

ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE MERGING OF THE CHURCHES OF OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PASTOR FOR THE NEW MERGED PARISH.

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Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist parish.

As you have at least partially already known, His Eminence Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York Archdiocese issued two decrees, both effective as of December 1, 2020:

1. Merging of the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred heart and of St. John the Baptist into one.
2. Appointing the Rev. Thomas Kunnel, C.O. as the new pastor of the merged parish.

The Oratorian Fathers of Saint Philip Neri, who were already entrusted with the pastoral care in both parishes, thank His Eminence for his continued trust and support of Oratorian Fathers and assure him and the people of God in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and of St. John the Baptist that we will do our best to fulfill our pastoral responsibilities in ways deserving the trust of his Eminence and confidence of our people in the new parish.

We want to thank Fr. Francis Conka, C.O., for his dedicated and inspirational leadership as pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart for the past six years. He is expected new assignment and new challenges as he pledges his priestly life to the glory of God.

We commend the new pastor Fr. Tom Kunnel, C.O. to your prayers. Welcome him with love and support him in his new ministry. In him you will find a new friend of Jesus and a dedicated shepherd.

There are changes, but do not miss to notice that through them all it is the Oratorian Fathers who are primarily responsible for your spiritual wellbeing and for the required priestly services. In your love support us with your prayers.

All these changes are taking place at the height of our Christmas celebrations. For all practical purposes, no noticeable change will take place until after Christmas as we enter the New Year in the name of the Lord.

May Emmanuel, "God with us", be the abiding presence with the new pastoral team and with the people of the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist.

Very Reverend Vladimir Chripko, C.O., Provost