



Office of Catholic Schools
835 N. Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611
tel 312.534.5200
schools.archchicago.org

November 28, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians of St. Therese Chinese Catholic School,

On behalf of the Archdiocese of Chicago, I wish to inform you of decisions recently made through the Archdiocese's Renew My Church initiative. As you may be aware, Renew My Church is an Archdiocesan discernment and renewal process that involves a review of each parish and Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Chicago. St. Therese Chinese Catholic Parish and School have been part of the Bridgeport Renew My Church grouping, which also includes:

- All Saints – St. Anthony Parish
- Nativity of Our Lord Parish
- St. Mary of Perpetual Help Parish
- Bridgeport Catholic Academy
- Santa Lucia-Santa Maria Incononata Parish and School
- St. Gabriel Parish and School
- St. Jerome Croatian Parish and School
- St. Barbara Parish and School

The Bridgeport-area grouping began the Renew My Church review and discernment process earlier this year. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment Team, which was made up of representatives from each of the parishes and schools, met to review and discern the future church, parish and school structures for the Bridgeport, Canaryville and Chinatown areas. Based on their meetings and discussions with the larger parish community, they submitted a report for the Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, which included representatives from across the Archdiocese.

The Archdiocesan Commission met to review the feedback report and other materials and information, including the enrollment and demographic trends for each of the Bridgeport-area schools. Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, and the Archdiocese's Presbyteral Council met, and based on the Archdiocesan Commission's recommendation and other considerations, the Cardinal made a final decision regarding the grouping structure.

The decision has been made that St. Therese Chinese Catholic School will assume responsibility of St. Barbara School, retaining campuses at both the existing St. Therese Chinese Catholic school building and the existing St. Barbara school building, under the St. Therese Chinese Catholic School leadership and name. The academic program will include expanded early childhood (PreK) at the St. Barbara campus with PreK - 8 at both sites pending enrollment. School leadership structure will consist of one principal with two administrators - one at each site. The school will be led by the current St. Therese Chinese Catholic School principal. The current St. Barbara principal will serve as an administrator at St. Barbara campus and will remain involved in leadership decisions. Current St. Barbara students will be automatically accepted into St. Therese Chinese Catholic School. St. Barbara faculty and staff will be given priority status in filling positions at the expanded St. Therese Chinese Catholic School.

Cardinal Cupich has requested additional time for further discussion and consultation regarding the parishes of All Saints-St. Anthony, St. Barbara, St. Mary of Perpetual Help and St. Therese Chinese Catholic and the Archdiocesan Center for Chinese Apostolate. Therefore, a decision regarding these parishes will be delayed until at least mid-January 2019.



Office of Catholic Schools
 835 N. Rush Street
 Chicago, IL 60611
 tel 312.534.5200
 schools.archchicago.org

We are hopeful that many St. Barbara School families will decide to enroll their children at St. Therese Chinese Catholic School next year. We ask for your support and partnership in the coming weeks and months to help ease the transition of those families – and welcome them into your school community. We also ask for your prayers for the St. Barbara School community and all Bridgeport-area Renew My Church grouping community members during this time of change and renewal.

Also, for your information, I want to share with you the additional decisions regarding the Bridgeport-area Renew My Church grouping that were shared during tonight’s community meeting:

- St. Jerome Croatian and Santa Lucia-Santa Maria Inconronata Parishes will unite to form a new parish, effective July 1, 2019. St. Jerome Croatian Church will serve as the active worship site for the new parish, and Santa Lucia-Santa Maria Inconronata Church will close no later than June 2020 at a time determined in consultation with parish leadership, the pastor of the new parish and Archdiocesan leadership. The new parish will have a single school housed on the current campus of St. Jerome Croatian School. Thus, Santa Lucia School will close, effective June 30, 2019. The new parish will be staffed by the Croatian Franciscans.
- The faith communities of Nativity of Our Lord and St. Gabriel will unite to form one, new parish. Both churches will remain open as active worship sites. Bridgeport Catholic Academy and St. Gabriel School will unite as one school with two campuses to serve this new parish. For the 2019/2020 school year, each campus will be led by its own principal, both reporting to the new pastor of the new, unified parish. Both campuses will provide programming for grades pre-K through 8, and all current students will be invited to re-register. The two campuses will operate under one, combined financial plan. One tuition rate and financial aid process will apply for both campuses. Faculty and support staff will remain employed at both sites assuming they remain in good standing, wish to return, and enrollment levels remain approximately the same. The new pastor and parish and school leadership will continue to evaluate the best long-term leadership and operational structure of the two campuses.
- The new parishes will enjoy the ministerial support of the SPRED Center on Lowe Ave.

I am praying for you, your family and the St. Therese Chinese Catholic School community.

Yours in Christ,

Jim Rigg, Ph. D.
 Superintendent of Catholic Schools
 Archdiocese of Chicago