

Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

April 28, 2018

My dear Sisters and Brothers of Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin Parish:

On April 12, 2015, I called the Church of Pittsburgh to join me in the initiative *On Mission for The Church Alive!*

The goal is to offer a deeper relationship with Jesus and His Church to everyone:

- those actively engaged in the Church;
- those who have lost touch with Jesus or who have left the Church;
- those who have never belonged to the Church, but are seeking deeper meaning in their lives.

For three years, we have labored to discern how to best position our local Church for the future. We must respond to the reality that populations have shifted, that many Catholics have drifted away from Mass, and that we will have fewer priests. We need to share and mobilize our resources to draw people deeper into the faith, seek the lost and serve those in need.

Following prayerful deliberation that included more than 30,000 of our faithful and representatives of your own *On Mission* parish team, together with all of our priests and deacons, I have reached the decisions that I believe will best help us to fulfill our mission as the Church of Pittsburgh. Here are my decisions for your parish:

Your grouping will include the parishes of **Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, Whitehall; Saint Germaine, Bethel Park; Nativity, South Park; Saint Valentine, Bethel Park.**

- The Clergy assigned to this grouping are:
 - Father John W. Skirtich as Administrator.
 - Father Michael S. Suslowicz as Parochial Vicar.
 - Father John E. Hissrich as Parish Chaplain.
 - Father John R. Haney in residence.
 - Deacon Thomas B. Mills and Deacon Robert J. Stein.
- These clergy assignments become effective on Monday, October 15, 2018.
- This grouping may have up to nine (9) Sunday Masses, including any Saturday Vigil Masses.
- At this time, no church buildings will close.

Parishioners of Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin Parish

April 28, 2018

Page 2

- Your grouping is expected to work together to form a new parish by the end of 2021 and to recommend which church buildings will best serve the new parish.

I truly believe that change can bring new life and joy. I realize that such transformation is rarely easy, especially in the heartfelt matters of faith and parish life. I know this change will require us to let go of some things that are precious and familiar. I ask you to open your hearts to make new relationships in your grouping of parishes, to create a welcoming community.

Today marks the beginning of a transition phase that continues through October 15, 2018. During this time of change, I rely on your continued cooperation, understanding and patience.

Your outgoing and incoming clergy will work together for a smooth transition. In the coming months, you will receive interim schedules for Sunday and weekday Masses, confessions, and religious education.

As always, I rely on your prayers for all of us who are *On Mission for The Church Alive!* I believe with all my heart that, embracing the will and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, we can together do what Jesus asks of us: We can be *The Church Alive!*

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

DAZ:jkb

Bethel Park/South Park/ Whitehall Grouping

Parish Grouping

- St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin
- St. Germaine
- Nativity
- St. Valentine

Schools:

St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin School
St. Valentine Pre-School

Mass Attendance = 3,100

Maximum Number of Masses: 9

Category: B

Administrator:

Father John Skirtich

Parochial Vicar:

Father Michael Suslowicz

Parish Chaplain:

Father John Hissrich

In Residence:

Father John Haney

Deacons:

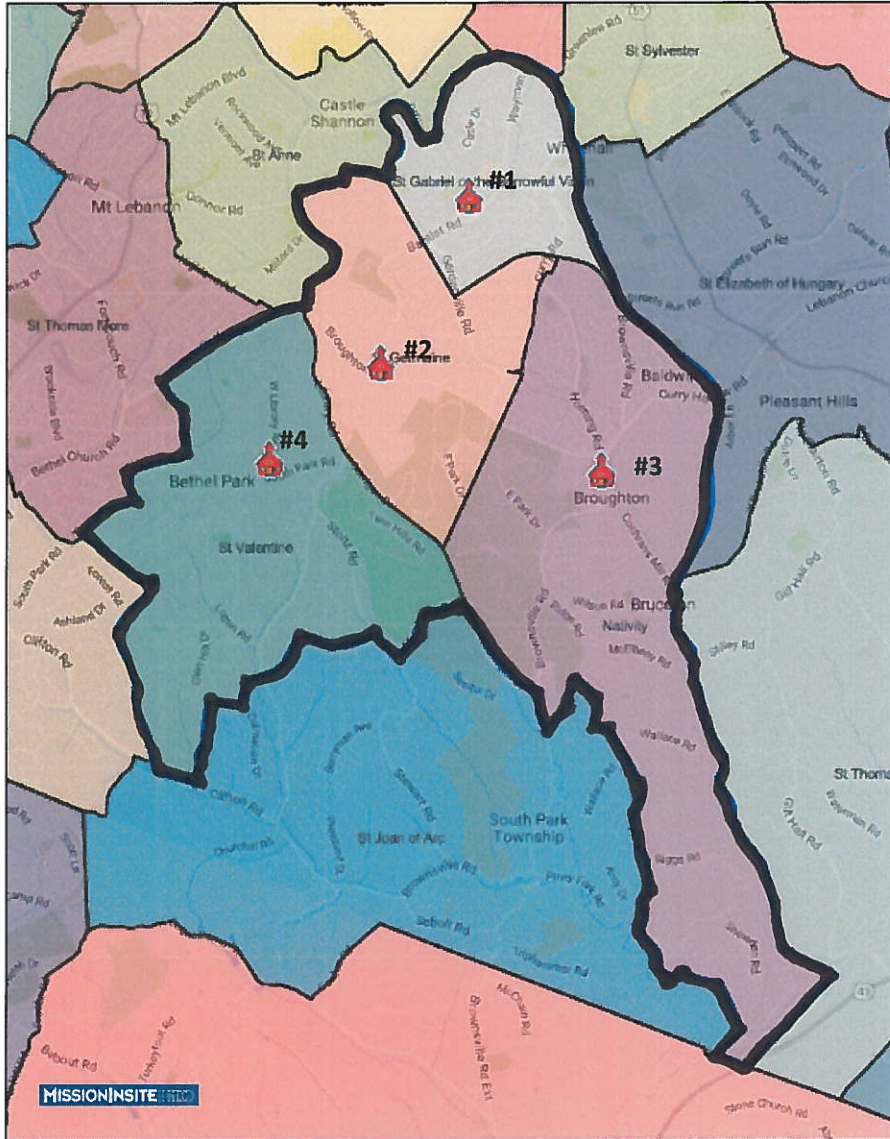
Deacon Thomas Mills

Deacon Robert Stein

Bethel Park/South Park/Whitehall Grouping (218)

(defined by the black outline)

brings together the parishes of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, St. Germaine, Nativity and St. Valentine



Listing of Church Buildings (The different colors show the parish territories.)

1. St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin
5200 Greenridge Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15236
2. St. Germaine
7003 Baptist Road, Bethel Park, PA, 15102
3. Nativity
5800 Brownsville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15236
4. St. Valentine
2710 Ohio Street, Bethel Park, PA 15102

April 26, 2018