

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
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September 2, 2022

Dear Saint John the Baptist Parishioner,

This week, The Diocese of Columbus released the final **Real Presence Real Future** draft models that outline potential structuring for parishes and schools. The new models, previous draft models, and information regarding **Real Presence Real Future** can be found at www.realpresencerealfuture.org.

The newly released models emerged from a process beginning in 2021 that included parish consultations, listening sessions, initial draft models and feedback gathering. I asked a few parishioners from Saint John's to participate.

Father Michael Hartge, the diocese's moderator of the Curia who oversaw the project, said the recommendations for parishes and schools at *a yet-to-be-determined point* will now be *reviewed* by Bishop Earl Fernandes. Models include possible clustering, consolidations, setting up some church buildings as oratories – places of prayer, devotion, celebration of the sacraments, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Yes, some churches and schools were recommended to be closed. *Saint John the Baptist was not recommended to be closed.* Our new bishop is expected to assess the models during the coming months as he becomes more familiar with the diocese. *He has indicated that he doesn't plan to make any announcements on his overall vision for the diocese until next summer at the earliest.*

As the Deacon-administrator, I felt that it was important to write this letter and let you know that **no final decision** has been made regarding the future of our beautiful Saint John the Baptist Church building. The Italian Catholic Community will still exist and will continue to be consulted on the direction Bishop Fernandes hopes to take in this neighborhood.

When you read the recommendations, it does call for Saint John the Baptist to be joined with Sacred Heart Parish (two blocks up Hamlet Street) and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish (about two miles away in Victorian Village on Buttles Avenue). Once again if Bishop Fernandes decides to accept these recommendations, then he will appoint a priest to pastor all three churches. This will not take place until next summer. As of now, everything stays the same. Please accept these recommendations in good faith and a way to help bring our Italian Catholic faith, culture, and heritage to all we meet.

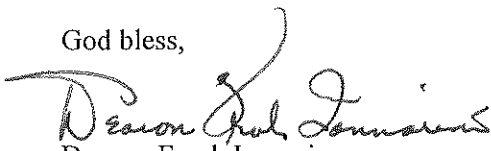
I will be discussing this further with the Saint John Advisory Board and The Columbus Italian Festival Executive Board. I have relied on these fine men and women - as well as other parish leaders – the last two years to advise me as the Administrator of Saint John the Baptist. Many good changes you have experienced over my two-year tenure has been due to the direction given to me by these members of the Italian Catholic Community.

I will also be willing to hold general meetings following our Sunday Masses during our weekly coffee and donuts. These Q & A sessions can begin next Sunday after the September 11th Mass in Marrapese Hall. They can continue throughout the month of September even at the Italian Festival.

As we approach the future, I pray that many of you will continue to attend Mass, pray for Bishop Fernandes, trust the Holy Spirit to guide us and – most importantly – don't be afraid! All will be well.

Saint John the Baptist Pray for us!

God bless,


Deacon Frank Iannarino
Administrator/Rector