

New Haven Catholic – FAQs – a preliminary list

1) Why are we transitioning into a single parish in New Haven?

To make sure that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and lived in the City of New Haven for well into the future. To work together, as One Body, to grow and form in the faith those who are currently engaged, to position ourselves in such a way that we can seek out and welcome new people into our Church, and to pass that faith onto our children and children's children. We are doing this so that we can devote ourselves more freely to that primary mission.

As was written by Archbishop Blair in a letter sent to all households registered in the New Haven parishes and reprinted in the New Haven Register: “The Archdiocese will now be implementing a new, united “municipal model” for the city of New Haven, where the several parishes in New Haven will be brought together into a single new parish, still keeping a number of existing church buildings and serving thousands of diverse parishioners. To begin this process, effective December 1, 2022, St. Mary Parish will have a new Pastor appointed who eventually will serve as what church law calls a priest “moderator in solidum” (CIC 517.1) a “first among equals,” collaborating with some of the current pastors and other soon to be named clergy as together they take up the various pastoral ministries of New Haven. All will be united together in their efforts to minister in a comprehensive “New Haven parish”.

2) When will the transition take effect?

*a) The transition is already underway, it started back in December of 2021 and will continue into **2023 and beyond. A canonical merger date is anticipated to be July 1, 2023.***

3) What do the terms: In Solidum and Moderator mean?

*a) Canon 517 – the Code of Canon Law states: When circumstances require it, the pastoral care of a parish or of different parishes together can be entrusted to several priests **in solidum**, with the requirement however, that in exercising pastoral care, one of the must be the **moderator**, namely the one who is to direct the joint action and to answer for it to the bishop.*

b) Since Fr. Roy will be retiring in May of 2023, Fr. Snell and Fr. Morgewicz have both left to pastor much larger parishes and have not been preplaced, nor will Fr. Elko as he approaches mandatory retirement at age 80, all this combined with diminishing numbers of clergy, calls for a new plan for staffing. Hopefully the “in solidum” model will be able to meet the sacramental and pastoral needs of New Haven. The Pastor (and indeed the parochial vicars) will have responsibility for various ministries, communities, priorities, etc.

New Haven Catholic – FAQs – a preliminary list

4. Will any church buildings close?

Not in the near future, however, eventually that will need to be discerned after careful evaluation of the physical condition of all church properties in New Haven and cost for restoration and repairs. Some like St. Stanislaus are in excellent condition while others like St. Joseph need a great deal of deferred repairs. Some may be open in a very limited capacity, for example, funerals and weddings only.

5. What about names?

Names of churches never change, as they were established at the time of their dedication. However, names of parishes do, to reflect pastoral changes, consolidation and sometimes in recognition of new saints and blessed. (i.e.: Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Saint John Paul the Great, Saint Paul VI). The process of naming a parish usually includes putting forth several recommendations to the Archbishop along with reasoning for each name. Once the Archbishop receives the recommendations, he will make a decision in consultation with members of his cabinet and the Presbyteral Council, and notify the Moderator (Fr. Lerner) of his decision.

6. Where will parish offices be located?

- a. That is a decision that will be made, again, after evolution of the potential locations currently owned by the parishes in New Haven. Issues like accessibility, parking, safety, physical condition all need to be considered. Since COVID much more is being done on the telephone and on line; few people if any “walk” to the parish office in their neighborhood any longer.

7. Will there be a single bulletin, envelope system, website ?

- a. Yes, the plan is to evolve to a single parish bulletin (larger) and envelope system, along with a new means to include on-line giving. An expanded website containing information about all the Masses, devotions and activities of the parish taking place in many different churches will allow for increased participation.

8. Will we still have separate trustees, finance and parish councils in our current churches?

No. There will be two lay trustees for the new parish as required by the State of CT along with a Parish Council and a Finance Council as established by Canon Law and the particular law of the Archdiocese of Hartford. Some of these will follow upon the “Transition/Implementation Team” which will guide the initial process.

New Haven Catholic – FAQs – a preliminary list

9. Will Mass schedules change again?

Mass schedules will be reviewed again in January 2023. If data shows that changes in the Mass schedule will be of benefit to the faithful in the city of New Haven, then PERHAPS another change will happen. All that is yet to be determined. Mass schedules change in all parishes over time.

10. Where are we “number wise” in New Haven today?

The first table shows the **October Count results for 2022**, and then compares them to 2021, 2019 and 2016. If you refer to the Totals row, you can see the combined count for the parishes comprising New Haven Catholic totaled 3120 for 2022, a decrease of 152 year over year and a decrease of 644 (21%) since 2016. “October Count” refers to the number of persons attending a Sunday or vigil Mass.

New Haven October Count 2022						
						2016 - 2022
Parish (# of Churches)	Oct Count 2022	Oct Count 2021	Oct Count 2019	Oct Count 2016		Total difference
SS Aedan and Brendan (1)	159	159	257	354		-123%
St. Anthony (1)	499	749	637	239		52%
St. Martin de Porres (1)	112	202	215	331		-196%
St. Mary (2)	780	725	749	926		-19%
St. Michael (1)	100	143	225	237		-137%
St. Stanislaus (1)	460	330	527	410		11%
Our Lady Of Guadalupe (1)	1010	964	836	1267		-25%
Totals	3120	3272	3446	3764		-21%

The second table factors in church capacity, average attendance and registered AAA families- those who are registered on a parish mailing list.

October Count with Archbishop's Annual Appeal Data							
						x2.55 (avg. CT	
Parish (# of churches)	TotalCapacity	Total Attendance	# of Masses	Avg Attendance	AAA Families	family size)	Pct. Attending
SS Aedan and Brendan	700	159	3	53	262	668	24%
St. Martin de Porres	250	112	2	56	118	301	37%
St. Anthony	250	499	3	166	771	1966	25%
St. Mary Parish (2)	1160	780	4	195	396	1010	77%
St. Michael	200	100	1	100	324	826	12%
St. Stanislaus Church	750	460	3	153	452	1153	40%
Our Lady of Guadalupe (2)	1200	1010	2	505	709	1808	56%
Totals	4510	3120	18	173	3032	7732	40%

New Haven Catholic – FAQs – a preliminary list

You will note:

- The churches of New Haven Catholic have a total single mass capacity (as reported by the parishes themselves) of 4510. The 2022 October count for all 18 weekend masses totaled 3120; if only one Mass were celebrated in each church in New Haven each weekend there would still be 1390 empty seats.
- Average attendance across all 18 Masses was 173;
- The New Haven Catholic parishes currently have a total of 3032 registered households with the Archbishop's Annual Appeal. If you multiply 3032 by 2.55 (which is the current average CT household size) you get a rough estimate of 7732 as the total family size of the AAA households;
- So, with the October Count total being 3120, this means that 40% of their registered AAA family members attended Masses the weekend of the count. The average for the Archdiocese overall is 18%.

11. Mass intentions

- a. *Can be booked as available according to church and time*
- b. *Some may be transferred with notification of the "requestor" according to the policies of the Archdiocese and Canon Law.*
- c. *Should someone not wish a Mass celebrated that is already booked they are free to call and cancel the Mass and their offering will be returned.*

12. Where will major holydays – e.g., the Easter Vigil, Christmas Midnight Mass be celebrated?

- a. *Schedules will be set well in advance and will take location, size, parking, musical instruments etc. all into account.*

13. What about the needs of Spanish, Italian and Polish languages and cultures?

- a. *At this time the Hispanic community is by far the largest and most active. Sacraments and devotions are celebrated in Spanish at St. Anthony and St. Francis Churches.*
- b. *St. Stanislaus continues to have Mass in Polish (and other Polish devotions).*
- c. *While Mass in Italian ended a while ago, St. Michael and St Anthony churches keep many Italian traditions alive.*
- d. *Various communities still preserve ethnic and cultural observances and the hope is to expand and increase attendance.*

New Haven Catholic – FAQs – a preliminary list

14. How do we deal with duplicate roles, ministries, committees, etc., and will any employees be losing their jobs?

The intention of the municipal model is to strengthen pastoral services in the most efficient way, which involves a continual evaluation of staff, expenditures, duplication of efforts, pastoral priorities, financial stability, etc.

15. Speaking of finances.....

When parishes are blended or merged, a new entity begins. All assets and liabilities belong to the new community. While some parishes may bring “better buildings,” others will bring greater numbers of parishioners and a more vibrant future and still others will bring financial resources and perhaps a strong history. One of these alone is not enough. As St. Paul wrote, “The body is not a single part, but many.”

16. What about Catholic education in New Haven?

- a. *Believe it or not, 21 Catholic parochial elementary schools have closed in the City of New Haven, the earliest ones founded in the 1800’s. We are committed to not let this continue and vow to support All Saints Academy (K-8) located on Ferry Street in the St. Francis School building with Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as Principal and on the staff. Along with St. Martin de Porres Academy (5-8) located in the Hill Section (former Sacred Heart School) the RC faith and educational excellence is offered to our children.*

17. What if we don’t like this municipal model/plan?

*Due to diminished church attendance, even before COVID, limited financial resources in many parishes, decreasing numbers of clergy and no vocations coming from within our own families and parishes, this **is** the plan we have adopted. All are now challenged to make it work, which we can do, with the help of God’s grace and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*