

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



RENEW MY CHURCH

Parish Conversation #1



Why are we here?

We are called



Where we were

Culture **was more Christian**,
open to faith, **enabled** people
to live out their faith,
and **recognized** religion as
avenue for spiritual life

Where we are

Culture **is more secular**,
ambivalent to faith, **dissuades**
people to live out their faith, and
undermines religion as avenue
for spiritual life



A decline in faith life



Mass attendance in our archdiocese has decreased by 27% over the past 20 years



Across the U.S., 2 in 5 children baptized are not confirmed



85% of children confirmed stop practicing their faith by age 21

Our Response

Called by Jesus Christ, we are

- Making disciples
- Building communities
- Inspiring witness



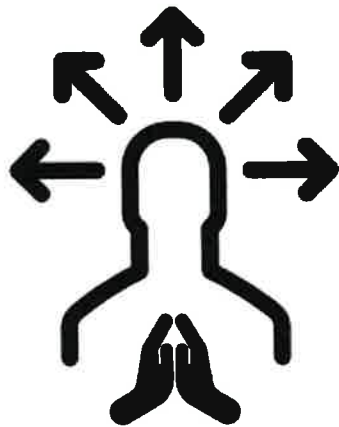
Overall goal for groupings

Build a renewed, vital, and sustainable Catholic presence for the good of all people in the collective communities within the grouping.

- What do we need to change structurally, given resource realities?
- How can we be more effective through collaboration?



Parish Grouping Process



Discernment and decisions

Communities prayerfully discern the right parish structures for future vitality



Operations transition

Establish a strong, sustainable parish financial and operational foundation



Building our new reality

Establish a strong parish ministerial foundation to achieve our mission

Objectives of this phase of the process

- **Connect to the larger RMC vision** and begin building toward a culture of evangelization
- **Build relationships** across communities within the grouping
- Understand the **current realities** in the local community
- Evaluate **structural options** for moving forward
- Tangibly: **Provide the RMC Commission with a feedback report** to help inform a recommendation for Cardinal Cupich

Outcomes for Grouping Session Meetings

The goal of these Discernment and Decisions Meetings is to provide the Cardinal and his team with relevant feedback regarding:

- 1.The concrete needs of the community/communities
- 2.How we have and have not addressed them
- 3.The potential for the Church to impact the communities
- 4.Opportunities for growth, especially through collaboration between parishes



Two types of meetings through the process

Grouping conversations

- Discern scenario feedback
- Incorporates feedback or insights heard at the parishes
- Submit a Feedback Summary Report to the Commission

Grouping Feedback & Discernment Team

Parish conversations

- Enable input-gathering from the broader parish
- Keep the parish informed about what is being discussed

Parishioners, staff, school families, GFDT



Why renew?





Our model of
parish life was
built for a different
time.

Current parish model makes implicit assumptions that no longer hold

Christendom age

- Culture is supportive of faith
- Family formation & practice is strong
- Parishioners already knitted together through ethnic or neighborhood ties



New missionary age

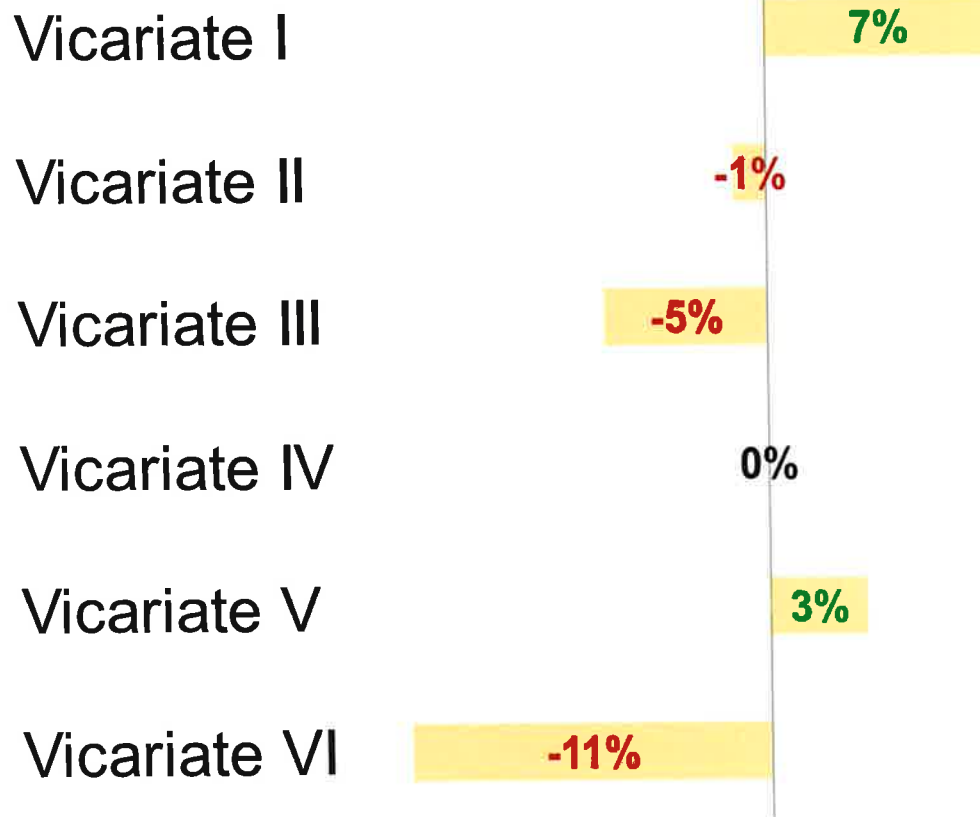
- Secular culture
- Weak family formation
- Crisis of social capital

New parish model needed for new missionary age

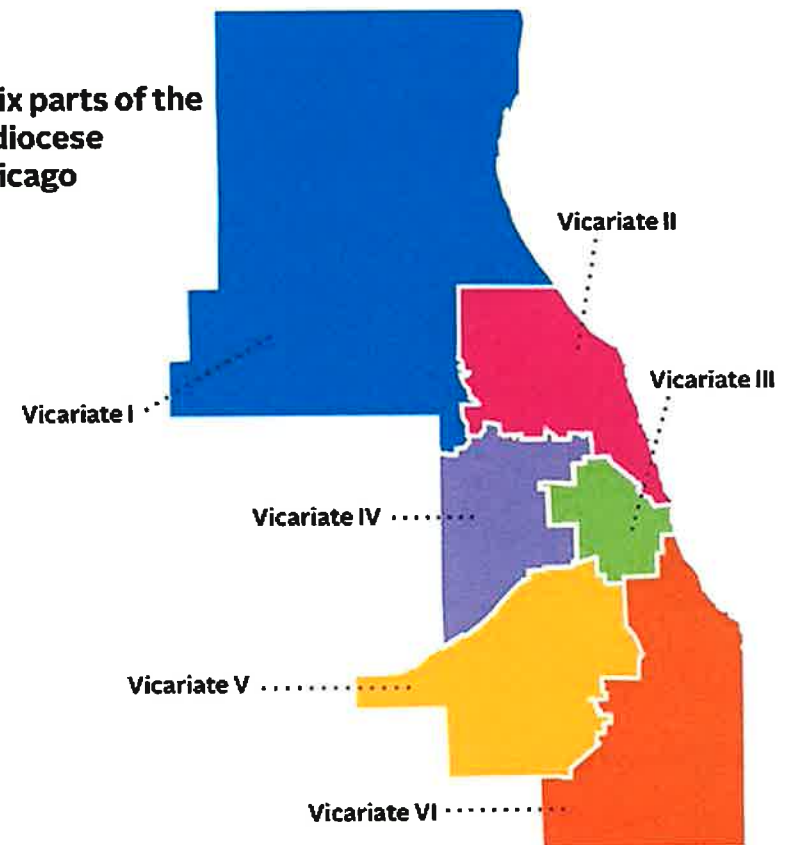


Population Shift

Percent change by vicariate, 2000 to 2014

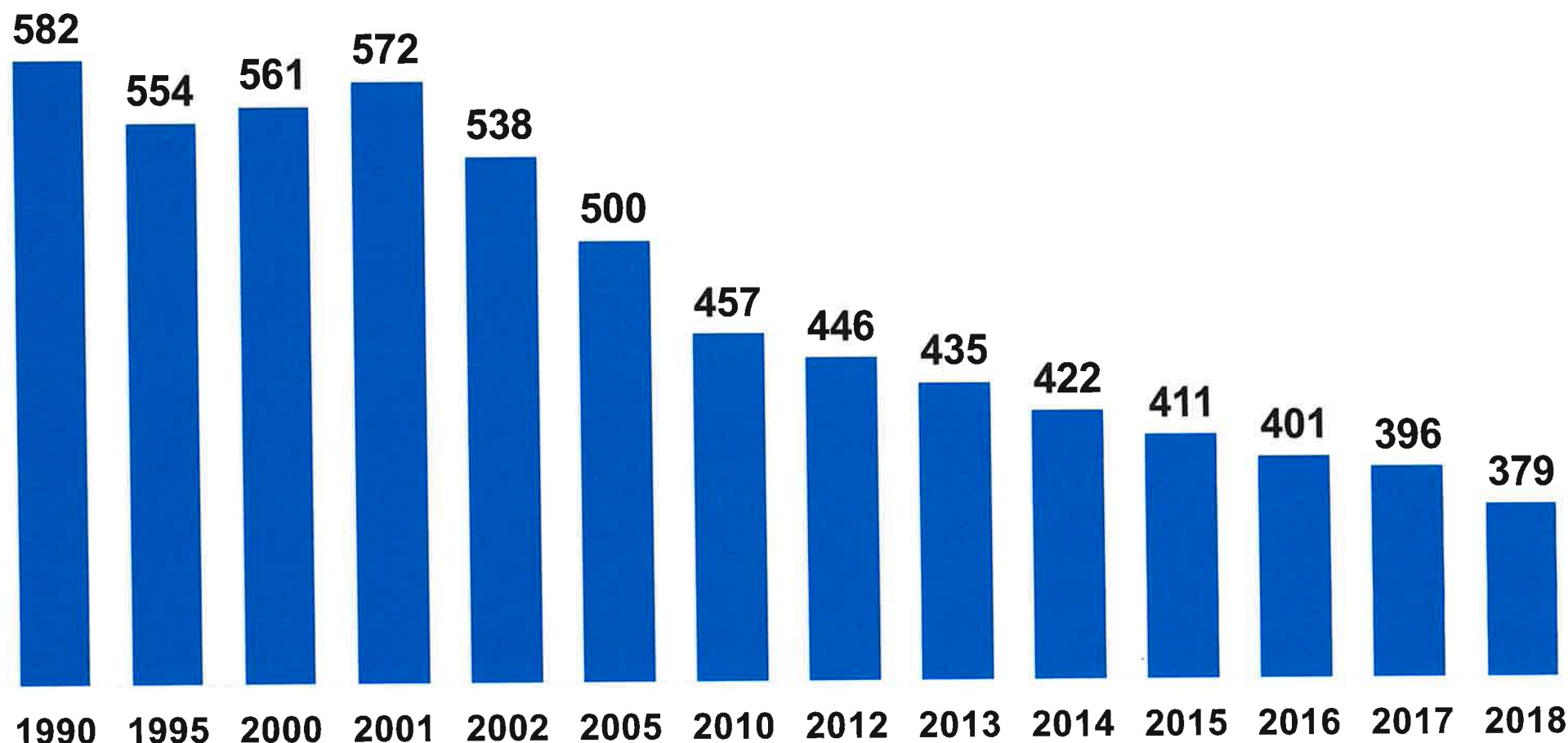


The six parts of the
Archdiocese
of Chicago

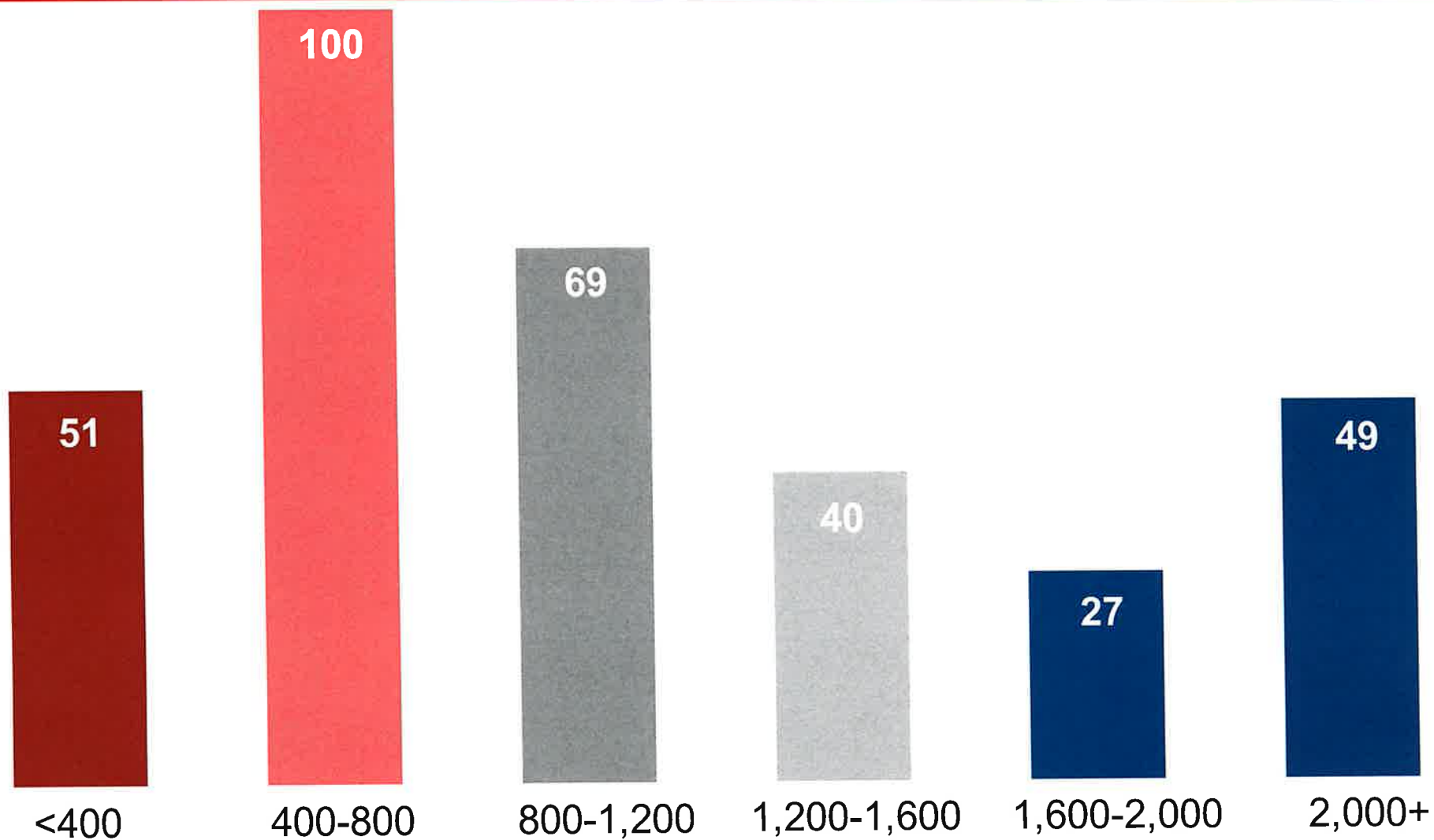


Mass attendance (October Count) has declined significantly

Thousands

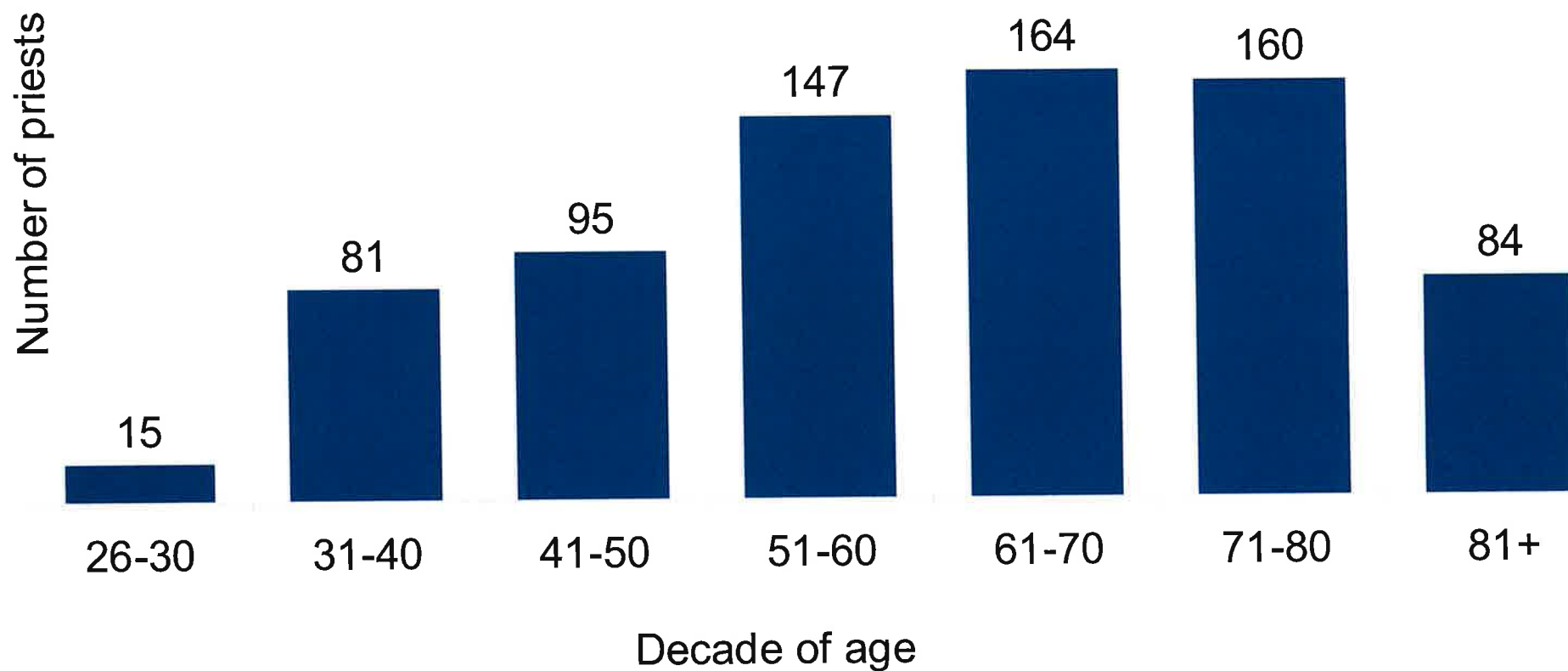


Parishes by October Count



Nearly 200 priests to retire soon

Archdiocesan priests by age, 2019





Invest in ministry to make disciples.



Invest in people to build community.



Invest in ways that inspire witness.

Together, as One, Local Church.

Renewal: three layers

- *Behold, I make all things new. (Rev. 21,5)*
 - In this sense, renewal is conversion—a turning towards God.
1. **Personal renewal.** God doesn't just call the Church; he calls each one of us.
 2. **Cultural renewal.** We are asked to be intentional around what we value collectively.
 3. **Structural renewal.** What structures can help us to continue our cultural and personal renewal?



Current realities

Before we can begin to consider grouping scenarios, we need to:

- Pause and consider current realities in our national Church, Archdiocesan Church, and in our grouping and individual parishes
- Identify our ministerial and operational strengths and challenges



Making Disciples, Building Communities, Inspiring Witness

Keeping before us our mission imperatives, we answer the questions:

- *What are current strengths within our grouping?*
- *What are challenges that present opportunities to unite resources and minister in renewed ways?*



Our Grouping's Strengths and Challenges

Strengths identify...

- Effective mission (ministry, outreach and community)
- Ability to grow
- Operating budgets, buildings and resources that support current and future sustainability



Our Grouping's Strengths and Challenges

Challenges identify ...

- Needs to strengthen mission (ministry, outreach and community)
- Ways to address current challenges for growth
- Ways to better align resources (finances, buildings) to invest in ministry



Our grouping's strengths and challenges

Our Grouping's Strengths:

- *There is a great sense of stewardship and generosity among the members of our parishes.*
- *Many parishes identified a spirit of welcoming as a strength.*
- *Many of our facilities are in very good condition.*
- *The number of active ministries speaks to the involvement of our parishioners.*



Our grouping's strengths and challenges

Our Grouping's Challenges/opportunities

- A number of parishes highlighted the need to strengthen our youth engagement and attendance.*
- Many of our engaged parishioners and volunteers are maxed out, and we struggle to recruit new help.*
- The pandemic has pushed us to streaming platforms in ways we never imagined. Yet, we have a great opportunity for potential engagement through technology.*
- The size of our communities gives us a great opportunity to develop strong small groups.*



Renew My Church Prayer

*Lord Jesus, you speak to us today,
as you spoke to holy men and women who
have gone before us.
In every age and in our own time, you call to us
and say: Renew My Church.*



Renew My Church Prayer

*Pour out the gift of your Holy Spirit upon us,
and so enable us to hear you clearly
to listen to each other attentively, to imagine our
future boldly
to discern your direction wisely, to persevere in
your holy will courageously
to stay together in charity, to surrender our own
plans readily
to embrace the greater good, to hand on your gifts
to future generations.*



Renew My Church Prayer

*May we remain in the holy company of
the Blessed Virgin Mary, the apostles, and all the saints.
May their example and presence inspire us with patient
confidence in the work of your grace.*

*We ask this of you who live and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
forever and ever. Amen*

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Email: RMC@saintmike.com

Your feedback is important and all questions and comments will be forwarded to the Renew My Church teams at St. Michael and the Archdiocese of Chicago.