

RESPONSES TO MERGER QUESTIONS

After viewing the Virtual Parish Assembly on our website/YouTube, or at the in person viewing offered at the Administrative Center, several questions were asked. Below are summaries of those questions and a response from the Parish Pastoral Council and Fr. Michael:

1. What has happened to St. Mary of the Mount Parish's responsibility for the buildings of the former Saint John Vianney parish?

St. Mary of the Mount Parish is not financially responsible for the former St. John Vianney Parish or its buildings. When St. John Vianney Parish closed, and its territory divided up to become part of the three adjacent parishes, the pastors of the receiving communities asked the diocese that no receiving parish would be responsible for the maintenance of the buildings, nor the debt.

In response, St. Mary of the Mount Parish, which is canonically responsible for the church, entered into a legal agreement with the Diocese, in which the Diocese would be responsible for the upkeep. It was also agreed that St. Mary of the Mount would not share in any financial profits, if and when the church is sold.

Upon closure, an appeal was filed to the Vatican in order to keep open the St. John Vianney Church building (historically referred to as St. George Church). The Diocese awaits the final decision of the Vatican Signatura.

2. When the proposed community center is built on Mt. Washington, will the 13th Street Administrative Center in the Southside be closed?

No. The 13th Street Administrative Center will continue to serve as the main offices for the newly formed parish. The new parish center, adjacent to St. Mary of the Mount Church is envisioned to serve as a base for community, education and ministry to our merged parish. Further study is needed regarding use and stewardship of a proposed community center, as well as all our remaining non-church buildings.

3. What are the results of the "Mass-time survey" that was done prior to the pandemic. Is there any intention of changing Mass schedules?

After having our churches closed for several months due to the pandemic shelter in place, we reopened celebrating four masses instead of six. As things get back to normal, however that may look, we will revisit the mass times, as well as the input given in the survey.

4. Why does the name of St. Mary of the Mount have to change, since it has gone through two previous mergers without changing its name?

The names of St. Mary of the Mount Church and St. Adalbert Church will not change. Both churches will be part of a soon to be named new parish. The new name is expected to be identified by the Bishop in November 2020, from the list of names, which members of both parishes suggested. One of the stipulations of the new parish name was that it could not be a name associated with any of the previous parishes or churches.

5. If Prince of Peace Parish was not required to remit the Parish Share money to the Diocese for the past several years, what happened to the money I gave to the Parish Share Program in this parish?

It stayed in Prince of Peace Parish. Parish Share could be explained as a 17.6% diocesan tax on all assessable parish income. That assessable income includes offertory, general donations, and fundraising. This assessment is usually covered by special envelopes, or collections given specifically to Parish Share. Since Prince of Peace Parish was in debt for multiple years, it was not required to remit the donated Parish Share money to the diocese. That money went right into the general operating account to cover normal parish expenses. If you want to consider it this way, the diocese shared whatever was collected right back to the parish.

6. Are we going to keep open our two remaining church buildings?

Yes. It is our hope to have a vibrant parish served by these two churches. Under the new parish, both historic churches will need expanded financial support to continue our mission. Clearly, the pandemic has posed unique challenges that will require a process to identify additional sources of revenue.

7. Will livestreaming continue after the pandemic?

Yes. We will have livestreaming capabilities in both churches. This will be particularly beneficial for special events (weddings, Christmas, etc.).