

Holy Saviour & St. John Parishes

Merger News

From the Desk of Father Ed Friel:

I wish you and your families a Blessed Advent, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

These last few months we have made great progress coming together. By now, all Merger Committees have submitted their final recommendations to the Core Team. These will serve as plans to be implemented in the new Parish. The transitional Communications and Hospitality Committees will continue their efforts. Communications will report on the latest merger news and address other efforts such as establishing an online presence and assembling a parish history. Hospitality will plan and host events where parishioners from Holy Saviour and Saint John's can get to know one another.

The Parish Naming Committee met on November 24 to consider the 537 forms returned by members of both parishes as well as members of the Deaf Ministry, Youth Ministry, Good Shepherd School, and the Religious Education programs from both parishes. At that time the committee learned that the Saint Clare (which many people selected) was already designated for another parish. The second and third choices were then considered for those forms that contained a preference for Saint Clare.

The Core Team met on December 3 and finalized the list of names to be submitted to the Bishop. Along with the names, the Core Team also forwarded information regarding each name, including meaningful justifications for each name, as well as areas of concern voiced by parishioners.

The Core Team will spend January assembling the final plans for the parish based on the committee recommendations and make decisions on key issues. In addition, Bishop Galante will select a name for the new parish from one of the following, as selected by members of both parishes.

- Good Shepherd Parish**
- Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Parish**
- Parish of the Good Samaritan**
- Visitation Parish**

When ready, the final report will be submitted to the Diocese and the formal review process begins. All Committee Reports will be analyzed for their completeness in addressing their respective areas. They will also be evaluated against the prism of the six key diocesan priorities established by Bishop Galante in early 2008.

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| 1. Lifelong Faith Formation | 3. Compassionate Outreach | 5. Lay Ministry |
| 2. Youth and Young Adults | 4. Liturgy | 6. Priestly Vocations |

If specific issues arise during the formal review, then key Committee Members may need to reconvene in order to clarify or elaborate on those issues.

In addition, the legal process involving the merger begins. This includes planning for the formal transfer of records (Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths), honoring benefactor bequests, and transferring all titles, assets, and liabilities to the new parish. This is typically the most time-consuming aspect of the merger process.

After the Diocesan Review Board has accepted all final reports and concluded all legal formalities, Bishop Galante issues the formal decree for the new parish. This is tentatively anticipated for the July-August 2010 timeframe. After the decree has been issued, there is a 30-day waiting period, within which formal objections to the decree can be lodged with the Diocese. Following this period, the new Parish comes into existence and the Core Team and all merger committees formally disband. The new parish then functions as a single entity.

Merger Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
January 2010	Core Team redefines all Recommendations for the new Parish. Core Team presents final report to Bishop Galante by January 31.
Feb – March 2010	Diocesan Review Board considers final report. Makes inquiries to Core Team on key issues that may require clarification.
April-June 2010	Diocesan Review process continues. Legal aspects of merger finalized.
July – August 2010	Decree issued from the Diocese. New Parish established 30 days after Decree.

Ministry With the Deaf – A message from Sister Bonnie McMenamin

The Deaf Community was thrilled that Father Ed Friel came to visit them at St. Gregory's Church in Magnolia on November 2, 2009. Father Ed gave a brief summary of the merger process between the Holy Saviour and Saint John's parish communities. He then answered questions and concerns raised by members of the Deaf Community. Both Father Ed and I emphasized to the Deaf Community that the merger is an opportunity to build up the Body of Christ and share fully in the life of the new parish. The members of the Deaf Community appreciated the invitation to be involved in the naming of the new parish and are eager to learn the chosen name.

Welcoming the Deaf Community to join the merger of Holy Saviour and Saint John's parish communities embodies the Vision Statement of the Diocese of Camden:

To promote respect and justice for all people . . . to strengthen unity with our Diversity.

The members of the Deaf Community look forward to meeting the members of both Holy Saviour and Saint John's parish. They are willing and able to "roll up their sleeves" and share their gifts with the new parish. Thank you for your hospitality and inclusion as we continue our journey together.

Prayer for a New Parish

Heavenly Father, You called the Israelites out of Egypt, into the desert to the Promised Land. Now You call us to leave the parishes we know to form a new community. Give us hope that our efforts will lead us to a welcoming and inclusive community.

Jesus, You called Peter from the boat to walk with You on the water. Give us Faith to keep our eyes on You and walk with You to a stronger community of Faith.

Holy Spirit, let this formative time be a time of prayer and dialogue so that, like the Apostles at Pentecost, we will share a new passion for the promise of a vibrant community.

Blessed Trinity, You are calling us to give up what we know and love for the promise of something better. Give us the courage to reach out to new people, the forbearance to accept solutions not our own, the generosity to bring our strengths and leave our misgivings behind. Bless our efforts with a new community that strengthens and supports each of us on our journey in this life.



CORE TEAM

*Ed Charlton
Joanne Cona
Rolland Coutinho
Pete Dunn
Tom Hauber
Margie Lamberto
Tom Praiss
Jane Whalen*