



MARCH 2019 UPDATES

- Merger News: FAQs
- New Mass Schedule for parishes of Saint Lawrence and Holy Family: Begins Memorial Day Weekend

Merger News: FAQs

The Transition Team has worked hard to address and move forward on the various fears, hopes, and ideas that the community expressed at the fall gathering at Saint Joseph. Here are some frequently asked questions around those and some of the decisions that have been or will be made moving forward.

What has to be done for the merger to take place according to Church laws?

Fr. Ryan and the trustees of both Saint Joseph (Andy Brunette and Frank Gerard) and Saint Lawrence (Steve Gilbert and Tony Larson) have met to begin the Church Canonical Process of merging two parishes. Through the course of the months ahead, you will see letters and announcements about this process. If you have any questions, please ask one of the trustees. Their first step was to mail a letter to the Bishop requesting the canonical merger. This letter was sent on February 20. We anticipate the Decree being sent soon.

Are there Minnesota laws surrounding the merger of two churches?

Yes, because each parish is a non-profit organization with a Tax-ID#, a civil process of merger must take place. Fr. Ryan and the trustees have also begun preparing for the civil merger. Minnesota state laws require a certain amount of paper work for the merger of churches. Wanting to be good stewards of God's gifts, the trustees are walking carefully through the civil merger process.

Is Saint Joseph Church already sold?

No. The church has not been sold, nor has a decision been made or formally discussed about what to do with the church after the merger. Fr. Ryan has worked on researching the information concerning property value and legal descriptions. Two separate parties have inquired about the purchase of the buildings. The decision of the final

disposition of the building will be made by a newly formed finance council after the merger.

What will happen to the organ at Saint Joseph?

We have met with the individual who originally built the organ for Saint Joseph to learn more about it and gather information, such as: process and cost for moving it to a separate location, market value, size and weight, and storability. This research was completed to help us care for such a sacred and beautiful instrument. The decision of the final disposition of the organ will be made by a newly formed finance council after the merger. The organ will continue to be played occasionally, on Sundays up to June 30. Thank you to Barb Coffin for her generosity in sharing her musical talents, especially on the organ of Saint Joseph!

Will a Saint Joseph history book be available to everyone?

We will make this book available to all Saint Joseph parishioners and have extra copies for anyone who may want one. If you know of someone who would like one that is not in the parish, let Stephanie at Saint Lawrence know.

What will happen to all of the religious items at Saint Joseph?

Great question. The Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus have made an inventory of all liturgical and religious items there, as well as other properties. Final disposition of all items will be decided by Father Ryan in consultation with members of the parish councils and staff. No items will be given to private parties, as per the diocesan rules on the disposition of liturgical and religious items.

What happens to all of the assets of Saint Joseph?

All assets, including land, property, and funds, go to Saint Lawrence. None are taken by the diocese.

What will happen to the music ministries in the cluster? Fr. Ryan and the liturgical music directors are amid conversations and discernment on how to move forward together. This is a sensitive issue to be patient with as we move forward.

Who will be on the committee for the planning of the final celebrations at Saint Joseph? The transition team will be looking for people who might be interested from Saint Joseph in being on the committee. We are looking to have a Sunday social at Saint Joseph on March 31 to share ideas on the possibilities.

What will my transition to being a new parishioner be like in terms of registration and membership? We hope you will find a welcoming environment at both Saint Lawrence and Holy Family. Both parishes hope you will consider being a part of the new community life that emerges from the merger. You will receive a letter in the mail in April with a form to send in to let us know of your decision moving forward. We will then register you at Saint Lawrence or Holy Family so that you don't have to go through any more paperwork. If you choose a parish outside of the cluster, we will inform that parish of your intentions and you will need to register directly with that parish.

Is the Saint Joseph Knights of Columbus Council moving their charter to Holy Family? Yes. After discussions among the members and with the District Deputies and other Grand Knights in the city, the decision has been made to move the charter of Saint Joseph Knights of Columbus Council to the parish of Holy Family.

Why hasn't Deacon Chico been at Saint Lawrence much recently? The Transition Team is grateful to Deacon Chico and his consistent presence with the Saint Joseph community, especially at Sunday Mass and socials. He has been intentionally present with the community at St. Joseph while the parishioners go through this difficult time.

New Mass Times

The Transition Team has collectively researched and discussed a new Mass schedule. They have monitored Mass attendance in January and February. The Team has also received and discussed feedback from various councils as well as from individuals in the community. The Transition Team along with Fr. Ryan has now

finalized the new weekend Mass schedule that will begin on Memorial Day Weekend, 2019.

The Teams' decision is based on a big picture vision for evangelization, the well-being of the priest, consistency of the pastor at all weekend Masses and social gatherings on Sundays, better opportunities for confession times, a bringing together of the community, and the need for only one priest to be able to cover the entire schedule.

A pastoral vision for evangelization through modern innovations and God's grace will be developed this summer. The Mass schedule is a vital foundation to moving forward with this vision and planning. It is not simply a reduction for its own sake; instead, it is an opportunity to open the door to the building of a great community and meaningful relationships.

While changes may come with more heartache and struggle, our intention is that through these changes, a "big picture" vision for the future can emerge. Clustering and merging parishes always brings changes and a "new normal."

The adjustments over the past few years in the cluster have been big and, at times, painful. All three parishes have lost beloved pastors; Saint Joseph is closing; Holy Family has lost having their own full-time pastor and two of their three weekend Masses; and now, Saint Lawrence will be losing their 8:00 am Mass. It is a Paschal Mystery journey of life, going through suffering and death to new life. It is so important that we make the journey together.

Though this is difficult news for some to receive, it is also exciting news to look toward new possibilities as a community. The Transition Team continues to hold everyone in prayer as we take these next big steps and look toward a future that is out in front of us as a community.

NEW WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE, BEGINNING MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND 2019.

Saturday:

3:00 pm Confessions – Saint Lawrence

4:00 pm Mass – Saint Lawrence

Sunday:

8:15 am Confessions – Holy Family

9:00 am Mass – Holy Family

11:00 am Mass – Saint Lawrence

****9:30 am Mass – Saint Joseph – until June 30**