

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



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January 28, 2017

Dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart,

The Church in the Archdiocese of Chicago has begun a historic process of renewal and revitalization called *Renew My Church*. Your parish leaders and pastor have generously agreed to take the lead by joining other parishes in your grouping to participate in the pilot of this effort. Your experience in this process will shape and benefit all the other parishes in the Archdiocese.

In my January 29, 2017 column for *Chicago Catholic*, I offer a vision of what is at stake, namely seeing that the faith is passed on to the next generation. *Renew My Church* simply put is about making sure that our parishes have the vitality and sustainability to inspire discipleship in our youth, our families and our neighborhoods. We take our inspiration from St. Francis of Assisi, who responded to Christ's call "Rebuild My Church," by revitalizing the faith not only for the benefit of his small town but for the entire world. His namesake in our own time, Pope Francis, now urges us to do the same for our own time, making the Church a leaven that can transform the world.

Practically, this means that your parish and the other parishes in your grouping will enter a period and process of prayer, facilitated discussions to identify current challenges and opportunities, discernment and planning to create a pastoral strategy for your particular area. The archdiocese has developed the resources you will need to take up this task.

Again, all of us will learn from you, as we gain insights from your pioneering experiences that will confirm and correct the process going forward for the entire archdiocese.

With *Renew My Church* our local Church in the Chicago area is stepping out in faith, trusting that the Lord continues to lead and guide the Church in our time, just as our ancestors in the faith did, when they built the churches and schools, social services and care facilities that have made this one of the great archdioceses in the world. It is time for us to do the same and dream big.

I pledge to work and pray alongside you as you pioneer *Renew My Church* for all of us. Thank you for your leadership, generosity and deep faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Card. Blase J. Cupich".

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago