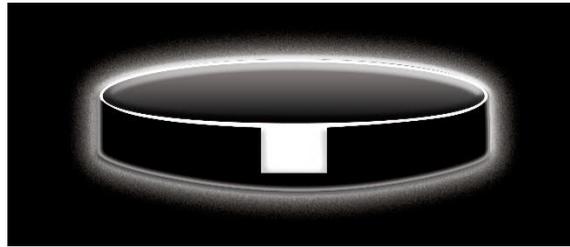


Newsletter from the Pastors of the Parish Pastoral Planning Team

*“Putting the
Conversation in
Black & White”*



**Following the meeting
held on Jan 26, 2019**

Next Meeting: March 2

MEETING CONTEXT AND SYNOPSIS:

Sometimes working through a process yields very gradual and incremental results, and sometimes the process seems very rapid and radical. This newsletter intends to summarize several different meetings and movements in the planning process from November to early February.

- The November 10th Pastoral Planning Mtg
- Archdiocese change of Planning Office personnel
- The January 10th Meeting of Priests
- The January 26th Pastoral Planning Mtg

A Framework for a Pastoral Planning Conversation

Deacon Luna opened the meeting in November with a time of biblical reflection on that day’s Gospel passage (Luke 16:9-15). As a group, we discussed how this passage brought up themes of trust in God, trust in our relationships with one another, the call to stewardship of resources, and Jesus’ call to servant leadership. This type of leadership is a call to lead as one who serves rather than leading by lording over others.

Fr. Norman gave a presentation on four components to our local planning process – **Structural, Evangelization, Local Context, and Implementation.**



The four components were meant to help organize conversation around planning in order to make it more manageable and effective. There are many interconnected parts to planning, and this makes the process complex and susceptible to paralysis.

Implementation refers to the specific steps and timeline for changes in the area to happen. Some factors for the implementation are within the committee’s control and some are outside of this local committee’s advisory role.

Local Context refers to the uniqueness of our communities, environment, and landscape. This allows us to acknowledge the distinct character of each faith

community. It allows us to acknowledge our local history, challenges, and opportunities. It’s a chance to say, “This is who we are, and this is how we can make things work.”

Structural refers to the organizational details about how our parishes are maintained and supported. Having less priests available in the future means changes to the number of office structures, services, staffing positions, and communications. This could be thought of as the planning for “what we’re building”.

Evangelization refers to the “why we’re building”. It is a type of planning that seeks to form us more intentionally as disciples and followers of Jesus. We can plan and focus on how our faith may be deepened and shared. This ‘why’ shapes and directs the ‘what’ of the structural.

The **November meeting** allowed us to discuss our context in detail. **The first planning process in Rural Central caused a lot of hurt in parish communities.** When the first round of recommendations from the Archdiocese’s work with the Meitler Group came out, people were angry and hurt at the designation of many “chapel” sites. Because our experience of faith is so rooted in our local faith communities that are in our church buildings, decisions about our church buildings also can feel that someone is labeling my faith life and my experience of God (and where I experience God) as not being valued. Violence can be done to someone’s faith by not acknowledging the physical place where the faith community is rooted. We needed to hear and validate that hurt was caused by a process that seemed callous.

The Archdiocese Pastoral Planning Office underwent some changes in December and January

In December 2018, Deacon Luna announced his retirement from the pastoral planning office for personal / health reasons. Fr. Jeff Lorig, who is the Director of Pastoral Services that oversees the planning office, has taken direct control of the planning office and its planning process. He, along with Fr. Scott Hastings (who oversees priest personnel), led a process of forming a systemic model of the rural archdiocese that was meant to include and replace what had been a piecemeal plan approach.

The Archdiocese Embraces a Model & Plan for Future

On January 10, 2019, there was a meeting of all priests in Fremont. The presentation showed all of us priests our priest number projections. Not everyone was keenly aware of the specifics. **We have between 18 and 24 priests retiring in the next 5 years.** This reality means that we can't continue to operate as "we've always done."

Our current model of parish life tends to put blinders on ourselves to anything outside of our parish or cluster. The Archbishop's plan is for parishes to be organized into larger groupings that can have a future of *together*. Instead of a competitive "us versus them" mentality, we are meant to be collaborators. **The plan calls for our grouping to reduce to 3 priests in July 2019 and to 2 priests within 5 more years.** Having the Archbishop's commitment to this plan allows us to make these changes more incrementally, and it allows us to conduct long range planning within our parishes.

New Vocabulary for Pastoral Planning

One Pastor Model (OPM): This refers to a parish grouping having a single pastor where there may have been more than one pastor. One priest becomes pastor of all; other priests become associate pastors.

Hub and Spoke Model: This refers to one office becoming a centralized resource utilized by the member church sites.

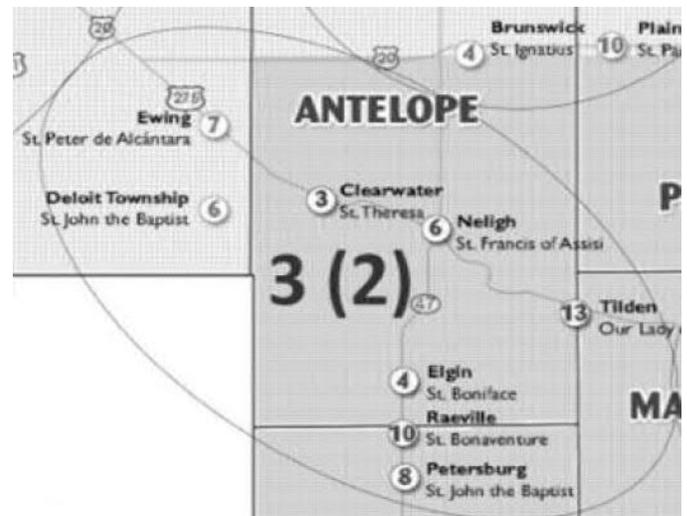
Shared Administrative Services (SAS): These are the combined centralized administrative responsibilities of office structure, communications, and services to parishes.

Parish Grouping: A designation by the archdiocese of a geographic area that will develop and implement a long-range plan for parish ministry within the grouping.

Implementation Timeline Factors

- July 2019-Msgr. Steffensmeier will retire from Cedar Rapids. Fr. Mark will become pastor of Cedar Rapids and will cease being pastor of Petersburg.
- July 2019-First step toward implementation. **Petersburg, Raeville, Elgin, Clearwater, Deloit, and Ewing will move to a One Pastor Model. In this, Fr. John Norman will become pastor of the 6 parishes and Fr. Kevin Vogel will become associate pastor.** Archbishop Lucas has asserted that he intends for these two to work as a 'priest team' together for several years, developing this model. Incorporation of all 8 parishes is a later step.

Our Future "Roadmap"



Note: The numbers next to the church sites can be ignored

Members of the Planning Team

Priests on the Planning Team

- **Fr. Kevin Vogel, Pastor**
 - St. Boniface in Elgin
 - St. Bonaventure in Raeville
- **Fr. Mark Tomasiewicz, Pastor**
 - St. Michael in Albion
 - St. John the Baptist in Petersburg
- **Fr. Pat Nields, Pastor**
 - St. Francis of Assisi in Neligh
 - Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Tilden
- **Fr. John Norman, Pastor**
 - St. Peter de Alcantara in Ewing
 - St. Theresa of Avila in Clearwater
 - St. John's Church of Deloit in Rural Clearwater

Archdiocese of Omaha

- Deacon Steve Luna, Process Facilitator (11/10)
- Fr. Jeff Lorig, Process Facilitator (1/26)
ArchOmaha Pastoral Planning Office

St. Boniface in Elgin

- Mr. Ben Meis
- Ms. Linda Mitchell

St. Bonaventure in Raeville

- Ms. Joyce Pelster
- Ms. Joan Stuhr

St. John the Baptist in Petersburg

- Deacon John Starman
- Mr. Alan Temme

St. Francis of Assisi in Neligh

- Ms. Amy Baker
- Mr. Bob Eggerling

Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Tilden

- Ms. Cindy Decker
- Ms. Debra Navratil

St. Peter de Alcantara in Ewing

- Ms. Kathy Arens
- Ms. Becky Kaczor

St. Theresa of Avila in Clearwater

- Mr. John Mlnarik
- Mr. Jarod Bearinger

St. John's Church of Deloit (Rural Clearwater)

- Mr. John Knievel
- Ms. Janette Kerkman