**Edgewater Rogers Park Renew My Church Grouping**

Strengths and Challenges

*August 9, 2020*

**Strengths**

1) Richness in ethnic and economic diversity, including welcoming of LGBTQ people and families (*e.g. St. Ignatius shrines).*

2) Strong, committed, joyful, and trusted pastoral staffs who provide a myriad of care and services. Sacramental life and faith formation ministries of some parishes are also strong.

3) Northside Catholic Academy is valued by all three parishes who jointly support it.

4) Social justice as a priority with important outreach ministries *(e.g. pantry, senior care, interfaith dialogue groups, hot lunches during the pandemic and refugee support).*

5) Loyola University’s presence in the neighborhood.

6) All three parishes are full of multi-generational families – and the parishes value community building and socializing.

7) COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice movements may provide an opportunity to reach out to individuals and families in search of a diverse, justice-minded, spiritual home *(e.g. St. Ignatius retreats on anti-racism/spirituality).*

8) Densely populated neighborhoods well-served by public transportation with reasonable parking.

**Challenges**

1) Creating community within our diversity, including across Spanish- and English-speaking communities, and affordability of NCA.

2) Stronger children, youth, and teen ministries needed, including progression through Confirmation.

3) Structural and systemic social, economic, and race/ethnic barriers to community building in the Edgewater and Rogers Park.

4) Collections and fundraising are low in some parishes, resulting in serious financial challenges.

5) High maintenance costs of our beautiful churches and other buildings on our campuses.

6) Some grouping parishes are strong in some benchmarks (e.g. finances or Mass attendance) and weak in others. This is both a strength and a challenge and points to the need for increased collaboration and shared ministries.