

FINDING OUR WAY TOGETHER

A newsletter of the Irondequoit Pastoral Planning Committee, representing Christ The King, St. Cecilia, St. Margaret Mary, St. Salome and St. Thomas the Apostle parishes

Issue No. 2

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"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit."

-1 Corinthians 12:13

Dear Parishioners,

This is the second in a series of communications from your Irondequoit Pastoral Planning Committee (IPPC). The challenge put before the IPPC by Bishop Clark's letter of September 2004, was *"to find a way to be a flourishing and vital church with five (or possibly four priests) sometime during the next five years – whether the priests are priest-pastors or sacramental ministers teamed with pastoral administrators. Your ten-year projection of four priests will result in fewer priests than parishes and will require configuration changes. It is important that you turn your attention from individual churches and focus on the entire Irondequoit community to see the five (four) priests as a resource for the entire community."*

Committee reaction to the Bishop's request began last year with the first task on the agenda to develop Mass schedules utilizing five priests. For planning purposes we were presented with a few guidelines. Canonically priests can preside at only three Masses per weekend (Saturday evening Mass of anticipation included). Also, for planning purposes, retired priests cannot be included in the schedules. Draft schedules utilizing five priests were presented to parish councils and leaders in April and June of 2005.

Before the final plans can be presented to parishes we need to conclude the next phase of planning, which is to look at parish structures utilizing only four priests. As soon as the IPPC gets closer to consensus on what we envision as a workable solution, we intend to carry out communication sessions with parishioners. This is probably a few months away.

Ultimately, Bishop Clark will discern whether we have an acceptable plan. His main desire at this time is that parishioners understand the consequences of the priest shortage in the Rochester Diocese. The prayer of our team is that our region's parishes will not only represent a "flourishing and vital church" but be enlivened by this process.

As was said in an earlier communication, "the best thing to do right now is continue to pray that the process will include openness to God's direction, wisdom, care for

the needs of all, trust in one another, and faith in the God who leads us all."

In this issue, we introduce a number of terms used in the Diocese and begin to answer questions that have arisen about Pastoral Planning in the Irondequoit region.

Some Definition of Terms used in the Diocese

- **Priest Pastor:** A priest appointed by and accountable to the Bishop for the pastoral care of a parish. Under Canon Law only a priest can be designated the "Pastor" of a parish.
- **Parochial Vicar:** A priest appointed by the Bishop to assist a Pastor in the pastoral care of a parish.
- **Permanent Deacon:** A Permanent Deacon is trained and ordained for service to the Diocese. Deacons are ministers of the Word, Sacrament, and Charity. They proclaim the Gospel, preach, preside at baptisms, funerals, and communion services, witness marriages, assist at Mass, and lead Benediction and prayer services. Their ministry is based in charity and justice.
- **Pastoral Administrator:** A qualified person (Permanent Deacon, woman religious, lay man or woman) appointed by the Bishop for the pastoral care of a parish. Usually hired full-time, Pastoral Administrators serve as Pastors in every way except they do not celebrate the sacraments, which are reserved to those who are ordained. A priest then is appointed to the parish by the Bishop to celebrate the sacraments. The Pastoral Administrator is not accountable to the Sacramental Minister, but to the Bishop through a Priest Moderator.
- **Sacramental Minister:** A priest assigned by the Bishop to provide sacramental ministry for a parish. Most often this is a part-time assignment given to retired priests or priests performing full-time jobs within the Diocese. In some cases a Sacramental Minister is assigned full-time to a parish.

Frequently Asked Questions by Parishioners



How will a new Pastoral Plan for our region affect parish life?

The overriding goal of our planning process is to *sustain and increase* the vitality of parishes and faith communities. Some of the possible outcomes include increased collaboration among parishes and the sharing of human and material resources.

The plan should include ways in which parishes can share resources and personnel, and include ideas on how our faith communities can work more closely together. The Irondequoit Senior Ministry is an example of a collaborative effort of our parishes.

Do Pastoral Planning Groups have information on the number of priests it can count on in its planning?

We have an expectation, but not a guarantee. The five parishes in our planning group currently have six priests. The Diocese has told us that sometime during the next five years, we are likely to have five, then four priests assigned to serve our parishes, which will include diocesan priests and priests of the Basilian Order that currently staff Christ the King.

How will the IPPC develop a recommendation?

The IPPC is the group responsible for leading the pastoral planning process by developing the pastoral plan. While most of the work of analysis, assessment, and planning will be done by a planning team, the results of the analysis and planning need the support of parish councils and faith communities.

For detailed information on the overall planning process, please go to diocesan Web site for:

- Irondequoit - <http://www.dor.org/planning/PlanningGroup/Irondequoit/irondequoit.htm>
- other parts of our diocese - http://www.dor.org/planning/PlanningGroup/planning_groups.htm

IPPC parishes and committee members:

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Parish Rep: Bob Spatola

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Parish Rep: Paul Noto

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Parish Rep: Stephen Oberst

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Parish Rep: Michael Ratigan

- **IPPC Co-Chairs** – Mark Bovenzi, Steve Caso
- **St. Ann’s Community** - Rev. Peter Bayer, Patricia Thummel
- **Finances** - Jim Reisenberger
- **Senior Ministries** - Donna Walker, Kay Nelson
- **Youth Ministry** - Donna Moll
- **SSJ Spirituality Center** - Sr. Mary Louise Heffernan
- **Diocesan Liaison** - Deborah Housel
- **Communications** - Kevin Kane

What would you like to know?

What questions or concerns do you have? What things do you want to hear about the planning process or the Planning Group? Please use this form to jot down your thoughts/concerns/questions. (Attach a separate sheet if needed.)

- (1) Drop it in the collection basket (Attention: IPPC Communications Committee), *or*
- (2) Mail this to: Kevin Kane, IPPC Communications Subcommittee Chair, c/o Christ the King Church, 445 Kings Highway South, Rochester, NY 14617
