

ALL PARISHIONERS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING PASTORAL PLANNING

***** Please Let Us Know Your Thoughts *****

Changes are coming that will affect all parishes in the Archdiocese, including St. John the Evangelist. Please read the following summary of important information on pastoral planning from the Archdiocese. Every parishioner needs to be aware of, and to consider carefully, this information as we move into a different structure for sharing resources among parishes. Your input is very important in this process.

For the past ten months, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning Commission has been working on a pastoral planning document, entitled *Disciples in Mission*, which proposes a vision for the Archdiocese that flows directly from the mission that Jesus Christ has given to his Church.

On December 5, 2011, Cardinal O'Malley and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning Commission met with priests of the Archdiocese of Boston and those serving in Archdiocesan parishes to begin the consultation process regarding the next phase of Pastoral Planning in the Archdiocese.

As stated, the principal thrust of the current draft of this Pastoral Plan is "to form stronger Christian disciples by strengthening our identity as a Christ-centered, mission-minded, welcoming and evangelizing Eucharistic community of faith."

There are five "Mission Initiatives" listed to accomplish this challenging vision:

1. Becoming a Church that More Readily and Actively Welcomes Every Man, Woman and Child to conversion of Life in Christ Jesus;
2. **Strengthening our Parishes as Primary Communities of Faith;**
3. Growing the Church through Evangelization;
4. Developing Excellence in Faith Formation for Catholics of All Ages;
5. Re-energizing Pastoral Leadership.

This draft of the Pastoral Plan focuses on the **second** initiative listed above, in order to strengthen parishes as welcoming, nourishing, thriving and evangelizing Eucharistic communities.

The proposal creates a new structure called a ***Pastoral Service Team (PST)***, comprised of both laity and clergy (priests, deacons, pastoral associates, lay ecclesial ministers, parish pastoral and finance councils) who will provide pastoral services to multiple parishes, which partner with one another to exercise the mission of evangelization. This plan hopes to provide pastoral services to parishes without altering the parishes themselves.

Each PST will work under the leadership of one pastor, with two goals:

- (1) to meet the specific pastoral and spiritual needs in each parish; and
- (2) to draw these parishes into a tighter and more effective bond for the work of the New Evangelization.

(Continued)

This proposed new structure does not involve changing the parishes themselves. Parishioners will continue to be members of their own parish, and each parish will retain responsibility for its own assets and liabilities. It is hoped that PSTs will enable each parish to determine how best to use their resources through a culture of partnering and collaboration. Each grouping will be known as a “**Pastoral Collaborative**.” The pastor in a PST will not have been the pastor of a parish served by that PST.

There are 290 parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston; there will be approximately 125 PSTs. Each parish will be served by one PST, and each PST will serve more than one parish. In each local area, the PST, “in dialogue and discernment with their parishes, will develop a Pastoral Plan for how best to utilize and apportion their resources, property and facilities to strengthen the parishes as Eucharistic communities rooted in Jesus Christ and to advance the Gospel mission of the Church.”

Since the December 5th meeting, three rounds of consultations have been organized, and are ongoing. The First Round, throughout the month of January, includes parish staff members (Deacons, Pastoral Associates, Parish Business Managers, DRE’s, School Principals, Music Ministers, etc.), to review the new mission initiatives and the basic principles of the PST model and elicits insights and response from the participants. The Second Round continues in January to present the groupings or “Pastoral Collaboratives.”

The Third Round begins in February and, as with the others, includes all the parishes in the archdiocese (in eleven separate meetings). This meeting is for Parish Pastoral Councils and Parish Finance Councils. The date for our Vicariate is set for March 6th.

After the completion of all the Third Round of consultations, representatives from the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Finance Committee and the Parish Planning Group will be provided with suggested models or frameworks for Parish Town Hall Meetings, FAQ’s and other necessary material.

There is a lot more information on the Archdiocesan website, including several video presentations and all the materials and feedback by the priests from the December 5th meeting.

More information is available at: www.planning2012.com/2012-consultation/.

Included on the website, you will find the following documents:

1. Strengthening Parishes as Primary Communities of Faith (PDF),
2. Frequently Asked Questions Document (PDF) and
3. Executive Summary of Presbyteral Feedback from Convocation

Note that the Archdiocese has stressed that this is a *proposed draft*, with consultation rounds for input from all members. **Now is the time to voice your opinions, concerns, support and/or constructive criticism. PLEASE LET US HEAR FROM YOU!** For now, this can be done through the St. John Pastoral Planning Group (PPG) e-mail or individual members (listed below), or written and placed in a “Comments Box” that will be placed at the entrances of the church.

As the plan indicates there are three phases of the consultation of this plan. This past week, we participated in Phase II in which Parishes were given Pastoral Collaboratives that they would work in. St. John has been asked to collaborate with St. Paul’s. Phase III of this plan will be to consult with Parish Councils, Finance Councils and with Parishes as a whole. During this Phase Parishes will be asked to reflect on the challenges and the possibilities of this proposal.

Current members of the PPG: Carolyn Anderson, John Calcio, Rose Mary Donahue, Svea Fraser, Gerald J. Kehoe (Chair), Dan Kenslea, Mike Nilles, Sister Evelyn Ronan and Fr. Tom Powers.
Pastoral Planning Group Email: PPG@stjohnwellesley.org