

PHASE ONE PLANNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Meeting # 1

REALITY STATEMENT:

In the future most parishes will share a priest with two or more parishes and need to consider new ways of sharing responsibilities for parish leadership.

The reality presents us with the opportunity to participate in creating our future as vibrant communities. These communities will have a variety of ministries, ministers and faithful disciples. It is a time for prayer, consultation and working together as we listen and respond to the Spirit. Together, we will discover the Holy Spirit working with us as we grasp the meaning of "Behold I make all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

As outlined in the Local Area Planning Guidelines 2010, each parish needs to forward a set of recommendations for future inter-parish collaboration. To prepare the report, you may go to the diocesan website and download it at:

<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/planning/index.htm>

Forward the completed report of Meetings #1 and #2 to Bishop Martin Amos, Diocese of Davenport, 780 West Central Park Ave., Davenport, IA 52804-1901. Report must be postmarked by January 17, 2011.

Each parish shall hold two meetings to which parish council members, commission members, finance council members, staff and all interested parish members are invited.

Meeting #1: Consider your parish's strengths and weaknesses in the major ministry areas. These will be used to discern how parishes might best complement each other in these major ministry areas.

Meeting #2: Begin a process of visioning how your parish might collaborate with neighboring parishes. Please consider the following questions carefully and prayerfully during these two meetings.

St. Mary's - Riverside

LITURGY – The parish is a worshipping community, a community of prayer which expresses and develops its relationship with God through liturgical and devotional celebrations.

- What are your strengths in the area of liturgy?
 - A part-time paid music liturgist
 - An annual Easter Vigil celebration that incorporates Organ music, horn player, choir, several lectors, and much pageantry

- An annual Christmas Vigil that incorporates Organ music, horn player, choir, over a dozen servers, banners, and much pageantry
 - Saturday/Sunday Mass with average attendance of 489 people
 - A daily mass with an average attendance of 26 people
 - “First Saturday” mass and Eucharistic Adoration the first of every month.
 - We conduct all Baptisms during mass
 - Several volunteer cantors
 - Numerous Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, altar servers, greeters, and ushers; a number of parishioners participate in this role – note just a few who do it all the time.
 - Volunteers who set out the gifts, prepare the church, etc before every service
 - A volunteer liturgy committee that prepares and decorate church for the different liturgical seasons
- What are your weaknesses in the area of liturgy?
 - We would like more people to help in this ministry.

FAITH FORMATION – The parish provides ongoing faith development for all age groups.

- What are your parish’s strengths in the area of faith development for all age groups?
 - St. Mary’s is building a million dollar plus Religious Ed and Retreat Center that is scheduled to be completed in February of this year. This building will be equipped with new classrooms and updated technology.
 - A full-time Youth Minister
 - Two volunteer Religious Ed coordinators
 - Baptism classes for all families having an infant baptized
 - Four regularly scheduled youth retreats once a year: Confirmation retreat, Boundary Waters Camping & Canoeing retreat, Steubenville North Retreat, Cincinnati Franciscans for the Poor retreat
 - Four 1st communion retreats scheduled throughout the year that includes parents and students
 - A total of 70 plus youth – between Holy Trinity, St. Mary’s, and St. Josephs -who participate in the four retreats throughout the year
 - A Cluster Youth Fund was established to help with transportation costs and youth scholarships. Youth fund is funded through various fundraisers throughout the year.
 - A Facebook page which promotes faith formation
 - A “youth column” in the bulletin which promotes youth events and keeps parishioners updated on the latest youth and faith formation news

- A two year combined Confirmation program split between St. Mary's, Holy Trinity, and St. Josephs. Parents are required to attend class with their son/daughter during the second year.
- An annual overnight Confirmation retreat
- One volunteer teacher and one teacher's aide for each class, classes K – 8th
- Children's Liturgy
- Vacation Bible School
- In Oct of 2010, about 70 people attended the Christ Our Life conference in Des Moines. We were the largest parish group at the conference.
- During the Christmas season, we distributed a copy of the Mathew Kelly book "Rediscovering Catholicism" to every family in the parish.
 - The Mathew Kelly books were donated by an anonymous member of the Cluster parish who purchased 1000 books to be distributed among the families of all three parishes. Extra books will be used be given to visitors and newcomers.
- In March, nationally known Catholic speaker Michael Cumbie will give a 3 day speaking seminar at the Cluster Parish
- Nationally known Catholic speaker Leah Darrow is scheduled to speak to our Cluster Parish Sept 25th, 2011.
 - We coordinated with St. James-Washington, St. Mary's-Solon, our own Cluster Parish, and Cluster Parish of St. Joseph's-Hills, St. Mary's – Nichols and Lone Tree to pay for her speaking fee and travel expenses
- In Oct 2008, hosted nationally know Catholic speaker Frank Runyeon to a packed church.
- Why Catholic: Over a hundred participants within our Cluster parish participated in this program
- After the Why Catholic series was over, several groups kept on meeting and are joining in regular fellowship and pursuing other Catholic study programs on their own.
- For the last several years, St. Mary's has been hosting Christian Experience Weekend (CEW)
 - We have had a number of parishioners attend this retreat. We estimate about 40 parishioners in the Cluster Parish have participated in CEW over the last several years.
- Several parishioners have participated in the Ministry Formation Program (MFP)
- Over the years, a group of parishioners along with Fr Rich, have taken two trips to Rome.
- In Oct 2011, a trip to the Holy Land is scheduled for Fr. Rich and various parishioners to attend.
- RCIA: We have a very vibrant RCIA program taught by our parish priest. Each year we have an average of 7 to 8 people going through our RCIA program.

- What are your weaknesses?
 - We would like parents to be more active in their children's faith development

SOCIAL ACTION – The parish responds to the social concerns of the local area and the needs of the broader world.

- What are your parish's strengths in the area of social justice?
 - We support Choices Medical Clinic with a monthly second collection
 - Annually contribute to Catholic Relief Services and Charities
 - Support and donate to Operation RICE Bowl
 - SHARE Iowa
 - An annual food drive to support the local food pantry
 - Annual collection of items to send to our men and women serving overseas in the military.
 - Care packages to young parishioners in college
 - Communion to the homebound

- What are your weaknesses?
 - We would like to get more people to become aware of social concerns and donate their time.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE – The parish is a community of service that sustains its mission and ongoing development through a commitment to good financial stewardship.

- What are your parish's strengths in the area of strategic planning?
 - St. Mary's funded and is in the process of building a million dollar plus Religious Ed and Retreat Center that is scheduled to be completed in Feb 2011.
 - Most of this was financed through parishioner's donations, and with the help of parishioners donating their time and skilled labor to help complete building project.
 - Currently promoting IRA charitable rollovers as means to financially support parish
 - A fully functioning web site that is updated on a regular basis.
 - A part-time web designer who updates and maintains website
 - A four page 8 ½ by 11 inch bulletin that is able to feature weekly contribution amounts and financial updates
 - A part-time bulletin editor
 - A Facebook page

- St. Mary's always meets its ADA obligations and has exceeded that amount for several years now.
 - St. Mary's was able to fully meet its Diocesan Capitol Campaign contribution. In fact, St. Mary's finances were sound enough that it was able to pay it all off in one lump sum from its reserves. This is quite remarkable when you consider that St. Mary's was also in the midst of a Building Campaign fund drive.
 - We have a part-time secretary who assists in managing finances
 - We have the latest finance software suggested by the diocese
 - We have automatic withdraw for anyone who wishes to contribute through electronic banking
 - St. Mary's finances are very sound and stable (Further documentation can be provided upon request)
- What are your weaknesses?
 - We are always looking for more contributors
- What are your parish's strengths in the areas of efficient use and careful oversight of your finances and your buildings and grounds?
 - We have a part-time secretary who helps manage finances
 - We have the latest finance software suggested by the diocese
 - We have automatic withdraw for anyone who wishes to contribute through electronic banking
 - St. Mary's always meets its ADA obligations and has exceeded that amount for several years now.
 - St. Mary's was able to fully meet its Diocesan Capitol Campaign contribution.
 - St. Mary's finances are very sound and stable (Further documentation can be provided upon request)
 - Further documentation of finances and financial viability can be provided upon request.
 - Buildings and Grounds:
 - St. Mary's funded and is in the process of building a million dollar plus Religious Ed and Retreat Center that is scheduled to be completed in Feb 2011.
 - Most of this was financed through parishioner's donations, and with the help of parishioners donating their time and skilled labor to help complete building project.
 - We have a paid cleaning lady who cleans the church and rectory
 - The parish council contracts with Tim Engel, a parishioner, for snow removal and lawn care
- What are your weaknesses?
 - We are always looking for more help and contributors

FAMILY LIFE - The parish promotes family life and supports families of the parish.

- What are your parish's strengths in promoting and supporting family life?
 - An annual Labor Day Fall Dinner which involves many families
 - Four Roast Beef Dinners throughout the winter hosted by the KC's. These foster a sense of community and family time.
 - St. Mary's is in the process of building a million dollar plus Religious Ed and Retreat Center that is scheduled to be completed in Feb 2011. This will provide a facility to foster family and community celebrations.
 - We provide a "Welcome Basket" for new parishioners, and conduct a short interview and take a family picture. This is placed in our bulletin under a column titled "New Parishioner Profile", and makes the whole parish aware of new member and families that have joined the parish.
 - We have families participate together in Baptism classes
 - We have families participate together in 1st Communion Retreats
 - We have families participate together in Confirmation classes
 - A Committee to provide support and help to expectant mothers
 - A prayer chain and support group which not only prays for those ill or in need, but provides support by bringing over meals for families and providing transportation in times of need.
 - Annual collection of items to send to our men and women serving overseas in the military.
 - Care packages to young parishioners in college
 - Communion to the homebound

- What are your weaknesses?

We would like to get more people on a committee to assist in Family Life activities

CHURCH LIFE- The parish is a community of disciples called by Christ and empowered with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to live a life of stewardship and proclaim the Gospel.

- What are your parish's strengths in promoting a sense of faith community?
 - During the Christmas season, we distributed a copy of the Mathew Kelly book "Rediscovering Catholicism" to every family in the parish.
 - The Mathew Kelly books were donated by an anonymous member of the Cluster parish who purchased 1000 books to be distributed among the families of all three parishes. Extra books will be used be given to visitors and newcomers.
 - In Oct of 2010, about 70 people attended the Christ Our Life conference in Des Moines. We were the largest parish group at the conference.

- St. Mary's is in the process of building a million dollar plus Religious Ed and Retreat Center. This facility will host Church events and is scheduled to be completed in Feb 2011. This project was also completed in the spirit of stewardship with most of the funds raised through parishioner's donations, and with the help of parishioners donating their time and skilled labor to help complete building project.
 - An annual Labor Day Fall Dinner which promotes a sense of faith community
 - In March, nationally known Catholic speaker Michael Cumbie will give a 3 day speaking seminar at the Cluster Parish
 - Nationally known Catholic speaker Leah Darrow is scheduled to speak to our Cluster Parish Sept 25th, 2011.
 - (We coordinated with St. James-Washington, St. Mary's-Solon, our own Cluster Parish, and Cluster Parish of St. Joseph's-Hills, St. Mary's – Nichols and Lone Tree to pay for her speaking fee and travel expenses).
 - Why Catholic: Over a hundred participants within our Cluster parish participated in this program
 - After the Why Catholic series was over, several groups kept on meeting and are joining in regular fellowship and pursuing other Catholic study programs on their own.
 - Several parishioners have participated in the Ministry Formation Program (MFP)
 - CEW: We have had a number of parishioners attend the annual CEW retreat held at St. Mary's-Riverside every year. We estimate about 40 parishioners in the Cluster Parish have participated in CEW over the last several years.
 - We have families participate together in Baptism classes
 - We have families participate together in 1st Communion Retreats
 - We have families participate together in Confirmation classes
 - Over the years, a group of parishioners along with Fr Rich, have taken two trips to Rome.
 - In Oct 2011, a trip to the Holy Land is scheduled for Fr. Rich and various parishioners to attend.
 - In Oct 2008, hosted nationally know Catholic speaker Frank Runyeon to a packed church.
 - Four Roast Beef Dinners throughout the winter hosted by the KC's. These foster a sense of faith community.
 - We have a fully functioning website that helps communicate and promote Church Life events
 - A part-time web designer to update and maintain website
 - A four page 8 ½ by 11 inch bulletin that is able to feature church news and promote upcoming events
 - A part-time bulletin editor
 - A Facebook page
 - Communion to the homebound
- What are your weaknesses?
 - We would like to get more people involved with Church Life

- What are your parish's strengths in fostering a sense of holistic stewardship and a willingness to share gifts?
 - We have a volunteer committee that organizes all funeral dinners and obtains food donations from parishioners for the dinner
 - We have an active Knights of Columbus council who:
 - Hosted several Roast Beef dinners to raise funds for parish youth activities.
 - Collected money for a Tootsie Roll Drive to aid individuals with mental challenges
 - Helped fulfill ministries at Mass and Lenten events during the year.
 - Collected items to send to our men and women serving overseas in the military.
 - A Committee to provide support and help to expectant mothers
 - Annual collection of items to send to our men and women serving overseas in the military.
 - Care packages to young parishioners in college
 - A prayer chain and support group which not only prays for those ill or in need, but provides support by bringing over meals for families and providing transportation in times of need.
 - All our religious ed teachers are volunteers
 - We have volunteers who organize church socials, Fall Dinners, chaperone at youth events, etc.
 - Communion to the homebound

- What are your weaknesses?
 - We would like to get more people involved

- What are your parish's strengths in fostering vocations?
 - We have a parishioner, Derick Cranston, going through the Deacon formation program and who will be ordained in 2013
 - We have hosted several Project Andrew dinners
 - We have hosted several seminarians who were doing an internship to learn more about rural parish life.
 - We have hosted a "Prayer Service for Vocations" led by Fr Marty Goetz
 - We say the "Prayer for Vocations" at every mass

- What are your weaknesses?
 - No member of the parish has entered the seminary or religious life within the last fifteen years

AREA NEED CONSIDERATIONS

Meeting #1

The following is a list of various communities, groups and institutions that may be present within your planning area. When developing recommendations, consideration should be given to addressing these pastoral needs as well. Name these in your area.

- I. Hospitals –N/A

- II. Nursing Homes – Parkview in Wellman, IA; Pleasantview in Kalona, IA; The Senior Village in Riverside, IA

- III. Schools –
 - A. Grade Schools
 1. Individual Parish Schools – N/A
 2. Area or System Schools – Kalona Elementary, Wellman Elementary, Washington Township, Riverside Elementary, Highland Junior High, Mid-Prairie Middle School
 - B. High Schools – Mid-Prairie High School, Highland High School
 - C. Colleges & Technical Schools – Campus Ministry – N/A

- IV. Multi-cultural Needs
 - A. Hispanic Community – N/A
 - B. Southeast Asian Community – N/A
 - C. Other Groups

- V. Prisons and Jails – N/A

- VI. Group Homes – N/A

- VII. Religious Congregations or Mother Houses – N/A

- VIII. Cemeteries – St. Joseph's cemetery, Holy Trinity cemetery, St. Mary's cemetery

Meeting #2

1. Parish name _____

City(s) where located _____

2. Name of person who completed this report _____

Phone # of person who completed report _____

3. Attach the attendance rosters from Meeting 1 and Meeting 2.

4. In what ways, if any, is your parish cooperating with neighboring parishes now?

For the last eleven years, Holy Trinity-Richmond, St. Josephs-Wellman, and St. Mary's-Riverside have been a cluster parish. We feel that we have a good model, and have overcome many of the "growing pains" that inevitably occur when parishes are clustered together. By combining our resources, our cluster has been able to hire a full-time youth minister and part-time music liturgist, web designer, and bulletin editor. Without the financial support of all three parishes, the salaries for these two employees would not have been possible.

Our full-time youth minister not only oversees our youth program and Confirmation classes, but is going through the Deacon Formation program, and assists with many other areas of parish administration and parish life, such as: conducting funeral vigils, marriage prep, conducting communion services, building administration, communion to the homebound, and many other functions. This helps free up the parish priest to use his time and energy in other areas of parish life. This benefits all three parishes for the better, and was made possible because all three parishes were able to pool their financial resources to hire a full-time youth minister/pastoral associate.

Having a part-time music liturgist, web designer, and bulletin editor also makes the work load easier on the parish priest, and again, it would not have been possible to hire a part-time staff person without the financial support of all three parishes

The strength and stability of our program also allows us to share our resources and collaborate with other parishes. Examples of this include: collaborating with St. James-Washington on sponsoring nationally known Catholic speaker Frank Runyeon in 2007, and participating together on a youth trip to Cincinnati, OH in 2008; Sharing our RCIA program and Confirmation program with the Cluster Parish of St. Joseph's-Hills, St. Mary's – Nichols and Lone Tree; coordinating with St. James-Washington, St. Mary's-Solon, and the

Cluster Parish of St. Joseph's-Hills, St. Mary's–Nichols and Lone Tree to sponsor nationally know Catholic speaker Leah Darrow who will speak at our cluster parish on Sept 25th, 2011.

We feel that if our cluster is broken up or if we merge with other parishes, the strength and stability of our cluster – which we have built up over the last eleven years – would be diminished. If such changes to our cluster are made, it would be difficult to get back to the point where we are able to collaborate and assist other parishes in the area.

5. Which two or three nearby parishes would be the most likely for your parish to work more closely with in the future? Why?

We would like to continue sharing with the three parishes in our cluster. As was noted in Q. 4, for the last ten years, Holy Trinity-Richmond, St. Josephs-Wellman, and St. Mary's-Riverside have been a cluster parish. We feel that we have a good model, and have overcome many of the “growing pains” that inevitably occur when parishes are clustered together. We also feel it would be detrimental to add another parish or parishes to our cluster (Please see response to Q. 9 for more detail).

6. Given that most parishes in the future will be sharing priests with neighboring parishes, do you have any specific recommendations concerning the assignment of priests in your area?

Do not assign a priest that will have to oversee more than three parishes in a cluster. (please see response to Q. 9)

7. Of all the programs and services provided by the diocesan offices, which does your parish value most? Include here any suggestions you might have on how to strengthen those services.

We have a parishioner going through the Deacon Formation program and we really appreciate this service that the diocese provides. We also have had several parishioners go through the diocesan sponsored MFP program. This is a program we find invaluable as well.

8. Do you have any suggestions how your parish, either working alone or collaboratively with other parishes, could make Catholic schools more accessible and affordable?

No. Since we are a small rural parish surrounded by other small rural parishes, this question does not really apply to us.

9. Are there any other thoughts, ideas or suggestions that you would like to be considered in the planning process?

Limit the number of parishes that are clustered together to three parishes. It would be very difficult for a priest and staff to oversee more than three parishes.

What makes this difficult is:

- the geographical distance
- The number of school districts involved. Our cluster already covers two school districts, which makes it difficult to schedule events that will not conflict with the different school calendars. Adding other parishes which are in different school districts, would make scheduling a nightmare.
- the sub-cultures that exist at every parish
- The diocesan mandate of three masses said during the weekend, would create dissension, when it came time to decide where the three masses would be conducted
- The decision on where to have daily mass said would be an issue
- It would be very stressful for one priest to minister to more than three parishes, and would stretch priest and staff very thin, possibly causing burnout.
- If there were more than three parishes in a cluster, future priests may be discouraged from coming to that parish because of the workload involved.

Indicate the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the two lay representatives from your parish who will serve on the Local Area Planning Committee beginning in February 2011.

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

If there are any specific dates between January 17 and March 1, 2011 that the pastor/parish life administrator or either of the lay representatives would prefer be avoided in scheduling the first meeting of the Local Area Planning Committee, please indicate those here.

Dates to avoid:

Signatures:

Pastor/PLA _____ Date _____

Parish Pastoral Council President _____ Date _____

Finance Council Chair _____ Date _____

Lay Director _____ Date _____

Lay Director _____ Date _____

Many thanks to all who contributed to the completion of this report.