



"A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust"

HOLY REDEEMER PARISH

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Dr. Linda Ritzer
Parish Services
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March 14, 2017

Dear Bishop Zubik, Dr. Ritzer & Parish Services.

On February 28, 2017, our Parish held a Town Hall Meeting in regards to the Models presented to us as possibilities for future parish configurations. 69 parishioners attended the meeting. After taking time to digest the models, this was an opportunity for us to discuss and review the models and other possibilities. This letter reports to you the outcome of our discussions.

The Catholic Church in Ellwood City has already undergone five mergers, beginning in the early 1990's. For that reason, Holy Redeemer Church is geographically isolated from other parishes. Our older parishioners are concerned about having to commute in order to attend daily Mass or fulfill the Sunday Obligation. The previous mergers have created a beautiful sense of family and community. Our parishioners fear the loss of their Parish Family and access to priests.

Our parish has grown due to the commitment and dedication of many organizations such as Christian Mothers and Ladies Guild, Holy Name, K of C, Social Club, Special Activities and others. The faith of the people has bore fruit in service. Holy Redeemer Parish has the only Social Service Ministry in the diocese that has harnessed the resources of all Christian denominations for the purpose of fulfilling the Gospel Imperative to those in need. This good work must continue.

During the meeting, it became clear that our parishioners desire a stronger church, a stronger and more active faith for each member and an outreach to our youth.

As the parishioners reviewed Model 27, Parish C, they felt very comfortable with this model as the campuses are nearby. Since most of the children from Holy Redeemer School have enrolled at St. Gregory, this feels like a natural fit. Also, the connection to St. Gregory carried with it the opportunity to connect with "youth and vitality." On March 7, the Mission Team from St. Gregory met with us. While they are interested in merging with St. Ferdinand Church, they also welcomed us into their plans.

At the same time, an equal number of parishioners have recommended that we merge with St. Monica and Holy Family because the parishioners of these parishes share similar socio-economic characteristics. I have spoken with Fr. Schreck in regards to this proposal and he is willing to explore this possibility.

I hope the content of this letter is helpful to you as we together work to build the Church Alive.

Sincerely

Fr. Mark Thomas
Pastor