

## DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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

### Preliminary Recommendations of the Planning Commission

COUNTY: **Bradford**

REGION: **West**

CLUSTER # **1**

PARISHES: **Epiphany, Sayre; St. Ann, Bentley Creek; St. John, S. Waverly; St. Joseph, Athens**

#### **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 growing cooperation.
- Your desire for strong Catholic presence in the community and surrounding communities.
- Your commitment to the Catholic school system.
- Adapting to the reduction of priests over the past years.

#### **Recommendations**

We have taken seriously your desire to be in partnership and understand that your rationale is based upon the following factors:

- Your present, positive working relationships.
- Your concern for pastoral care to the larger community.
- Your desire to revitalize your parishes.

However, based on our study of your Cluster Reports, the challenges you identified in your Parish Summary Report, 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 Epiphany, Sayre; St. Ann, Bentley Creek; St. John, South Waverly and St. Joseph, Athens. We also recommend that the parish site be at Epiphany, pending the facility assessment results with an additional worship site at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, which will be reviewed after two years.

We further recommend that:

1. The consolidated parish be served by one pastor and one parochial vicar.
2. There be a new staff position (filled by a deacon or religious) to address the pastoral care needs at the hospital and nursing homes.
3. A pastoral staff be created to include a paid Pastoral Associate, Youth Minister, Director of Religious Formation, Business Manager, and a Liturgical Minister.
4. There be exploration of the feasibility of new construction for office/social needs.
5. The rich ethnic heritage of the people in your area be honored and celebrated whenever appropriate.

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6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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 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:

1. The size of your parish communities in relation to the projected number of priests in the future.
2. Your close geographic proximity.
3. The potential that exists in your local area for new initiatives by combining your resources.