

Important Update 2-19-23

Our Parish Partnership ~ Good Shepherd and Resurrection...

Overview...

In a Parish Partnership the Parishes of Good Shepherd and Resurrection will be connected in almost all areas of administration and in many pastoral areas; while at the same time they remain canonically and financially independent parishes.

This partnership is an alternative to parish mergers (uniting two or more parishes into a single parish) and to parish “twinning” (appointing one pastor to serve two or more otherwise separate parishes). This model has been successfully used in a number of other dioceses as well as parishes within the Diocese of Brooklyn.

This partnership helps to address the immediate need to make better use of the limited number of priests within the Diocese of Brooklyn to serve as pastors. The forming of this partnership allows each parish to combine efforts to do the work of the Church in Marine Park and Gerristen Beach more effectively and economically.

In time a successful Parish Partnership will help Good Shepherd and Resurrection Parishes to grow by combining efforts in evangelization. Vital parish partnership can also help to encourage vocations to the priesthood.

Parishes are Connected...

In a Parish Partnership the parishes are connected in almost all areas of:

1. Administration - such as sharing a pastor, other clergy, parish staffs, office, Rectory, Pastoral Council, Sunday bulletin and other communications. Most of these administrative changes are “behind the scenes” and should have minimal impact on the average parishioner.
2. Pastoral Partnership - to consider having some combine parish activities, ministries and organizations whenever pastorally prudent. The common pastoral plan will also develop ways the two parishes will work together in evangelization efforts.
3. Faith Formation - under the leadership of Deacon James Giorgio and Mrs. Margaret Foti, they will develop an in person and an online Religious Education Program

4. Prayer Ministry - currently the two parishes have Charismatic Prayer groups that meet together. This was formed in light of COVID and the parish of the Good Shepherd having a lack of meeting space with an increase of enrollment at Good Shepherd Catholic Academy.
5. Mass and Other Liturgical schedules - this must be coordinated (and perhaps reduced or adjusted as necessary) so as to accommodate the increased obligation of the clergy.
6. Use of parish buildings - to develop a plan for the use of the parish buildings of Good Shepherd and Resurrection to determine if combining some operations could be freed up for rental.

The Parishes remain Independent...

These parishes remain canonically independent. The parish finances are kept distinct. Assets and debts remain with each parish. Each has its own collection envelopes and budget. Each also keeps its own Finance Council, however they should begin to meet together to form one combined group serving each parish.

Overview

As with any good relationship, it is one that will require charity, openness, and good will.

1. Christian Charity - parishes are Christian communities who look to Jesus as our model and guide.
2. Openness - it is a natural tendency to want to stay with what is familiar and comfortable. However, as followers of Jesus, we sometimes have to go beyond our comfort zone for our own good and the good of the wider Church.
3. Good Will - we all want is best for our parishes and the Church. We may have good faith disagreements as to the best way to proceed, but we always need to respect the good will that we share.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS...

- **Is this a temporary situation?** Currently, this partnership is permanent due to the critical shortage of priests. Many other parishes will also be in need of a pastor in June due to retirements and deaths. While Resurrection parish is not on a list to receive a pastor now, we do not know what the future may hold.
- **Why the focus on partnership?** The mission of the Catholic Church is at the heart of this partnership. To achieve our mission, we must re-invigorate our parish communities, which includes adapting to the needs of the faithful and to our current reality.
- **Why now?** Today we face many realities that are impacting parish life and making it difficult to fully live out our mission. We face an urgent - yet - exciting - opportunity to transform parish life.
- **Will either parish be closed or sold?** No. the current reality is a direct result of the decreasing number of priest personnel. The future of these two independent parishes will depend more than ever of the active leadership and active participation of the people of the parishes.
- **Will the sacraments and funerals be celebrated in each parish?** Yes. Funerals will be available at each parish as parish schedules permit. Baptisms and Weddings will be scheduled according to the availability of the Mass schedule and clergy at the parish requested.
- **Will the parish Mass schedule stay the same in both parishes?** Over the next few weeks the Mass schedule will be reviewed and will be adjusted to ensure that a limited number of clergy can celebrate all scheduled Masses beginning in July.
- **How will the collections, gifts, etc. be handled?** All donations and gifts will be used for the benefit of each parish. The only expenses to be shared between the parishes are the clergy, music ministry and Faith Formation Directors salaries and benefits.
- **What happens if I need a priest after Office hours?** We will work with our communication providers to see how best to have calls answered remotely. You will be able to continue to leave a message and will call back as quickly as possible. We will also explore a cell phone to answer all emergency calls.