



Real Presence. Real Hope. Real Mission.

## Second Sunday of Advent, 2021

### What is The Renewal All About?

For so many reasons, such as the priest shortage, secularization of the population, and the abuse scandals, the Catholic Church has suffered its worst decline in 5 centuries. Here in the Diocese of Buffalo, like so many other dioceses across the country, we are choosing to proactively address these disastrous trends, and to both safeguard and “renew” our Church.

The Renewal movement is *not* just about a structural realignment of parishes into larger collaborative entities. The new alignment is but only one component. The Renewal is an all-encompassing movement within our diocese meant to intentionally bring new and innovative thinking, planning and, most of all, rekindle God’s vibrant and sustainable spirituality that it may imbue every aspect of being Church and truly living our Catholicism.

Including:

- Worship/Liturgy
- Education, Catechesis and ongoing formation for all ages
- Continuous development for all clergy
- Greater involvement of the Laity
- Truly being a missionary church that brings the Good News to those who are not in our pews today
- Culture/Engagement
- Responsible, efficient and reliable administration practices
- Greater, more consistent focus on Out-Reach and In-Reach
- Communication

These much-needed changes are purposefully aimed at making our Catholic Church more secure, attractive, trustworthy and truly missionary.

The Renewal is not a top-down pre-packaged program. Instead, it’s the result of listening to the combined voices of people in different roles within our churches across our diocese and the wisdom of the leaders of other dioceses who have already experienced positive results implementing similar movements.

### FAQ

***This past week our parish was notified that it has been selected to be a part of the Pilot Program in the Family of Parishes of the Road to Renewal.***



### **What does this mean?**

- Being a pilot family means that you are one of the first parishes to embrace this family model.
- This means Transitional Leaders will commence the right conversations to begin leading parishes to work together within their designated family.
- The formation of Transition Teams will help parishes to begin moving into a working family of parishes culture and environment.
- Pilot Families will modify and analyze how they minister within the Family, from offering of Sacraments, to outreach, to spiritual life, to ministry.

### **Who is in charge?**

- A Transition Leader for the family will be appointed on January 18. This Transition Leader will be one of the priests currently leading a parish within the family of parishes. Information concerning the process for each parish in your family will come through them and they will coordinate the transition meetings throughout the pilot program.
- Your current pastoral leadership team will still be in place, but they will be asked to synchronize with the Transition Leader so communication between all parishes in the family is clear and implemented well.
- The Transition Leader will also establish a Transition Team of leaders from each parish coming together within the family to begin making decisions on how to move the family forward.

### **What does this mean for my parish?**

#### ***Each parish will:***

- Identify two people to be part of the family Transition Team.
- Look at strengths they offer the family, and areas that the parish needs improvement.
- Contribute to the pastoral plan of the family moving forward.
- Analyze where cooperation, collaboration and sharing of services can take place to create ministry and business efficiencies.
- Be asked to be open, flexible and accommodating to Mass schedule dialogue and decisions moving the family forward. Mass schedules will look different as the family begins to form.

### **What does this mean for me as a parishioner?**

#### ***Parishioners are being asked to:***

- Pray for the Renewal process and your own parish moving into a family model.
- As the Transition Teams are developed, parishes will be adapting more manageable Mass schedules for the clergy available, identifying other resources that can be shared among parishes and services that are needed within the family.
- Be involved in the transition, attend parish meetings that are held.
- Be open to the new schedules that will certainly be developed in Masses, office hours and location, and services parishes offer.
  - Parishioners who have expectations of attending a specific Mass time may find themselves having to attend Mass at another location within the family due to the shortage of priests.
  - Keep in mind, there are 10 parishes today who are without priests – ***your willingness to share provides Masses every Sunday for people in our diocese who would otherwise go without!***
- Stay informed to all that is happening.