

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

CALLED TO HOLINESS AND MISSION: PASTORAL PLANNING IN THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Preliminary Recommendations of the Planning Commission

COUNTY: Susquehanna/Wayne

REGION: North

CLUSTER # 13

PARISHES: St. Joseph, Forest City; St. James, Pleasant Mount; St. Juliana, Rock Lake

Appreciation

We wish to thank you for the prayer, reflection and work which you have put into *Called to Holiness and Mission* to date. We appreciate the time and effort you have given to evaluating your parishes based on the Criteria established by the Planning Commission and making a Suggestion for your future.

Commendations

We commend you for:

- The incredible amount of work done over the years to consolidate the many communities into one Catholic community in Forest City.
- The well articulated explanation of your situation.
- Your ability to keep the Church alive and vibrant in a wide-ranging geographic area
- Your statement that “there are many intangibles which are not expressible either in numerical value, or in the written word.”

Recommendations

After reflecting on Bishop Martino’s Goals for **Called to Holiness and Mission**, your work evaluating the Criteria established by the Planning Commission, your Data Verification Forms and Parish Summary Form, we make the following recommendations:

We affirm your suggestions and recommend that as a cluster you enter into:

- Model One: Consolidated Parish between St. James, Pleasant Mount, and St. Juliana, Rock Lake. We also recommend that the parish site be at St. James, pending the facility assessment results, with an additional worship site at St. Juliana which will be reviewed after two years. The Mission Churches of St. Cecilia, Hilltop, and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Lake Como, will be closed.
- Model Two: Linked Parishes between St. Joseph, Forest City and the consolidated parishes of St. James and St. Juliana.

We further recommend that:

1. St. Joseph, Forest City ensure that the canonical checklist for consolidation is complete.
2. St. Joseph, Forest City engage in the diocesan process to establish a new name for the consolidated community in Forest City.
3. The rich ethnic heritage of the people in your area be honored and celebrated whenever appropriate.
4. A new Mass schedule be developed that reflects good stewardship of priestly resources and maximizes opportunities for larger assemblies to provide a more robust celebration of the liturgy.
5. You share our Preliminary Recommendations and rationale with each of your parish communities, and invite their questions and feedback on an ongoing basis now through September.

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1 of 2

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6. Upon reception of the Bishop's directives for your cluster, please establish a Cluster Implementation Team to design ways to fulfill the directives

Rationale

We make these recommendations based on your desire and ours to have a strong Catholic presence in your area now and in the future. Our thinking is also based on your desire and ours to have a strong Catholic Presence in your area. In addition, we considered

1. The unique geography of your area.
2. The significant changes that have already taken place in Forest City.
3. Weather-related realities in your area.