



St. Malachi Parish

PARISH COLLABORATION



St. Patrick Parish

Dear Parishioners of St. Patrick and St. Malachi,

The Gospel for the Second Sunday of Easter, also known as Divine Mercy Sunday, describes the Risen Lord's appearance to the disciples who locked themselves in a space because they were afraid. Their efforts in creating a fortress did not prevent Jesus from entering. And, as Jesus entered, he simply greeted them with *Peace be with you*. He said it again, *Peace be with you*. *As the Father has sent me, so I send you*. Jesus then breathed on them and told them to receive the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:19-31).

This encounter changed each of their lives in that very moment. Even Thomas, who didn't initially grasp what had occurred, would eventually come to believe after Jesus addressed his concerns.

Today, 27 April 2025, marks the official merging of St. Malachi Parish into St. Patrick Parish by decree of Bishop Edward C. Malesic last month. This decree is in response to a process of discernment which led parish leaders of St. Malachi to courageously recommend, as one of our options, that the parish might become an oratory (a church designated as a place of worship for a special purpose or mission) in order to assure its future.

Recognizing the similarities between St. Malachi and St. Patrick – especially with our emphasis to serve our poor and marginalized sisters and brothers on Cleveland's West Side – Bishop Malesic determined in July 2023 that it would be fitting to have St. Malachi become an oratory of St. Patrick Parish.

Understandably, this decision may very well connect our experience to that of the first disciples as fear and apprehension can tempt us to stay locked up by creating a fortress to shield us from what lies ahead. But the Risen Lord has breathed upon us that very same Spirit who instructs us, through the apostolic role of our Bishop, to leave the familiar and secure space. Like those first disciples, the Spirit requires a response of action. Either we go forward in faith or we, like Thomas, can be tempted to demand further proof and remain in that locked space until we are convinced otherwise. Thankfully, a large majority of parishioners from St. Malachi and St. Patrick have generously responded to the Spirit's initiative to go and move forward with our Gospel mission.

Responding to that same Spirit, therefore, we established a process to ensure that both parishes, while cherishing our unique character and particular customs, pursue a path toward collaboration. This Collaboration Process included two very important phases. The first phase, The Recommendation Phase, began in January 2024 with the formation of a Collaboration Steering Committee (CSC) comprised of women and men representing both parishes. This phase included working groups, comprised of nearly 60 parishioners, who studied our needs at St. Malachi and St. Patrick. Recommendations from each of these groups were then made in August 2024.

Having received the recommendations from each of those groups, the Steering Committee members reviewed them and invited every parishioner to respond with feedback. Representatives then joined me in September 2024 as we met with Bishop Malesic to present our proposal for moving forward. Bishop Malesic and members of his staff affirmed our plans and he gave his blessing to proceed with implementation.