



BECOMING DIVINE MERCY PARISH One Parish | Three Churches | Two Schools

ONE PARISH, THREE CHERISHED CHURCHES

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Of all the questions raised in our survey, few carried as much concern as this one: which of our churches will be designated the “parochial” church, and what will that mean for the others? I understand the importance of this question, so I want to explain it as clearly as possible.

Under Church law, every parish must designate one church as its parochial church. That church carries certain responsibilities, including the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, the presence of a baptismal font, and the regular celebration of Mass.

The other churches in the parish are designated in Church law as subsidiary churches. This designation describes their canonical role within the parish structure; it does not diminish their sacred character, history, or importance in the life of our communities.

While our parish will be known as Divine Mercy Parish, each church will continue to retain its own historic name. Our Lady of the Visitation Church, St. Joseph Church, and St. Jude Church will continue to be known and identified by those names, preserving the rich history and identity of each community.

Our churches remain sacred places of worship, each with its own history, identity, and place in the life of the faithful. They continue to be places where the Eucharist may be reserved, where the sacraments are celebrated, and where the faithful gather for prayer. In our parish life, all three churches will continue to be active centers of worship, community, and service.

Church law permits only one church to hold the designation of “parochial,” which is why this distinction must be made. However, each church retains its sacred dignity and protections under Canon Law. Each is a consecrated space that holds a unique place in the life of the faithful.

I want to reassure you that this designation does not mean secondary in dignity, importance, or belonging, nor does it mean closure. All three of our churches will remain open and active places of worship where the sacraments are celebrated and where our parish family gathers in prayer.

Two additional questions arose frequently in the survey. First: will baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other sacraments still be celebrated in our churches that are not designated as parochial? The answer is yes.

Second, a more complex question: what will happen with the Easter Triduum—Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil?

The Church understands the Triduum as one continuous liturgy celebrated within a single parish community. For that reason, once we become one canonical parish, the Triduum will be celebrated at the parochial church as one unified parish celebration rather than in multiple locations.

Finally, I am aware that some have wondered whether these decisions have already been made. They have not. This is one of the most important pastoral decisions before us, and it will be made after careful consultation, considering factors such as location, capacity, accessibility, and the history of each community. Your survey responses have already provided valuable insight and will continue to inform this process. The reasoning behind the decision will be shared with you before any formal submission is made.

I assure you that whichever church is designated as parochial, no church community will be considered more important or less important than another. We are one parish with three cherished churches, and the flourishing of each is my pastoral responsibility.

Please continue to share your thoughts and to keep this process in your prayers. Thank you for your trust, your faith, and your patience.

In Christ,

Rev. Donald Siciliano

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Pastor

Pastoral Council: Kathy Brungs, Mike Brunsman, Steve Deiters, Tony Edwards,
Candi Fern, Lisa Hackman, Don Larrick, Neil LeSaint, Shellie Weiskittel

