

## Explanation of the Decree of Unification

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings! Attached to this letter you will see a decree signed by Cardinal Cupich. A decree is a pronouncement or document that formalizes a decision within the Church. In this case, the decree included here concerns the decision for our parishes to unify as a new parish after our grouping's Renew My Church discernment.

The decree states that Holy Angels, St. Elizabeth, St. Ambrose, St. Anselm, and Corpus Christi will form a new parish on July 1, 2021. The decree states the new parish will have an *ad interim* name. This means that the parish will be called Corpus Christi, Holy Angels, and SS. Elizabeth, Ambrose, and Anselm Parish until we propose a new name to Cardinal Cupich for his consideration and approval.

When you read the decree, you will notice the decree states Holy Angels Church will be the parish church of the new parish and that the churches of Holy Angels, St. Elizabeth, St. Ambrose, St. Anselm, and Corpus Christi will be churches of the new parish. A couple of notes on this:

One implication of Holy Angels being designated the parish church means that the sacramental records of the new parish, as well as the past sacramental records of each of Holy Angels, St. Elizabeth, St. Ambrose, St. Anselm, and Corpus Christi will be maintained at the offices on the Holy Angels campus in the future. For the current time, each parish's records will remain at their current locations, and we will update everyone when the records are fully brought together at the office on the Holy Angels campus.

Second, the decree states that each of the churches of Holy Angels, St. Elizabeth, St. Ambrose, St. Anselm, and Corpus Christi will be churches of the new parish. When a new parish is formed, all of the assets of each former parish become part of the new parish. This includes the churches. As shared at the announcement on January 21, the new parish's Masses will fully transition to Holy Angels – the specific timeline to be determined in the coming months. Until the procedure for formally closing a church occurs, a church remains available to use for occasional worship even if regular daily or Sunday Masses are not scheduled at the church.

Regarding the name of the new parish, there will be a process to include everyone. We will keep you updated on the timeline of when this process to consider a parish name will begin.

Until then, let us hold fast to the Lord's promise that He is with us always, and trust in the fact that He is at work in a special way within our faith community and is creating something new for all of us.

Certainly, the process of renewal is an emotional one. For many of us, it is a time of significant change. So, let us also keep each other and our neighbors in prayer as we continue our journey forward.

May Our Lady of Africa and the Holy Spirit Lead Us and Guide Us!

Fr. Robert J. Kelly, SVD

PS: Please see the Decree of Unification Attachment and the Decree of Our New Name Attachment