

ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY of NORTH-WESTERN ONTARIO COUNTY

In our work as the planning team for the Canandaigua/Route 96 group, we have come to acknowledge the following:

- ...the call of our Baptism to make Christ present in the world by our actions
- ...the call to be church requires ongoing reflection, prayer and openness
- ...the emotions which surround change are deep, real and often slow to heal
- ...the past experiences within faith communities are an important gauge of readiness to look at the possibilities which change can foster
- ...the need for change is inevitable and should call us to a spirit of unity in Christ
- ...the dignity, value and importance of each member of our communities

As representatives of our individual faith communities of St. Bridget's/St. Joseph's, Bloomfield, St. Dominic's, Shortsville, St. Felix, Clifton Springs/St. Francis, Phelps, St. Mary's, Canandaigua and St. Patrick's, Victor we state **the strength of our individual parishes and the effectiveness of our ministry will be enhanced by the combined efforts of our entire grouping of parishes. Our future depends on how well we can abide by the law of Christ and go beyond a view of Church and parish as a parochial, independent structure.**

Therefore, we ask affirmation of the following plan to accommodate current status and address future realities:

1. **the continuation of the individual identity in name and canonical status** of each of the parishes in this planning group
2. **the continued staffing of priest-pastor** for St. Dominic's, St. Felix / St. Francis, St. Mary's and St. Patrick's
3. **the appointments of pastoral administrator and sacramental minister** for St. Bridget's / St. Joseph's, effective June 27, 2000
4. **the additional ministry for the sacramental minister** (as a priest working full-time within our planning group) to include support to hospitals, jails, hospices and nursing homes as well as celebrating Mass within our planning group area
5. **the creation of an interparish council** by March 1, 2000
This council will ensure direction and review of the plan as it has been shaped to date and ongoing reflection / dialogue / action for the continued work of the parish grouping
This council needs to be formed with each parish's priest / administrator as an ex officio member and the selection of two parishioners from within each faith community. The charge and focus to this group and its individual members must be the needs of the total Roman Catholic Community of North-Western Ontario County.

The interparish council will have several immediate and ongoing agenda items to address:

a. **the Mass configuration** for the communities

Since the sacramental minister in Bloomfield also will provide weekend assistance at Victor, this will need to be a coordinated schedule among the parishes.

Also, the interparish council needs to be pastorally sensitive to arrangement of the weekend Masses within our planning group over as wide a range of times on Saturday and Sunday as is possible in order to compensate for eliminated Masses, maximize church capacities and accommodation of persons' schedules. Based on current church building size, capacity, attendance figures of the past several years and available priests, faith communities can anticipate the following number of weekend Masses:

St. Bridget's/St. Joseph's	- 2
St. Dominic's	- 3
St. Felix/St. Francis	- 3
St. Mary's	- 3
St. Patrick's	- 4

Since priest assignments will be effective June 27, 2000, the work of determining exact Mass schedules must be completed by that date.

b. **support for the emerging ministry** of the fifth priest (assigned as sacramental minister for Bloomfield) as this outreach to hospitals, nursing homes is developed.

An equitable formula for funding this position has been determined with larger communities paying a larger proportion.

The strong recommendation of the planning teams is that this priest reside in one of the communities where much of his work will be focused.

Since this canonical assignment will be made effective June 27, 2000, the council must make this job description and compensation package a priority immediately upon its formation.

c. **a timeline to address the several areas of collaboration** established by December 31, 2000 as expressed by the people of these parishes and articulated by the collaboration sub-group, as follows:

...lay leadership – Working together we need to remind all of the Baptized of their dignity and their shared importance in the leadership of the Church. Efforts could include:

- preaching
- joint training of parish councils

- empowering people to participate in decisions affecting them
- ...volunteers - Working together we need to identify and treasure the gifts of all and welcome them to use their gifts for the good of our community. Efforts could include:
 - joint volunteer recruitment and training
 - structuring volunteer recognition
- ...social ministry – Working together we need to proclaim the sacredness of life from conception to natural death in both our words and actions. Efforts could include:
 - advocating for the poor and neglected
- ...evangelization – Working together we need to be a living and welcoming witness to God’s presence in our lives and in our world. Efforts could include:
 - helping people recognize their role in spreading the “Good News”
 - welcoming home distanced Catholics
- ...life-long learning – Working together we need to help people deepen their faith throughout the cycles of their lives. Efforts could include:
 - joint parish programs for people of all ages and situations in life
- ...young adults – Working together we need to reach out to young adults (ages 18-35) and empower them to develop a ministry to their peers. Efforts could include:
 - establishing a young adult core group to do planning, etc.
- ...youth – Working together we need to develop a youth ministry plan which will meet the faith development needs of teens and give them the building blocks to be life long active members of the church. Efforts could include:
 - developing a youth council to set the direction for youth ministry in our community
 - hiring a full time shared youth minister

Each of these areas of collaboration needs to be shaped with utmost creativity to meet emerging needs.

- d. **use of home parish envelope procedure**
In order to preserve financial stability among the member parishes, parishioners will be encouraged to use “home” parish envelopes while visiting neighbor parishes. Each parish will return “home” parish envelopes from collections to their appropriate “home.”
- e. **a vehicle(s) for ongoing communication** among the parishes of the planning group for sharing information on Mass schedules, parish events and any jointly-sponsored projects. Common portions of a weekly bulletin, a joint website, billboard space, radio and television advertising and an area Catholic newsletter need to be explored as well.
- f. **an openness to the need for larger worship sites** as the number of priests continues to decline, and to be attentive to broader administrative and ministerial coverage needs in response to configuration issues.
- g. **publication of interparish Mass schedule.** Once a plan goes into effect , the Mass schedule of each worship site will be published by each parish weekly.

With this plan we make a statement of our understanding and involvement in long-term collaboration. We trust these first steps will provide us a firm foundation to continue to look at the needs and resources of our local communities and local church over the years and decades to come. We need to keep an ongoing openness to creative, new ministry models including teams to serve in multiple parishes. This must be combined with a balance of the defining character of Catholicism to also include strong evidence of community-building, formation and service as well as centrality of the Eucharist.