collaboration with parish families who presented variations from the initial proposals with the help of pastors, vicars, parish council leaders and parishioners. In all, 26 of 36 Families of Parishes realized changes from the initial recommendations to what we have presented today, with six of the Families of Parishes accepting the initial recommendations.

What is the timeline for the closures?

We are expecting that the mergers will be accomplished by June 2025.

What will happen to the parish properties?

Once canonical mergers are completed, church buildings no longer in use will go through the process to prepare them for sale.

What becomes of the sacred objects/sacramental records?

Some sacred objects will be used within the parish family. Sacramental records will become the responsibility of the central office in the parish family.

Who will maintain parish properties that are not in use?

The Family of Parishes will provide for maintenance of the properties utilizing assets from the closed parish.

When a church building that is no longer in use is sold, what happens to the funds received through the sale?

Oversight of those funds becomes the responsibility of the pastor, trustees, and parish finance council in accordance with Diocesan financial guidelines.

Will there be any special Mass to commemorate the closing of these parishes?

Transition teams composed of members of the respective Families of Parishes will work with the diocese on closing Masses.

Are Catholic schools affected by the Road to Renewal?

A planning group is developing a Catholic Education Strategic plan, in concert with the Road to Renewal, that should be finalized in the fall as it relates to all schools in the diocese.

What about the outreach ministries within these closed parishes?

Parish outreach ministries are important to the vibrancy of our Diocese and the areas they serve. The outreach ministries will be accommodated in the Family of Parishes.

What can we expect next? Might we face more evaluations in the future?

The Diocese, our faithful, our priests, deacons and religious will greatly influence our future. All of us have a role to play. Parish viability depends on spiritual renewal including participation in sacraments, parishioner engagement, welcoming new members into the faith and the availability of priests.