



## Renew My Church Evanston Grouping Weekly Update

On Monday, September 20, 2021, the Evanston Grouping held its second meeting of the Discernment & Decision phase of Renew My Church. St. Joan of Arc hosted the grouping teams from St. Athanasius, St. Mary, St. Nicholas and the Sheil Catholic Center for a tour, dinner, and meeting.

The meeting began with a reminder of the three mission imperatives of Renew My Church which are: making disciples, building communities, and inspiring witness. The facilitators then discussed that the goal for the meeting was to become aware of the grouping realities and to identify strengths and challenges of the Evanston grouping as a whole. Data from all parishes and the Sheil Catholic Center about Mass attendance, demographics, and finances was shared with all the members of the RMC team.

The team worked in groups comprised of members of each parish and the Sheil Center to evaluate the data and determine the overall strengths and challenges of the Evanston grouping and identified the overall strengths and challenges as:

### Strengths

- ☞ Financially, no debt; good savings
- ☞ Diversity
- ☞ Collaboration \*
- ☞ Robust Schools \*
- ☞ Active Lay Leadership
- ☞ Similar Challenges
- ☞ Strong Interfaith Connection

### Challenges

- ☞ Operating deficit
- ☞ Shrinking attendance
- ☞ Aging and mobile worshippers
- ☞ Many worship choices in Evanston
- ☞ Engagement – General
- ☞ Priest shortage
- ☞ Not engaging youth
- ☞ Distrust of institutions

The night ended with an encouragement to continue to learn more about each other's faith communities and to continue to reflect on the strengths and challenges of the Evanston grouping.

Please continue to pray for the members of the Evanston Grouping Teams and all Evanston Catholics as we work to fulfill the charge Jesus made to St. Francis of Assisi to *Renew My Church*.

In Christ — Fr. Ken Anderson, Fr. Tom Baldonieri, Fr. Hernan Cuevas, Fr. Kevin McCray, Fr. Bradley A. Zamora,

## Renew My Church



**Come, Listen, Give Your Feedback**  
**Possible Futures For St. Mary**  
**& All The Evanston Parishes**

**Tuesday, October 12 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**In the Church**