



## **Rationale**

- The grouping team's preferred scenario included three parishes and pastors (from the original six parishes in the grouping), however the archdiocesan RMC Commission proposed forming two parishes to establish a stable foundation from which to move into the next phase. The Commission had significant concern about the sustainability of three parishes in the face of parish trends, lower-than-expected future priest vocations (impacting future pastor availability) and continuing declines in total local area population.
- The archdiocesan Commission also wrestled with how many worship and ministry sites to propose within the two parishes. Understanding the Grouping Team believed 3-4 total worship sites would best serve the grouping, the archdiocesan RMC Commission proposed one worship site in each united parish to provide a more manageable foundation for each parish. While maintaining additional worship sites can allow for a less abrupt transition, the experience of many parishes across the archdiocese is that the financial and administrative costs of additional worship sites negatively impact the time and financial resources it takes to focus on new evangelization efforts.
- The archdiocesan RMC Commission shared concern about losing Catholic presence in the southern section of the grouping, which is why it has asked the RMC Operations support team to work with parish leadership to investigate the possibility of retaining a portion of either St. Irenaeus or St. Lawrence O'Toole campus for continuing outreach ministry.

## **Next steps**

- The renewal process calls us to become a stronger, more sustainable presence for the future capable of reaching more people in their work of making disciples of Jesus Christ, building communities with one another and inspiring witness in the world around us.
- The newly united parish communities will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. We know that this structural change is just the beginning of our journey of renewal.
- Renewal of our Church means that every Catholic, every searcher, and everyone who loves Jesus and his Church, will have to look anew at what it means to be Jesus' disciple and to live out that discipleship.
- Profound gratitude to all involved in the process to date, and prayers for all those who will take up the next phase of renewal, sharing faith and evangelizing those searching to know Jesus more deeply.