

# Archdiocese of Detroit

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## SS. Kevin and Norbert Parish in Inkster to Close

Cardinal Adam Maida, archbishop of Detroit, has announced that Saints (SS.) Kevin and Norbert Parish in Inkster will close. The exact date for canonical suppression (closure) of the parish, located at 27355 Woodsfield, has not yet been determined, but it will be no later than May 31, 2004.

In a letter to parishioners, Cardinal Maida noted the decision was made after Bishop Frank Reiss, auxiliary bishop for the South Region, and Father Jack Baker, the parish administrator, met with the SS. Kevin and Norbert Pastoral Council in December 2003 and held a “town meeting” earlier this month. Churchgoers were informed of the decision at the 4 p.m. Mass on Saturday, January 10.

Cardinal Maida indicated he had “sought the wisdom” of his priest consultors (a group which advises the him on administrative and financial issues) and the Presbyteral Council (a group which represents the priests of the archdiocese and assists him). Both of these groups recommended the closure and suppression of the parish.

St. Norbert Parish and St. Kevin Parish (30043 Parkwood) merged in May 1998. The combined parish has been operating out of the St. Norbert site. Cardinal Maida cited a number of factors that were considered in the process that resulted in the recommendation for closure:

It was hoped that the joint parish, working with nearby Holy Family Parish, would be able to provide for the pastoral experience of the people of Inkster. Experience proved however, that the combined parish has not been able to maintain viability.

At the one weekend Mass currently held at the parish, the average attendance is 80 people. There have been almost no Baptisms and/or weddings and only a few funerals (most were not from the parish).

Financially, the parish is \$700,000 in debt to the archdiocese. Comparison of weekly income and expenses for the current budget indicate inability to meet costs. Also, the buildings and parish plant at the St. Norbert site need extensive attention and repair.

The pastoral needs of the parishioners of SS. Kevin and Norbert Parish can be easily met at one or another nearby parish, all within approximately one mile of the parish—St. Dunstan to the north, Divine Child to the east, SS. Simon and June to the west, and Holy Family and/or St. John the Baptist to the south.

“...A decision to close a parish is not easy for anyone, myself included,” Cardinal Maida writes in the letter. “...SS. Kevin and Norbert have each made a great contribution to the Church of Detroit over the years. We can—and should—rejoice in all that God has accomplished over the last half century. With courage, humility and trust, let us now move forward into a new chapter of these parishes and our Archdiocese of Detroit.”

## **Fact Sheet on Saints (SS.) Kevin and Norbert Parish**

- June 1951:** Saint Norbert Parish, 27355 Woodsfield, Inkster, was **founded**.  
The parish had 1,000 households and Father Isidore Bohr was pastor.
- June 1957:** Saint Kevin Parish, 30043 Parkwood, Inkster, was **founded**.  
The parish had 283 households and Father Lawrence McHugh was pastor.
- May 1998:** Saint Kevin Parish and Saint Norbert Parish **merged**  
and became SS. Kevin and Norbert Parish.  
Father John Lehner, OSFS, was pastor.
- January 2004:** Father Jack Baker is the parish administrator.  
Updated figures show SS. Kevin and Norbert Parish has 163 households.  
Average attendance at the one weekend Mass celebrated is 80 people.

After the closing of SS. Kevin and Norbert Parish, there will be 314 parishes in the six-county area of the Archdiocese of Detroit. The last two parishes closed prior to SS. Kevin and Norbert were St. Bernadette in Dearborn in June of 1998 and St. Peter Lithuanian in Detroit in May of 1995.

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