



+April 29, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Patrick's parish,

May the blessings and joy of this Easter season be with each of you!

This week, I had the opportunity to meet with your stakeholders here at the Chancery. They shared a beautiful presentation about St. Patrick's as well as their own personal stories about parish life. Your parish is a welcoming community with strong faith, a love of liturgy and social justice, and an appreciation for lay ministry, among other things. I valued how one stakeholder said, "we wish to be Christ in the world." Thank you for sharing this with me.

As I shared in the room, I am the fifth archbishop to study the needs of the archdiocese and I do not make decisions about parish changes lightly. This is all about people, their lives, their faith, and the future. Caring for the souls in this archdiocese is very much on my heart and on my mind.

It has been clear for many years that we cannot continue serving the people of God as we have been. Decades ago, St. Patrick's was identified as one of several parishes for a possible merger or closure. While your parish has many wonderful characteristics, the truth is that the parish, which is located in walking distance of several other parishes, has suffered a long-term decline in many aspects of parish life and this trend has continued.

After meeting with your stakeholders, I went to the chapel to pray, sit with our Lord, and ask him what he envisions for the future.

I left the chapel reflecting on the idea that there have been several moments throughout this two-year journey when we have stopped and evaluated what we have heard, what we have learned, and have asked very specifically, "Are we on the right track? Do we keep going or do something else?" At each one of these moments, the decision was made to continue ahead. My meeting with your stakeholders was another one of these moments.

Your presentation, the beautiful video performance at the end, and the handouts were all valued and did not fall on deaf ears. Our meeting was another opportunity for input, for more listening, and for us to ask, "Are we on the right track? Do we proceed?"

The answer, my friends, is: Yes, we do.

Based on the most recent information I received from your team, the majority of your parishioners are keen on merging into St. Joseph. With this in mind, we will stay the course and aim to complete this merger by July 1, 2022.

Please remember this effort is about creating something new to better provide for the people in the future. Like Christ's resurrection, there is a dying process in these mergers to create new life for the future – a future in which Jesus is already present. A future full of grace. Yes, it will be different than what you experience today. My prayer is that we can come together to create something God himself envisions for the future.

Again, I wish to thank your stakeholders for all their work throughout this journey. Please be assured of my prayers for you and your community during this journey. As always, I remain,

In the heart of Christ,

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL  
Archbishop of Seattle