



May 27, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In our worship this weekend we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the early Church, the Spirit which strengthened the Apostles to give bold and courageous witness to the Lord Jesus after the resurrection. The Acts of the Apostles tells us that the Spirit prompted them to live in a conspicuously different way from the prevailing culture of the Roman Empire. So compelling was their witness – especially through their charitable love for the widow, the orphan, and all whom society ignored – that thousands at a time chose to be baptized and to live the way that Jesus had taught.

This same Spirit, whose outpouring we celebrate this weekend, was breathed into us on the day of our Baptism and sealed in us on the day we were Confirmed. St. Paul tells us that this Spirit of God is no cowardly spirit but *One who makes us strong, loving, and wise*.

I invite all of us this Pentecost to reach deeply into our souls where that same Spirit dwells and to allow the fruits of the Spirit – particularly peace, patience, gentleness, faithfulness, and love – to fill our minds and our hearts as we embrace a time of transition together in the implementation of *All Things New*. Each of us, and I in particular, am mindful that this transition which we embrace together will be more difficult for some of our brothers and sisters than it may be for others. Please, let us lift one another up in prayer asking the Spirit to draw from His storehouse of manifold gifts what each of us needs at this moment in the life of our family of faith here in our archdiocese.

Having received, studied, and prayed over all the input and feedback that has been submitted by your pastor, by your key parish leaders, by you yourselves, and by our archdiocesan Presbyteral Council, I have discerned the following decisions regarding the future footprint of the Archdiocese of St. Louis:

- Moving forward, the Archdiocese of St. Louis will be reshaped from 178 individual parishes into 134 parishes. These parishes will be overseen by close to 90 diocesan pastors and 17 religious order pastors. These modifications include the merging of 35 parishes that will be subsumed into neighboring parishes and 15 parishes being merged to create 5 new parishes. There will also be a new personal parish for the Spanish-speaking community in St. Charles County.
- Even in parishes where there is no change to the pastor or parish structure, all of our communities are asked to re-evaluate their current pastoral care, social outreach and evangelization efforts to see if they can be streamlined, refined or re-invented. Our new Vicariate structure will support this.
- Over the next several months our priests will be discerning with their people what the best use of our facilities should be to provide the Sacraments and necessary pastoral care to all who live in their boundaries and begin to reimagine what a vibrant, evangelizing parish ought to look like.

- Implementation of these plans will begin in summer/fall of 2023 and may continue through 2026. The newly formed Office of Parish Mission and Vitality will also begin developing new plans for evangelization and social outreach to build upon the strength of our new archdiocesan footprint.

Details can be found at allthingsnew.archstl.org. Anyone who is a parishioner and who considers themselves to be aggrieved by my decision has the right to appeal my decision to me in writing concerning the way that their parish is being altered. Per Canon law, the request must be made in writing, postmarked no later than June 12, 2023, and addressed to the Archbishop at 20 Archbishop May Dr, St. Louis, MO 63119. We cannot accept emails or phone calls as a request for appeal.

I look forward to sharing with you soon how we, as the Curia, will be restructured to support this new footprint.

May the Holy Spirit embolden each of us to follow the example of the early Church and do our very best to go, *make disciples of all nations* and to reach out in loving service to those around us in need. May the Spirit make our efforts bear much fruit!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski
Archbishop of St. Louis