



## Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

May 18, 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Most Holy Name of Jesus, Saint Nicholas and Saint Patrick-Saint Stanislaus Parishes:

Easter blessings as together we rejoice in the triumphant glory of the Risen Lord and his victory over death. May God fill your home with peace, hope and love.

Five years ago we initiated *On Mission for The Church Alive!* with the goal of offering a deeper relationship with Jesus and the Catholic Church. Over that time you have considered, prayed and planned about how best to serve God and his people through vibrant parishes and effective ministries.

Recently, after consultation with your clergy teams and others, a proposal was made to create a grouping of shrines, five church buildings near Downtown Pittsburgh that have unique historical and spiritual significance for our diocese, as well as one other parish church connected with the shrines. On May 14, 2019 the diocesan Priest Council and Vicars General gave unanimous consent to the proposal, and I have decided to enact these recommendations.

Effective July 1, 2019, your parishes will become part of the Shrines of Pittsburgh Grouping, which will both provide for the pastoral care of the faithful in these parishes and promote these shrines as places of pilgrimage and spiritual renewal for people throughout the diocese and even across the country.

The five shrines will be:

- Saint Anthony Chapel, Troy Hill
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Polish Hill
- Saint Nicholas Church, Millvale
- Saint Patrick Church, Strip District
- Saint Stanislaus Church, Strip District

The one parish church will be:

- Most Holy Name of Jesus Church, Troy Hill

For the time being, the parishes will remain separate as a plan is developed regarding how they can best work together to promote the unique opportunities for spiritual and cultural engagement that they have to offer.

The Shrines of Pittsburgh Grouping will be served by the following clergy team:

- Rev. Nicholas S. Vaskov, Team Moderator and Director of Shrines
- Rev. James R. Orr, Full-Time Team Ministry and Co-Director of Shrines
- Rev. Michael R. Ruffalo, Part-Time Team Ministry and Co-Director of Shrines
- Deacon G. Gregory Jelinek

I know that this clergy team will be able to provide for your needs while fostering increased spiritual vibrancy and making these shrines places of pilgrimage. Their service as good shepherds will continue to lead you closer to Jesus as these communities are strengthened. I am also grateful to your current priests and deacons for their care and leadership throughout this process.

With your faith in Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit, I invite you to warmly welcome and serve each other as we all seek to build up *The Church Alive!* May you discover the mission that God has planned for you to share.

Grateful for our continued efforts together in being *On Mission for The Church Alive!*, and for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

Most Reverend David A. Zubik  
Bishop of Pittsburgh