

# MILESTONE MOMENT

## PROPOSED PARISH MERGERS ANNOUNCED



As we move into the next milestone of our diocesan pastoral planning initiative, All Things New: Honoring the Past and Inspiring the Future, we are announcing the projected diocesan-wide plan. Please keep in mind that this is a working plan and is subject to change.

Over the past year, the All Things New committees in each Area Catholic Community have devoted countless hours to prayer, thoughtful dialogue and careful analysis as together we discern a sustainable and Spirit-led future for our diocese. I am deeply grateful for their commitment, generosity and love for the Church.

In the last few months, each ACC submitted the plans they developed within their communities for diocesan review. Representatives from each ACC then met with the diocesan Committee for the Affirmation of Plans, where every proposal was discussed in detail. When a plan met the established parameters and was understood by the CAP to contribute to the common good of the whole diocese, it was affirmed and moved forward to the next stage.

Following this, the Presbyteral Council, (a council of priests representing the presbyterate of the Diocese of St. Cloud), met and voted on the proposed parish mergers. Please keep in mind that a merged parish is formed by taking the churches, territories, other assets, rights and obligations of two or more parishes and putting them all together into an existing or new parish corporation (“juridic person” in Canon Law). As we move through the canonical and legal processes, the Presbyteral Council will continue to provide consultative votes whenever Canon Law requires it.

Current projections indicate that these proposed mergers would bring us from 131 parishes to approximately 48 parish corporations. Though some of the submitted plans include church closures, the merging of parishes and the closing of churches are separate questions which must be dealt with through distinct processes. The bishop intends to study each request to close a church over the next months and years, consulting with appropriate persons before making any decision that closes a church.

Bishop Patrick Neary anticipates issuing parish merger decrees in April and May. These decrees will not all be issued at once. Your pastor and ACC planning team will keep you informed about the process for your specific ACC, and updates will be available at [stdio.org/planning](http://stdio.org/planning).

In addition to these mergers — one important step in the broader planning process — many of our churches will not be used for Mass on a regular basis. This does not mean they are closed. The timelines

and processes for each site will be shaped locally within each Area Catholic Community. A map and list of churches expected to be impacted appears below.

It is important to remember that pastoral planning is ongoing. This is the first major milestone with more to follow. While this pivotal moment represents a significant structural shift, it is not the end of our discernment. Your prayers, patience and steadfast commitment to the Church sustain us as we walk together in faith, trusting that God indeed makes all things new. We can already see how these changes, if enacted, will improve clergy health and longevity, streamline the use of church resources for seeking and saving lost generations and open new possibilities for responding to the challenges of the present moment.

Brenda Kresky, Director of Pastoral Planning

**REMINDER:**

A key step in the process is the notification of those parties affected by a decree. When a decree is issued, it must be communicated, preferably in writing, to the person or person it concerns. Strictly speaking, since the pastor represents the parish in all legal matters, it is enough to communicate the decree to him. However, to help him communicate this decree to the parishioners of his parishes, the pastor and the diocese will collaborate in the following ways: 1) the pastor or his delegate will read relevant sections of it aloud at all Masses on a particular weekend; 2) the pastor or his delegate will provide free paper copies of the decree in the church of each affected parish; 3) the decree will be posted to the diocesan planning website.

## Proposed parish mergers

### ALL CALLED TO CHRIST

- St. Cloud – Christ Church Newman Center, Holy Spirit, St. Anthony, St. Augustine, St. John Cantius, St. Mary Cathedral

### BENEDICTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES

- Collegeville (St. John the Baptist), St. Joseph (St. Joseph)

### CENTERED ON CHRIST

- Cold Spring (St. Boniface), Jacobs Prairie (St. James), Richmond (Sts. Peter and Paul), Rockville (Mary of the Immaculate Conception)

### CHRIST OUR HOPE

- Lake Henry (St. Margaret), Paynesville (St. Louis), Roscoe (St. Agnes)

### COME TO THE WATER

- Alexandria (St. Mary), Belle River (St. Nicholas), Osakis (Immaculate Conception)

### COR

- Elbow Lake (St. Olaf), Herman (St. Charles), Kensington (Our Lady of the Runestone)

### CROSS ROCK

- Bowlus (St. Stanislaus Kostka), North Prairie (Holy Cross), Opole (Our Lady of Mount Carmel), Rice (Immaculate Conception), Royalton (Holy Trinity)

### DISCIPLES OF THE MISSION

- Battle Lake (Our Lady of the Lake), Henning (St. Edward), Maine (St. James), Brandon (St. Ann), Millerville (Our Lady of Seven Dolors), Urbank (Sacred Heart)

### FIVE STAR

- Browerville (Christ the King), Clarissa (St. Joseph), Grey Eagle (St. Joseph), Swanville (St. John the Baptist)

### FOLEY AREA

- Brennyville (St. Elizabeth), Gilman (Sts. Peter and Paul), Morrill (St. Joseph), Foley (St. John), Minden Twp (St. Patrick)

### FOUR PILLARS

- Foreston (St. Louis Bertrand), Milaca (St. Mary), Mora (St. Mary), Ogilvie (St. Kathryn)

### FR. FRANCIS XAVIER PIERZ

- Buckman (St. Michael), Harding (Holy Cross), Lastrup (St. John Nepomuk), Pierz (St. Joseph)

### HARVEST OF HOPE

- Albany (Seven Dolors), Avon (St. Benedict), St. Anthony (St. Anthony), St. Martin (St. Martin)

### HAVEN OF MERCY

- Belle Prairie (Holy Family), Flensburg (Sacred Heart), Little Falls (Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Mary), Randall (St. James), Sobleski (St. Stanislaus)

### HOLY SAINTS

- Kimball (St. Anne), Luxemburg (St. Wendelin), Pearl Lake (Holy Cross), St. Augusta (St. Mary Help of Christians), St. Nicholas (St. Nicholas)

### ISANTI AREA

- Braham (Sts. Peter and Paul), Cambridge (Christ the King), Isanti (St. Elizabeth Ann Seton)

### MARY AND THE SAINTS

- Elmdale (St. Edward), St. Francis (St. Francis of Assisi), Upsala (St. Mary), St. Anna (Immaculate Conception), St. Wendel (St. Columbkille)

### MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

- Bertha (St. Joseph), Blue Grass (St. Hubert), Bluffton (St. John the Baptist), Menahga (Assumption of Our Lady), Motley (St. Michael), Staples (Sacred Heart), Verndale (St. Frederick), Wadena (St. Ann)

### NORTHERN CROSS

- Butler (Holy Cross), Dent (Sacred Heart), Perham (St. Henry), Rush Lake (St. Lawrence)

### ONE IN CHRIST

- Mayhew Lake (Annunciation), Sauk Rapids (Sacred Heart), Sartell (St. Francis Xavier), St. Stephen (St. Stephen)

### ONE IN FAITH

- Greenwald (St. Andrew), Melre Grove (St. John the Baptist), Melrose (St. Mary), Spring Hill (St. Michael), Freeport (Sacred Heart), New Munich (Immaculate Conception), St. Rosa (St. Rose of Lima)

### PARISHES ON THE PRAIRIE

- Belgrade (St. Francis De Sales), Brooten (St. Donatus), Elrosa (Sts. Peter and Paul), Sauk Centre (Our Lady of the Angels, St. Paul), West Union (St. Alexius)

### PELICAN VALLEY

- Elizabeth (St. Elizabeth of Hungary), Fergus Falls (Our Lady of Victory), Pelican Rapids (St. Leonard of Port Mauritius)

### RED RIVER VALLEY

- Breckenridge (St. Mary of the Presentation), Kent (St. Thomas), Tintah (St. Gall)

### SAINTS BY THE LAKE

- Glenwood (Sacred Heart), Lake Reno (St. John Nepomuk), Villard (St. Bartholomew)

### SHERBURNE AREA

- Becker/Big Lake (Mary of the Visitation), Clear Lake (St. Marcus)

### TOGETHER AS ONE

- St. Cloud – St. Michael, St. Paul, St. Peter, and Walte Park (St. Joseph)



**If your parish is not listed, it may be one that is not merging and will continue as its own parish corporation. Your ACC Planning Team can provide the most accurate information.**

# Proposed churches that will be used on a regular basis

## Diocese of Saint Cloud



### APPEAL PROCESS

The Church's Law anticipates that whenever a church authority takes a decision to make a significant structural shift, it is possible that persons will be aggrieved for reasons justified and even, at times, avoidable. If you have a suggestion to refine the details of a proposed merger or are aggrieved by the entire proposal, you may submit a petition to the Diocesan Bishop within 10 working days of notification of the merger decree. Instructions as to how to submit this petition and the deadline for its submission will be included in every merger decree. As a service to the People of God in the Diocese of St. Cloud, the Vicar for Canonical Affairs and other diocesan staff are happy to assist with the composition of such petitions. Please contact the Planning Office with questions at 320-251-2340.



### Saint Cloud

1. Holy Spirit
2. St. Mary's Cathedral
3. St. Augustine
4. St. Anthony



[Visit the full-size map](#)

## Proposed churches that will be used on an infrequent basis

*Bertha, St. Joseph*  
*Braham, Sts. Peter and Paul*  
*Brandon, St. Ann*  
*Brennyville, St. Elizabeth*  
*Bluffton, St. John the Baptist*  
*Brooten, St. Donatus*  
*Flensburg, Sacred Heart*  
*Foreston, St. Louis Bertrand*  
*Greenwald, St. Andrew*

*All are invited...*

Harding, Holy Cross  
 Kent, St. Thomas  
 Kimball, St. Anne  
 Lastrup, St. John Nepomuk  
 Lake Henry, St. Margaret  
 Menagha, Assumption of Our Lady  
 Minden Township, St. Patrick  
 Morrill, St. Joseph  
 North Prairie, Holy Cross  
 Ogilvie, St. Kathryn  
 Opole, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel  
 Pearl Lake, Holy Cross  
 Roscoe, St. Agnes  
 St. Anthony, St. Anthony  
 St. Cloud, Christ Church  
 Newman Center  
 St. Cloud, St. John Cantius  
 St. Cloud, St. Peter  
 St. Francis, St. Francis  
 St. Nicholas, St. Nicholas  
 St. Wendel, St. Columbkille  
 Sauk Centre,  
 Our Lady of the Angels  
 Sobieski, St. Stanislaus  
 Spring Hill, St. Michael  
 Urbank, Sacred Heart  
 Verndale, St. Frederick  
 Waite Park, St. Joseph  
 West Union, St. Alexius

## Save the Date...

for a diocesan-wide prayer service as Bishop Patrick Neary, CSC, prays for unity for the newly-merged parishes, a major milestone in the All Things New diocesan pastoral plan.

This event will be live-streamed. Stay tuned for more information on where to watch.

*Sunday, May 3 | 7p.m.*  
*Sacred Heart Church, Sauk Rapids*



### Intercession:

For our diocesan family, as we enter this milestone moment of pastoral planning: that the Holy Spirit will guide our parishes with wisdom and peace, strengthen our unity in Christ and help us trust that God is making all things new. Let us pray to the Lord.



### Bulletin Announcement:

Diocese announces proposed parish mergers

As part of *All Things New: Honoring the Past and Inspiring the Future*, the Diocese of St. Cloud has released the projected plan for proposed parish mergers across the diocese. These proposals are the result of a year of prayer, consultation and careful discernment.

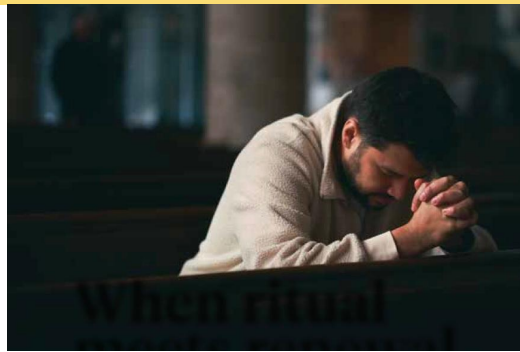
Current projections indicate a reduction from 131 parishes to approximately 48 parish corporations. Please note that parish mergers and church closures are separate processes; no decisions about church closures have been made at this time. Bishop Neary expects to issue merger decrees in April and May.

Updates for each ACC will be shared locally and decrees will be posted at <https://stcdio.org/mergers-and-relegations/>.

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✠ THE CENTRAL MINNESOTA  
**CATHOLIC**

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## Fr. Steve Binsfeld: When ritual meets renewal

As parishes navigate change through All Things New, Father Steven Binsfeld reflects on how ritual, Eucharist, and shared imagination can carry the Church forward with hope amid loss.

[READ MORE>](#)

[More "All Things New" planning articles](#)

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## RETREAT OPPORTUNITY

**"Made in the Image of God: Seeing Ourselves and Others as the Body of Christ" Retreat**

**April 18** – All are invited to join in the **“Made in the Image of God: Seeing Ourselves and Others as the Body of Christ”** retreat from 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. at the Centre for Christ in Sauk Centre. This year’s retreat will focus on how we care for ourselves and how we serve community, recognizing both as our call in the One Body of Christ. The day will include fellowship, reflection talks, and time to spend in individual prayer. Registration is \$35, including refreshments and lunch. Space is limited, so register right away, online at: <https://forms.office.com/r/5j1rZUfWyZ>.

## ALL THINGS NEW PRAYER

We invite you to pray for the Diocese of Saint Cloud during this milestone moment, holding together the grief of what is changing and the hope of what God is bringing forth. Through prayer, we grow in solidarity across the diocese, remembering our shared call as missionary disciples and our dependence on God’s grace. Rooting this pastoral planning process in prayer allows us to move forward together—grounded, compassionate, and open to the Spirit who continues to lead and bless our Church.

Suggested uses for the “All Things New” prayer:

- Religious congregations (OSBs, OSFs, Crosiers, Poor Clares, OPs)
- ACC Pastoral Councils
- Parish Finance Councils
- Stewardship committee
- Various meeting of parish volunteers
- Liturgy committee
- Staff meetings
- Adoration
- Other parish/ ACC groups, i.e., sewing/knitting, Knights of Columbus, Altar Society,
- Music rehearsals
- Bible study, Book clubs
- School faculty/staff meetings
- School board meetings

## Prayer card

- [English](#) PDF
- [Spanish](#) PDF

[All Things New prayer digital slide](#) - 1920 x1080

## RESOURCES

[All Things New resource page](#) – As resources are created, they will be made available on this web page.

- Decree Appeal Process
- Intercessions
- Documents
- Bulletin Announcements
- Videos/Digital Slide
- Canon Law and Parish
- Glossary of Terms
- **And more**

***[For more information, visit All Things New website](#)***



Diocese of Saint Cloud

(320) 251-2340

[www.stcdio.org](http://www.stcdio.org)

