

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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

Preliminary Recommendations of the Planning Commission

COUNTY: Luzerne

REGION: South

CLUSTER # 4

PARISHES: St. Nicholas, Wilkes-Barre; St. Mary Immaculate Conception, Wilkes-Barre; St. Joseph (Slovak), Wilkes-Barre; St. Aloysius, Wilkes-Barre; St. Casimir, Wilkes-Barre (Lyndwood); St. Therese, Wilkes-Barre

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 awareness of the diminishing number of priests.
- Your willingness to work together in cluster meetings.
- Your planning in evangelization, youth ministry and stewardship.
- Your RCIA processes and planning.

Recommendations

We have taken seriously your desire for partnership and understand that your rationale is based on the following factors:

- Evaluation of the criteria;
- Desire for a strategic plan;
- Diminishing number of priests.

However, based on our study of your Cluster Reports, the challenges you identified on your Parish Summary, 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 as a cluster you enter into:

- Model One: Consolidated Parish between St. Joseph, Wilkes-Barre and St. Mary, Wilkes-Barre at the St. Mary site, pending the facility assessment results.
- Model Two: Linked Parishes between the newly consolidated parish at the St. Mary site and St. Nicholas, Wilkes-Barre in three years.
- Model One: Consolidated Parish in three years among the three Wilkes-Barre parishes St. Aloysius, St. Casimir and St. Therese at the St. Aloysius site, pending the facility assessment results.

We further recommend that:

1. You collaborate on a religious education program for high school students.
2. You develop a collaborative adult education program

REGION: South

CLUSTER # 4

1 of 2

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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

Preliminary Recommendations of the Planning Commission

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 through September.
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 own parish study and concepts found in the materials you provided. Our thinking is also based on your desire and ours to have a strong Catholic presence in your area now and in the future. In addition we considered the declining number of priests and the decreasing demographics.