



SAINT MARY OF THE LAKE

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Parishioners,

Christ's peace to you!

As part of Renew My Church, Cardinal Cupich announced this past Friday, January 22, 2021, his decision for our grouping of Saint Andrew, Saint Benedict, Saint Mary of the Lake, and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes.

In these decisions, Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict will remain separate parishes while establishing a covenant for ministry between them, with particular emphasis on evangelization and spiritual renewal. This decision builds upon the activities that these parishes have already co-sponsored over the last several years and asks them to more deliberately plan on ways that two Catholic parishes can support one another.

The Cardinal's announcement also included his decision to unite Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Mary of the Lake as a new parish called Saint Mary of the Lake and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish with one pastor and pastoral team. This change will take effect July 1, 2021, with both Saint Mary of the Lake and Our Lady of Lourdes Churches used for Masses. In the coming months parish leadership will discuss the Mass schedule at each church to begin after July 1. The future of Our Lady of Lourdes Church and campus will be reviewed on an annual basis, with a particular focus on supporting the pastoral presence and importance of the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, balanced with what is financially sustainable.

The changes being asked of Saint Mary of the Lake and Our Lady of Lourdes will be hard on the members of these faith communities. The parishioners of Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict want to reassure the parishioners of Saint Mary of the Lake and Our Lady of Lourdes, that they are in their prayers and they offer their support.

We would also draw your attention to the other announcements that the Cardinal has made which united several other parishes. All over the archdiocese, faithful Catholics are mourning the loss of things the way they once knew them. We would ask that you keep the Church and all her members in your prayers.

As Catholics we believe in the imagery that Saint Paul writes about in his Letter to the Corinthians. He points out that we are all part of one body, the Body of Christ. When one part of the body suffers, we all suffer. These decisions are painful, but we also believe that Christ always walks with us, offering us healing, peace, and new life.

We want to thank all of our Renew My Church Discernment Teams who spent many hours over the past several months meeting with representatives from the archdiocese. In the coming weeks we will have more information about next steps. We want to emphasize that what is being asked of us is to partake in a journey of spiritual renewal. We invite you to join us on this journey that, with God's help, will lead us to a more vibrant Church.

God bless,

Fr. Sergio Romo
Saint Andrew Parish

Fr. Stephen Kanonik
Saint Benedict Parish

Fr. Manuel Dorantes
Saint Mary of the Lake Parish

Fr. Michael Shanahan
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish