

More on Divine Mercy Parish

Contributed by Fr. Jared Hood
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I don't like trying your patience, and I hope that I am not doing so by reiterating with new words what I have already tried to say about our merging process. I know there is still confusion as to what is happening and why. Are we going to lose St. Aloysius as our patron saint? No. We are not going to lose St. Aloysius. This church will still be St. Aloysius Church. St. Aloysius will still be our patron saint. And what a wonderful patron he is to have for a church that promises vocations from our wonderful youth! Why does the name of the parish have to change? First of all, no one desires the name of the parish to change. It is not based on the fickle whim of anyone - not the priests, not the bishop, and definitely not those who have belonged to St. Aloysius Parish for so very many years. But in order to ensure that in years to come ALL of the parishes can and will remain open, there MUST BE a reorganization of the Diocese of Madison. If I, for example, am Pastor of Divine Mercy Parish, then I will be responsible for administering the sacraments at BOTH of the churches in the one single parish, thus not leaving one parish without a priest. Heaven forbid that such a parish left without a priest would be St. Aloysius. So in order to AVOID CLOSING PARISHES, the Diocese has opted for the only sensible thing to do, which is to merge parishes so that the individual churches can be managed by a single priest. So, once again, the name of the PARISH will be a NEW NAME because the parish will be a NEW PARISH, with two churches. The CHURCHES will NOT CHANGE THEIR NAMES or their PATRON SAINTS. Does it help for me to withhold my registration paper? Might that inhibit the process? No. It doesn't help in any way. St. Aloysius as a parish will cease to exist. I assume everyone wants to still belong to St. Aloysius Church. Well, the way to do so is to register for Divine Mercy Parish, CONTINUE TO CALL ST. AL'S & "ST. AL'S", and continue to attend Mass here and receive the sacraments here, etc. The process of the merger is going to happen, not because anyone desires to change the name of the parish, but because it is necessary in order to encompass the faithful at St. Mary's in Merrimac. It doesn't help to say, "I'm going to remain a member of St. Al's, because I always have been." St. Al's as a PARISH is no longer going to exist, and even though we attend St. Al's Church, the PARISH where St. Al's is will be DIVINE MERCY PARISH. If St. Norbert's is part of the cluster, why are they not part of the new parish? What is the difference between the cluster and new parish? The cluster is an UN-official grouping of parishes that are united under one pastor. Right now, our cluster is made up of six parishes with one pastor for the six parishes. The merging process (i.e. two parishes becoming one) is an actual CONSOLIDATION of two parishes that could technically be attended to by ONE PRIEST. The way parishes are chosen to merge is based on their size and location. So the logical pairing up of parishes is that St. Al's merge with St. Mary's due to size and location. St. Norbert's and St. Al's are both large parishes, and will hopefully always be able to stand on their own because we hopefully won't be THAT short of priests. At any rate, for the time being, St. Norbert's will remain as it is. When all of the merging is complete, there will be three parishes: Divine Mercy Parish, Holy Cross Parish, and St. Norbert Parish (and yet we will STILL have SIX CHURCHES!, all with their current names!) I thought the church already had my sacramental records on file. Why am I asked for them in the registration form? We do hope to have all of your sacramental records on record. We asked you to fill them in if you know them so that we could check to make sure there are no discrepancies in our computer system. If you do not know them, that's perfectly alright. Leave it blank. We will always maintain official sacramental records. They are on perpetual file. So, there are just a few questions and answers that I hope clear up this process a bit. I ask you all for your good will and cooperation. Please feel free to call or come in to ask any questions or voice any concerns. But please work with me and the parish staff and volunteers who are trying to make this transition as smooth as possible. Let us put forth our best foot and in Christian maturity in the Lord realize that even if we don't know all the ultimate why's and wherefore's we know that this is for the good of the faithful people of the Diocese so that we can be best attended to for years and years to come. Let us never take the spiritual attention that we have for granted. May God bless you and I hope for you, once again, a wonderful New Year.