



# St. John Paul II Parish Family

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## Video #3 – The Process

You may be wondering, what's the process for becoming one canonical parish? Canon Law says that "It is only for the diocesan bishop to erect, suppress, or alter parishes. He is neither to erect, suppress, nor alter notably parishes, unless he has heard the presbyteral council" (c. 515 §2). It is entirely the Archbishop's prerogative to make this canonical unification a reality, and he does this by issuing a decree. If he issues a decree making us the St. John Paul II parish, then the decree will (and Canon Law says that it must) be shared with all of you. As part of the Beacon's of Light process, we will be asking the Archbishop to issue a decree making us one canonical parish. Also, it is worth noting that, if everything goes well, the Vatican will not be involved in our process at all; a decree will be issued by the Archbishop, and we will become one canonical parish with no other intervention.

However, in order for the Archbishop to issue a decree making us a single parish, there are some procedures that he has to follow. First, as you see above, he must "hear the presbyteral council." The presbyteral council is a group of priests that meets regularly with the Archbishop to advise him on his governance of the Archdiocese. When we are ready to submit our request for canonical unification, all of the documentation detailing the work we have done together and the reasons for our request will be sent to the Archbishop, and he will share them with the presbyteral council. After some discussion, the members of the presbyteral council will advise the Archbishop as to whether or not they think he should issue a decree making us one canonical parish. It's important to note that the Archbishop does not need the permission of the presbyteral council, but he does need to get their opinion. Our hope is that, seeing all of the great work we have done to come together as a family and the great work that is being done through our shared efforts, the presbyteral council and the Archbishop will all be in agreement that we should become one canonical parish.

Canon Law also says that, before issuing a decree, the Archbishop must "seek out the necessary information and proofs" (c. 50). In order to fulfill this requirement, our St. John Paul II staff has already been hard at work gathering and documenting the information and proofs to support the Archbishop in issuing this decree. Ultimately, this can be seen as a celebration of the great work that we are doing together. We will be sharing with the Archbishop that – we have a single source of communication for our family, including a single bulletin, website, social media presence, and newsletter; we have one faith formation program, including a unified OCIA ("Becoming Catholic"), PSR, Jr High/High School Youth Group; that our Pastoral and Finance Councils are already working together, and many other great works/programs that we are doing together.

Finally, Canon Law also says that, before issuing a decree, the Archbishop must hear those whose rights can be affected (c. 50). This means that the Archbishop needs to hear from you! All of your feedback at our information sessions will be recorded and shared with the Archbishop. You can provide feedback through our website and all of this will be shared with the Archbishop as well. This feedback can include the good things you see through our collaboration together, hopes that you have for the future, and/or concerns you have moving forward – it is all valuable. Also, we want you to be able to give feedback from a place that is well-informed. This is one of the reasons we are sharing these articles and videos. In the next segment, we will be detailing what exactly your rights are.