

Pastoral Planning Process beginning in the Auburn-N. Cayuga Catholic Parishes

*Holy Family, Our Lady of the Snow, Sacred Heart/St. Ann,
St. Alphonsus, Ss. Mary and Martha, St. Mary's*



Bishop Matano met with our pastors earlier this year and asked that we begin a pastoral planning process to address a number of areas. The pastors formed a planning team with representation from each parish as well as St. Joseph School.

Topics for Pastoral Planning

- Assess ministry needs, identify areas of ministry for collaboration, and determine ministry priorities with due regard for clergy availability and potential future clustering.
- Assess administrative needs for the parishes.
- Consider the re-alignment of staffing and ministries (including a shared finance/business office as well as faith formation, youth ministry and the visitation of the homebound) to meet ministerial and administrative needs while using parish financial resources most responsibly.
- Given our identified ministry priorities and ministerial staffing, determine the types and availability of volunteer leadership and the training that will be needed.
- Gather information and assess usage and projected capital repairs of buildings, *other than churches*, and develop a long-term plan for building usage or sale.
- Connect St. Joseph School more directly to the parishes. Work with St. Joseph's to enhance recruitment, fundraising, and financial resources to ensure a strong school into the future.

Why are we doing this planning?

This work is driven by two factors common across our Diocese, the neighboring Diocese of Syracuse, and other Catholic communities in the northern part of the United States: **priest availability** and **declining Mass attendance/decreased number of parishioners**. Currently half of the priests in the Diocese of Rochester are 70 and older; in 5 years approximately 63% of our priests will be. There are currently 10 seminarians but they are not sufficient to replace those priests reaching senior priest status without changes across the diocese. The Priest Personnel Board has projected that within the next several years there will only be 4 priests serving our parishes rather than the current 6. Between 2012 and 2016, total weekly attendance across the Auburn-N. Cayuga parishes declined 20%. During that same period the number of registered parishioner households decreased by 4%. Planning is also driven by the opportunity to **use our financial resources more efficiently** in continuing the mission of the Church.

Members of the Planning Team

Holy Family—Fr. John Gathenya, Liza Kelly, Robert Ringwood; **Our Lady of the Snow**—Fr. William Darling, Diane Case, Edward O'Neil; **Sacred Heart/St. Ann**—Fr. Michael Brown, Patrick Dooley, Frank DeOrio, Kim Guinnip (alternate for Fr. Brown); **Ss. Mary and Martha and St. Mary's**—Fr. Frank Lioi, Fr. Erick Vilorio; **Ss. Mary and Martha**—Dan Szozda, Jim Malinowski; **St. Alphonsus**—Fr. Timothy Niven, Lisa Ann Homic, Nancy Camardo; **St. Mary's**—Joe Manning, Ed Fenzl; **St. Joseph School**—Michael Carney, Anne Marie Duffy; **Staff Representatives**—Aaron Wilson (ministerial), Shawn Gillen-Caryl (finance); **Staff to the Planning Team**—Abigail Moss (secretary), Karen Rinefierd and Tom Kubus (diocese).

There will be regular, ongoing communication

The planning team will keep parishioners fully informed throughout the planning process and seek input from pastoral councils, finance councils, parish staff members, and parishioners at large at particular times. In addition to regular bulletin articles and inserts, planning team minutes and gathered information will be shared on a new website: <http://auburnweedsportcatholicchurches.org/>. Copies of these documents will also be available in each parish office for those parishioners who cannot access the internet.