

I. Introduction

Guided by God's spirit we responded to the call to collaborate in pastoral planning over five years ago. As people of the parishes of St. Ambrose, St. James and St. John the Evangelist, we have looked for ways to be more fully the Church of the Winton-Culver Catholic Community. With each parish bringing its unique gifts, we propose now to gather those gifts together. Blessed with a diversity of people, this group of churches believes that a joint ministry team will strengthen our common ministries and empower new relationships for those ministries that are currently unique to a single parish.

Change always presents a challenge to those affected by it. We realize that for many the changes in this proposed plan will be difficult. Yet, we recognize that change is necessary and we welcome the tremendous potential it offers as we work towards our new vision for ministry in the Winton-Culver Catholic Community. Our shared faith gives us a common ground that provides strength and the determination to accomplish great things. Our combined resolve gives us the opportunity of not only helping others to recognize the living Christ, but also of helping each other.

We offer this proposal after many hours of study, discussion, agonizing and prayer. We see it as a dynamic development of our ministry in the Winton Culver Catholic Community.

II. Recommendations

1. Proposed Model:

We recommend that the three parishes become a cluster with a single Pastoral Leader by July 1st 2004 and then become a single canonical parish with multiple worship sites within 5 years. We recommend that two full-time priests staff this new cluster.

2. Schedule for Eucharistic Celebrations:

Weekend Eucharistic Schedules

With Eucharist as the center of our lives of faith, we propose the following plan for our weekend Eucharistic Celebrations:

St Ambrose
9:45 AM Sun
5:00 PM Sun

St. James
4:30 PM Sat
8:00 AM Sun

St John
9:00 AM Sun
11:00 AM Sun

Holy Day Eucharistic Celebrations

Initially we will continue with the recently developed Holy Day Schedule:

St Ambrose
9:15 AM
7:00 PM

St James
6:00 PM vigil
7:45 AM

St John
8:30 AM
12:10 PM

Weekday Eucharist Celebrations

Pastoral Staff from each parish will begin to identify criteria on which decisions regarding a new weekday liturgical schedule might be based. We propose that such a schedule will include regular celebrations in all three churches. The new Pastoral Leader will make final decisions regarding the new weekday schedule.

All Schedules will be evaluated after 6 months into the new plan.

III. Implications

The implications of this decision mean that we will need to continue to address collaboratively the following issues - Shared Ministry and Shared Decision Making

Shared Ministry

We propose to organize Lay Leadership and Staff in our Winton-Culver Catholic Community around the following ministerial needs:

A. PARISH MINISTRIES

1. LITURGY AND WORSHIP

A joint meeting of the three worship committees has taken place three times a year for the last two years get to know one another and share information, experience, materials, resources and ideas.

They have planned and held inter-parish prayer services and retreats and involved staff and parishioners from all three parishes working together. They developed new Liturgy schedules for Holy Days and Sundays and will work with the new Pastoral Leader on a revised schedule for weekdays.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility;

- *Liturgical Ministries*
- *Music*
- *Liturgy of Word for Children*

2. FAITH FORMATION

The Faith Formation Programs at the Winton Culver Churches have had open registration going back to the year 2000. The directors of Faith Formation have a positive, energizing relationship with confidence in themselves and in one another as professionals and in their ability to work productively with one another as we move forward.

There is a proposal before IPAT which indicates how the self contained classroom model at St. James will, in the school year 2004-2005, be absorbed by the Family Faith Programs which now exist at St. John and St. Ambrose. This spring there will be a visitation schedule so that parents/children/programs will be well matched. Parents from the three churches may choose the program that best suits their children and schedules. There will also be a unified database created so that families are monitored and that each parish is able to encourage attendance in the religious education of its children. The director from St. James will be an integral part of Faith Formation

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility;

- *Baptism*
- *Confirmation*
- *Eucharist*
- *Reconciliation*
- *Marriage*
- *RCIA/RCIC*
- *Adult Education*
- *Family Faith*

3. PASTORAL MINISTRY

The three Pastoral Associates have developed a close working relationship. They have shared information, ideas and support.

They have coordinated afternoons of reflection for liturgical ministers from all three parishes. They have hosted joint retreats for the last 5 years.

They will continue to act together to encourage spiritual growth and liturgical development in our three parishes.

They will continue to look at ways to consolidate the purchase and sharing of resources.

They will continue to build on what they have accomplished and expect to improve ministry to the bereaved and to find ways to work together more in our Pastoral Visitation responsibilities.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility:

- *Hospitalized*
- *Homebound and Nursing Home*
- *Bereaved*
- *Funeral*
- *Welcoming*
- *Stewardship*

4. SOCIAL MINISTRY AND EVANGELIZATION

Each of our parishes has a distinctly different style in managing social ministry efforts.

Our challenge is to move beyond the brick and mortar and traditions of each parish. We must begin to embrace our most important commonalities, which include our faith and our commitment to living that faith.

Mindful of our Baptismal call to be a servant people, our ministry of Outreach and Evangelization will be supported by a coordinator whose role is to facilitate our social mission of Service, Advocacy and Education.

One of the fruits of the spirit of service is the Evangelization of those whose lives are touched by our shared commitment to Outreach, Charity and Justice. The coordinator will keep before parish and staff, the opportunities for evangelization that exist in the daily exercise of our faith and ministry.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility:

- *Social ministry (service, advocacy and education) organized around the corporal works of mercy*
- *Evangelization of inactive Catholics*
- *Welcoming ministries*

5. PARISH/COMMUNITY LIFE

We recognize the need to celebrate our Community life as an extension of our Eucharistic table.

The Winton-Culver Community Life Committee will continue to serve as a joint committee to identify and plan opportunities to celebrate parish life.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility:

- *Staff Liaison with Committee*

6. DIGNITY OF WOMEN

The Dignity of Women Committee is a standing committee of the Pastoral Council of St. John the Evangelist Church. This committee was established as a direct response to the General Synod of the Diocese of Rochester held in October 1993 and presided over by Bishop Matthew Clark. The mission and goal of this committee is to directly address Synod Goal # 3 that states, "To recognize and value the dignity of women in the church and society." This committee seeks to embody this Synod Goal by heightening awareness of women's gifts and societal issues. To this end, two subcommittees have been established: *Women of Hope* - which addresses the spiritual needs of women and *WEAVE* (Women Empowered Against Violence Everywhere), which addresses the impact of Domestic Violence on women in our society. As the members of the parishes of the Winton-Culver cluster work to deepen collaboration, it is the hope of this committee to expand its vision and activities to include members of each parish.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility:

- *Staff Liaison with Committee*

7. YOUTH MINISTRY

The Winton/ Culver Youth Groups are broken into two groups - Senior High (grades 9-12) and Junior High (grades 6-8). Senior High meets three times per month and Junior High meets once a month. Both youth groups are involved in diocesan activities, the church community, and community service. The Director of Youth Ministry for the Winton-Culver Catholic Community, along with the youth advisory board, will continue to develop a program that includes catechesis, evangelization, social action, community building, enablement and advocacy. In addition the Senior High Group raises funds on a continual basis in order to attend national conferences and to participate in summer mission projects.

The Director of Youth Ministry is currently the only joint employee who works for all three parishes.

8. SENIOR CITIZENS

It is important to have a group designed for the Senior Adults in our faith community. In our new configuration, we plan to recognize the needs of this group and to support them as they face the challenges of aging. We will provide opportunities to share their stories and enjoy activities and travel with others of their age group. There is also the opportunity for outreach as these senior adults reach out to the sick and homebound through phone calls, cards and visits. St. James presently has an Adult Group, a Travel Group and a Samaritan Group, which can be a model/bridge for the Winton-Culver parishes as we come together.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility:

- *Staff Liaison with various committees and groups*

9. YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

One of the areas we plan to address together is Young Adult ministry serving those aged 18-35.

B. SUPPORT MINISTRIES

1. SECRETARIAL

It is most important that the parishioners of the proposed cluster are kept informed and know where and whom they can contact for their needs. Each parish site will initially maintain an office and an office staff. A common calendar, schedule and cluster newsletter will be an essential tool for communicating cluster information to all parishioners.

One bulletin for the cluster will eventually take the place of three separate bulletins. This weekly information tool will be prepared and edited by a designated secretary. Deadlines for articles will be clearly established. The scheduling of weekly or biweekly staff meetings, including the secretaries from each office, will maintain good communication between the Pastoral Leader and the staffs. As soon as possible, any new office procedures (funerals, weddings, and Mass intentions) will be established, informing all those responsible for following those procedures.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility;

- *Communication*
- *Bulletin(s)/Web Site*
- *Records*
- *Facilities Use Coordinator*
- *Information Technology (computers)*

2. OPERATIONS AND FINANCE

The facilities representatives from each parish have shared information and have established a listing of tools that can be borrowed among the staffs.

Shared services have been investigated but seem not to be a viable option at this time; possible future sharing will be considered.

A joint list of Contractors has been established that can be a resource for each parish.

Consolidation of facilities does not seem possible at this time because of high usage.

Future shared use of meeting rooms is open for consideration and would be encouraged as a good use of facilities when applicable.

The joint finance group has been working together for 3 years. The committee will continue to work together collaboratively to fund our Ministries and Facilities as the three become one.

Individual Parishes will continue to have sole financial responsibility for facility costs through the time we are a clustered community. Currently, the Winton - Culver Finance Committee, business managers and pastors are developing a common budget, fair to all and recognizing the responsibility of Christian stewardship.

Staff arrangements will need to cover the following areas of responsibility;

- *Budget*
- *Bookkeeping*
- *Payroll*
- *Maintenance*
- *Buildings, Grounds and Facilities*

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

While job descriptions may change for individuals currently on the staffs of our three parishes, except for cause as described in the Diocese of Rochester Employee Handbook, we are committed to retaining all current staff members (priests excepted) for a period of at least one year ending June 30, 2005. Pastoral leaders together with staff members will work on job descriptions to fit new ministry needs including the work of Social Ministry Coordination and Evangelization.

Shared Decision Making

Lay Leadership is an essential part of our parish and diocesan life. We hope to continue the empowerment of lay leadership in our Winton-Culver Catholic Community.

PASTORAL COUNCIL

The year 2004-2005 will be a transition year for our Pastoral Councils. During this transition, IPAT will design and develop a covenant for a single Pastoral Council. This covenant will:

- define the council's mission, vision and goals
- provide a framework for council membership and terms of office
- define the council's role and working relationship with the Pastoral Leader

The new council covenant may use elements of the existing covenants of St. Ambrose, St. James and St. John, while remaining within the Parish Pastoral Guidelines as recommended by the Diocese.

During the transition, the existing councils will be responsible for their own parishes. They will continue to meet as individual councils, with monthly meetings. However, they will meet with the new Pastoral Leader at a common time and location. The joint part of the meeting will begin with:

- Shared time of prayer
- Pastor's Forum, where the Pastoral Leader can share important items with the whole group
- Open Forum, a limited time allowing any Winton-Culver parishioner to seek clarification, to comment or to ask questions on issues of common concern.
- Common agenda items that the three councils can discuss in consort.

After the joint meeting, the councils will break into groups to conduct their individual council business.

The Inter-Parish Advisory Team will continue to operate during the transition year. IPAT will discuss common issues, especially those that develop from our new partnership and concerns from the Pastoral Councils. In addition, IPAT will develop the covenant for a single Pastoral Council.

IV. Proposed Timeline

By July 1st 2004

- A single Pastor or Pastoral Administrator with a total of two full time priests.
- New Mass Schedule in operation
- Decision on transitional council structure and selection of 2004-2005 members

By July 1st 2005

- Joint council in place
- New covenant and by-laws written

By July 2009

- Merger into one canonical parish with 3 worship sites

V. Conclusion

There is a strong belief among IPAT that our Creator has provided the circumstances and this opportunity to grow in our faith. It is a challenge for all - parishioners and Pastoral Leadership - to reach out to others and to come closer to God. After five years of prayerful study the Inter Parish Advisory Team offers, with enthusiasm and great expectations, this pastoral plan to Bishop Clark.

Inter-Parish Advisory Team

Janet Andrychuk-Tedesco
Mary Austin
Anne-Marie Brogan
Mary Ebert
Onolee Johnson
The Reverend John Lynch
Joyce K. McAndrew

Dorothy Meisenzahl, SSJ
Charles Randisi
Karen Rinefierd
The Reverend Michael Schramel
The Reverend William Spilly
Marc Zicari