

ST. JAMES KANSAS CITY'S RESPONSE TO PASTORAL PLAN

Here is what the plan says about St. James:

St. Francis Xavier, St. James, and St. Therese Little Flower have the possibility to cluster under the leadership of the pastor at St. Francis Xavier. All administrative and ministerial activity for all three parishes would be conducted through the parish office at St. Francis Xavier. St. James and St. Therese Little Flower will become sister churches. If the parishes do not form a cluster, they will form a parish network with St. James and St. Therese Little Flower forming a cluster. (Pastoral Plan Draft 1-22, page 13)

Response from St. James Parish

- St. James meets all the criteria to remain a viable, 'clustered' parish with St. James Liberty with our own administrative staff and committees. Even during the challenges of Covid, we have functioned as a vibrant faith community. The Plan's proposed reconfigurations with remaining parishes in the deanery seems premature because our situation is still fluid and unknown as we come out of the pandemic. However, St. James acknowledges the need for more mutual support among our parishes but also believes that retaining our own administrative identity and independence is the most effective way to proceed. Thus, if the Plan's intent is to CLUSTER St. James with St. Francis Xavier and St. Therese Little Flower, St. James will consider this if the Jesuit Provincial accepts it.
- St. James wishes to state strongly our belief that diocesan support for the church's presence in the central city is a key to evangelizing absent Catholics and youth, improving the public perception of the church on the most pressing issues facing Kansas City and honoring the history of Catholic involvement by priests, religious and laity in the areas of racism, poverty, and ecumenical collaboration in the core of the city. So, if the Jesuit Provincial declines the stated Plan, St. James will consider CLUSTERING with St. Therese Little Flower or any other parish.
- St. James believes that diminishing Catholic presence and influence at a time when the central corridor is set to benefit from a huge investment of federal infrastructure money signals the need for vision and foresight. Losing locations in midtown or liquidating valuable property now may meet immediate needs but could prove unfortunate as the resurgence of urban areas and population offers opportunities in the future. Now is the time to strengthen and invest in personnel and public support in the core. Having said that, St. James believes that making St. Louis a mission church of either St. Francis or St. James will maintain the Catholic Church's presence in the area.

- We did not attempt another parish meeting after going into full Covid precautions again, but we respectfully submit this response as the consensus of our parishioners based on our first meeting. We have attached personal statements from some of them about how important the parish has been in their lives and ask that these be included in our response.

Fr. Michael Roach
Pastor
St. James Kansas City

Benedict Babaran
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St. James Kansas City