

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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

Preliminary Recommendations of the Planning Commission

COUNTY: **Lackawanna**

REGION: **North**

CLUSTER # **9**

PARISHES: **St. Thomas Aquinas, Archbald; St. Mary of Czestochowa, Eynon; Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mayfield; Sacred Heart of Mary, Jermyn**

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:

- Your creativity and boldness in your own models about the future.
- Your cluster's serious engagement in the process.
- The multiple models you developed for our consideration.

Recommendations

We have taken seriously your desire to be Model two: Linked Parishes and Model Three Partnership Parishes and understand that your rationale is based on the following factors:

- Geographic proximity of the parishes in the cluster.
- The potential residential growth in the Eynon/Archbald area.
- Your consideration of priestly resources.
- Your statement that "the opportunity to better share resources, to come together as a faith community, cooperatively and collaboratively."

However, based on our study of your cluster reports, the challenges you identified on your Parish Summary Report Form, the goals of *Called to Holiness and Mission* as stated by Bishop Martino, our listening to you and our best thinking, we respectfully disagree with your suggestion.

Therefore, we recommend that you enter into:

- Model One: Consolidated Parish among St. Thomas Aquinas, Archbald, St. Mary of Czestochowa, Eynon, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mayfield and Sacred Heart of Mary, Jermyn. We also recommend that the parish site be at St. Thomas Aquinas, pending the facility assessment results. There will be additional worship sites at St. Mary of Czestochowa and Sacred Heart of Mary which will be reviewed in two years.

We further recommend that:

1. As a consolidated parish, you work to combine programs such as CCD, RCIA, youth ministry, music ministry, etc.
2. The rich ethnic heritage of the people in your area be honored and celebrated whenever appropriate.

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3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 growth potential in the Eynon/Archbald area.
2. Decreasing numbers and lower Mass attendance in the Mayfield/Jermyn area.
3. The various models that you presented, including those regarding consolidation.