

Cluster: St Bernard Church, St Joseph Church, St Maurice Church, St Matthew Church, Sacred Heart Church

Present:

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Father Jim Carini	St Matthew	jpaulcar@aol.com
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Absent:

Sacred Heart

First topic of discussion: Is the group of five parishes a reasonable structure.

St Maurice is not part of the cluster, now looking to work collaboratively with the neighboring parishes. But who is their neighbor? (Close to Sacred Heart, Close to St Joseph, also close to St Mary in Coventry and Holy Family in Hebron.)

Goal of St Maurice is to rebuild. Their priority is not to collaborate but to rebuild.

There are three parishes in the cluster with two priests; St Bernard, St Matthew, St Joseph

The estimate is that there will be at least 14 fewer priests available for assignment and only six priests in the pipeline shortly.

There are some things we can do.

Shared RCIA process with Triduum in each parish

Shared Youth Group

Collaboration with Missions

Coordinated Mass schedules so that shared coverage is possible.

There was a foundation set by St Bernard and St Matthew's and perhaps one way of moving forward, is to incorporate St Joseph and Sacred Heart into this foundation, however a plan needs to work for all parishes.

Things that have already been done (St. Bernard & St. Matthew):

1. Advent and Lent Penance Services - moving between the parishes.
2. Collaboration between Religious Education (7th and 8th Grade) to get started knowing each other.
3. The two Directors of Religious Education (DREs) are working together on planning.
4. The RCIA collaboration is a project that is in process.
5. The Youth ministers are working together.
6. The websites are linked.
7. Sharing bereavement processes
8. The shared Lenten Calendar for the four cluster parishes was well received.

We discussed a cluster solution for sending extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to Rockville Hospital, on days with no coverage.

The model of planning that we started with was realistic for up to - three parishes. It began with a basic model of sharing and moved into "cluster" activities. We discussed whether we would be better served to re-look at configurations that would work for the parishes, and be within our Bishop's criteria for workable clusters.

It is difficult to move ahead with St. Maurice neither in nor out. The cluster needs stability. It is also difficult to think about five parishes, but if we look farther down the road, there may not be five parishes.

What would be a reasonable sub-cluster alignment?

The current cluster is St Bernard, St Matthew, Sacred Heart, St Joseph
St Maurice is collaborating in a non cluster arrangement with Sacred Heart and Saint Joseph.

Saint Maurice would like to honor the November 2011 letter from Bishop Cote and operate outside of a cluster as an independent parish.

This leaves the cluster in an uncomfortable position. Sacred Heart, St Bernard and St Matthew are in a cluster with Saint Joseph, who is also collaborating in a non-cluster arrangement with Saint Maurice. We would like to bring this to Sister Elissa to seek guidance on how to work going forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Deacon Mike Berstene