

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



Office of the Archbishop
835 North Rush Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312.534.8230
archchicago.org

Prot. N. 2021 RMC-3.3

March 4, 2021

Petitioning Members of St. Constance Parish
c/o Rev. Pawel Barwikowski, Administrator
St. Constance Parish
5843 West Strong Street
Chicago, Illinois 60630-2098

Dear Petitioning Members of St. Constance Parish:

On or around February 11, 2021, my office received several scores of the attached sample letter. I asked Father Pawel Barwikowski to publish this reply in your parish bulletin or by other suitable means.

The letters are identical, except for the name and address of the sender. They all ask me to revoke or amend my decree of January 28, 2021, which unites St. Constance Parish with St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, effective July 1, 2021.

The letters indicate a misunderstanding of what is to happen after the effective date of the decree of January 28, 2021. The decree will unite St. Constance Parish and St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in one new parish under the leadership of a single priest/pastor, and it indicates that St. Robert Bellarmine Church will be designated the parish church.

Designating one of the two churches of the new parish as the parish church only means that this church's campus will be the location of the new parish office and records. It is not my intent to close either St. Constance Church or St. Robert Bellarmine Church. On the contrary, the new parish will continue to need and fully use both churches. Neither will close. Indeed, the ministries located on the St. Constance Church campus will continue, and there are no plans to sell the property of either parish.

Consequently, I see no grounds to withdraw my decree, for the basis of the request seems to be a belief that St. Constance Church will close. The church will remain open.

Be assured of my prayers and blessing as we move through this Lenten Season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago

Attachment

February 6, 2021

Cardinal Cupich
Archdiocese of Chicago
835 N Rush St.
Chicago, IL 60611

Re: St. Constance Parish

Dear Cardinal Cupich,

I am a parishioner of St. Constance Parish, and I am extremely disappointed to learn that St. Constance Parish is being merged with St. Robert Bellarmine and that the future of St. Constance is in jeopardy.

St. Constance is a financially healthy parish with an active congregation. Closing St. Constance is not just a matter of transferring parishioners for holy mass to another parish. For many of us, St. Constance is our second home and for some of us, St. Constance is our *only* family.

Such a decision destroys the very Catholic community and family that has been created and nurtured over decades. Many choose to turn away from the church all together, as has been the case with other parish mergers.

Cardinal Cupich, we urge you to reconsider your decision to close St. Constance Parish and allow it to continue to shine the beacon of Catholicism for the parish faithful.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Name

A black rectangular redaction box covering the name of the sender.

Address

