

St Patrick – St Hyacinth – St Rocco

Q&A

- 1) **St Patrick, St Rocco, and St Hyacinth Churches are being united. What's the bottom line? Why the change?** The Catholic Church in our area continues to experience relatively weak Mass attendance and support. These three churches live very close together in a Catholic world that is radically smaller and different than when they were established. There are simply too many parishes in the Glen Cove area, serving too few Catholics with too few priests. As national parishes (versus territorial parishes, see below for more details), if not now then certainly in the future, St Rocco and St Hyacinth would have always be at some risk of change in status or mission, especially since the absolute need of their original missions to first-generation immigrants no longer exists in the same way as they once did. But by uniting them now to the broader mission of the territorial parish, we guarantee the survival of all the churches and the missions for which they were created. This is about not about loss, but about protection and preservation. Nobody loses. Everybody wins.
- 2) **What is a territorial parish?** Most parishes are “territorial”, meaning they have geographic boundaries. They are responsible for the pastoral care of all Catholic within her borders. St Patrick was established in such a fashion.
- 3) **How were St Hyacinth and St Rocco established?** Both these parishes were established by the Bishop of Brooklyn (Rockville Centre was first established in 1957) within the territorial boundaries of St Patrick as “national” parishes, to serve first-generation Polish and Italian immigrants respectively still learning English.
- 4) **Are the Churches of St Hyacinth and St Rocco disappearing?** Absolutely not! Both St Hyacinth and St Rocco will continue as churches within the one united territorial parish. They will retain their names, identities, campuses, cultures and missions, including the welcoming of Italian and Polish speaking parishioners who live outside our parish border.
- 5) **What will happen to the Italian and Polish Masses?** The Italian and Polish Masses will continue to be offered on Sundays as they are now.

- 6) **What will happen to each parishes' assets?** By uniting the parishes, all current assets will be preserved for the service of our local Catholic community. To avoid any rumors or worries, no, the Diocese of Rockville Centre will not be "taking" any assets. All assets of the three churches will remain locally with the one united parish.
- 7) **How will the three churches/campuses cooperate?** Cooperation between St Patrick and St Rocco began as soon as the Canons arrived in 2011, and St Hyacinth became a part of that cooperation several years ago. This change simply strengthens and formalizes that cooperation. Fr Gabriel remains the pastor, but all the Canons (and Fr Leonard) will remain serving in all three as they do now.
- 8) **How will the united parish be governed?** A parish must have two lay trustees by civil law and a finance council by canon law. These two groups, especially the finance council, which can have as many members as we wish, will be made up of parishioners of every aspect (linguistic, cultural, and liturgical) of our parish.
- 9) **Will the Mass schedule be changed?** We always must periodically revisit this question to balance access to Mass, Mass attendance, and the priests' ability to offer the Masses (in five languages!). There will be no change to the schedule at this time, but at some point in the near future we will most likely have to revisit this question and "right-size" the number, times and locations of Masses.
- 10) **Will the parish office at St Rocco (also serving St Hyacinth) be closed?**
No. Most combined administrative functions will eventually be migrated to St Patrick, but the intention is to maintain a presence at St Rocco, even if part-time for things such as acquiring Mass intentions, etc.
- 11) **What about the campuses of St Patrick, St Hyacinth, and St Rocco?**
Having one united parish will allow us to best match our assets to our needs, and this will naturally be an ongoing process. We will begin to do this kind of analysis and explore options, but there are no current plans to sell any building or property. Certainly, the churches themselves will continue to be utilized as they are now.