



Diocese of Pittsburgh
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Office of the Bishop

May 28, 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Saint Ferdinand, Saint Gregory and Holy Redeemer Parishes:

It is my prayer that the promise of Easter, realized in our Lord's Resurrection, has filled your hearts and homes with much joy. As we look to Pentecost, may your faith continue to grow and be strengthened by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

As you may recall, on April 12, 2015, I called all the faithful of the Church of Pittsburgh to journey with me in the *On Mission for The Church Alive!* initiative so that we could focus the resources of our parishes on mission and ministry. Since that time, the faithful of our diocese have prayed and planned about how best to serve God and His people through vibrant parishes and effective ministries, hoping that all people might come to learn, love and live Jesus.

Despite the most recent challenges with the pandemic, your parishes successfully completed the merger process by presenting Parish Assemblies and gathering written and electronic feedback from parishioners. Members of your Pastoral and Finance Councils worked with your administrator to complete all necessary documentation for the merger. In turn, your grouping administrator, Father Philip N. Farrell, petitioned me to merge the parishes. On April 7, 2022, after consulting with the diocesan Priest Council and Vicars General, I have given consent to the proposed merger and decided to enact these recommendations.

Effective July 1, 2022, your current parishes will cease to exist, and the new parish of **Divine Grace** will take their place. No church buildings will close at this time. At this time the name of the school associated with the parish, Saint Gregory School, will not change.

Every member of your current parishes is now a member of the newly formed Divine Grace Parish. Divine Grace Parish will also inherit all of the assets, responsibilities and liabilities of the current parishes.

Today, I must also share with you that after much consideration, prayer and discernment, I have decided to appoint a new pastor to Divine Grace Parish, effective July 1, 2022. Your current administrator, Father Philip N. Farrell, has accepted my request that he serve as Regional Vicar of the North Vicariate, also effective July 1, 2022. Father Farrell has faithfully and diligently served you in bringing the merger process to completion. I am deeply grateful for his leadership and ministry to you.

Divine Grace Parish will be served by the following clergy team:

- Father James A. Wehner, Pastor
- Father Mark L. Thomas, Senior Parochial Vicar
- Father David J. Egan, Parochial Vicar
- Father John P. Gallagher, Senior Priest
- Deacon Jeffrey J. Ludwikowski
- Deacon Donald C. Pepe

Please pray for the new clergy team as they minister to you and the local communities in which your parishes reside.

This has not been a simple task. Jesus never promised that it would be easy to carry his message of love and mercy to others. He was clear that sacrifice would be necessary. However, you are positioning your new parish for more effective ministry by tending to evangelization and mission, sharing resources and allowing your clergy to focus on the spiritual work for which they were ordained. With your faith in Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit, I invite you to warmly welcome and serve each other as you become one parish family.

Grateful for our continued efforts together in being *On Mission for The Church Alive!*, and for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

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Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

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