

2006 to Present - Narrative

"The 'Called to Be Church' initiative is an opportunity for 'creating our future'," the words of Bishop Howard Hubbard. As St. Gabriel's begins the next chapter in its history, the parishioners have been challenged, as have all parishioners in the Diocese of Albany.

Upon Father Leo Markert's retirement in July 2007, Bishop Howard Hubbard named Mrs. Annette Brooks from St. Ambrose Church in Latham as St. Gabriel's Parish Life Director (PLD) and Rev. James Belogi and Rev. Robert Powhida as the Sacramental Ministers. Thus, St. Gabriel and St. Madeleine Sophie parishes were linked and would share spiritual and physical events as needs arose.

In October 2006, the 27-month process "Called to Be Church" was initiated in the Diocese by the Bishop. Individual church committees were formed and after many meetings and discussions, their recommendations were submitted to the Bishop for his review. The final decision as to which churches would be closed, merged or linked would come later.

Anxiously awaiting the Bishop's decision, in January 2009, he announced that St. Gabriel's would remain linked to St. Madeleine Sophie with Annette Brooks continuing as the Parish Life Director and Fathers James Belogi and Robert Powhida as the Sacramental Ministers.

During this period, changes in Mass schedule and personnel have occurred. However, many of our activities in church and school have remained. These include potluck and soup suppers, craft fairs, senior luncheons, card parties, Communion Mass and Supper, Living Nativity, Youth Stations of the Cross, Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation. New events were tackled and proved to be successful: Festa, in September to honor St. Gabriel's feast day, Giffy's barbecue, Lenten Friday fish dinners and activities and retreats in the school involving multi-generations such as Girl's and Boy's Night Out.

Currently, St. Gabriel's and St. Madeleine Sophie will continue as two parishes linked in faith, worship, service and community. In this new phase of our changing church, parishioners are being challenged to keep St. Gabriel's vibrant and alive! How? Who? Look in the mirror!

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Historian
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