

DIOCESAN PARISH REORGANIZATION PLAN

THE SECOND ROUND DRAFT MODELS

Video presentations sharing with the faithful the latest proposed models of parish reorganizations are now publicly available to you at www.realpresencerealfuture.org. These are **not final recommendations**. Nonetheless, the Diocese is providing you this draft in the interest of “transparency,” and for the purpose of inviting your responses.

The Second Round Draft Models are radical. Every parish is affected, and most are affected dramatically. However, again, this iteration of reorganization is **not a “done deal.”** Keep in mind, that **nothing (of this magnitude) can be done in a diocese that has no bishop in place.** A diocesan administrator is responsible for keeping the *daily* operations of the diocese going and on an even keel. An administrator has no authority to reorganize the diocese or, under ordinary circumstances, even move priests from one parish to another.

Before I outline the current plan for St. Agatha Church and School, I want to first caution you against one “knee-jerk” reaction and encourage you to another one. Most parishes are slated right now for extreme changes. Faced with an extreme, it is normal for people to themselves react in an extreme fashion. Perhaps one’s initial reaction will be to “jump ship.” This is why I discouraged the powers-that-be from making these models public before we had a bishop to review and direct us. A few other priests and I fear that the premature unveiling of these suggestions will result in a self-fulfilling prophecy long before any final decisions are ready to be made. For instance, say a particular parish is being considered for closure in this second round, those parishioners could conceivably panic and get away from there now, causing that parish to effectively close for lack of parishioners. I caution you against this reaction. Instead, I encourage you to take a much more constructive approach: to offer to the Diocese your views, to suggest alternatives, and to speak with love and generosity-of-spirit to all.

So here is the latest suggested arrangement involving St. Agatha Church and School.

1. We would be part of what is identified as “Model B.” In this model, three parishes will become “associated” – St. Agatha, St. Christopher, and Our Lady of Victory. Of those three, only one (1) will remain “a parish.” The other two (2) will remain open as churches served by, and under the auspices of, the one remaining parish. For the three associated churches, there will be one (1) pastor assisted by one (1) parochial vicar. In other words, there will be two priests for three congregations. Whether St. Agatha or St. Christopher or Our Lady of Victory will ultimately be the “seat” of the parish remains undecided. My guess is that St. Agatha will be designated the one parish, but I have no inside knowledge one way or another.
2. In Model B, there will be only one (1) Parish Staff and Office administering all three separated sites. There will be only one (1) Finance Council for all three sites. And there will be only one (1) Parish Council for all three sites.

3. The real “kicker” in this scenario though is this: St. Agatha School would be taken away from the Parish in order to become a Diocesan school devoted to “special needs” education. Apparently, this is something already working in other dioceses. The idea is that the “special needs” school will draw its students from the entire/wider Columbus area.

Now, please keep in mind, these are **not final recommendations**. And **none of it can move forward without the bishop’s approval, and we do not yet have a new bishop**. Thus, consider all that you see as “written in pencil” subject to change. Regardless, any reorganization of parishes is estimated to not occur for another 3-7 years (if ever).

I hope you see the importance and urgency of watching the video presentation at <https://realpresencerealfuture.org/draft-models-spring-2022/>. Most importantly, at the end of the 34-minute presentation, you have the opportunity to express your opinions and to make alternative scenarios.

Yours in Christ and Challenges,

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