

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

Strategic Planning

June 20, 2016

6:30pm

Notre Dame Parish Center

Members Present: Fr. Joe Giroux, Gregory Paye, Pam Leduc, Jennifer Champagne, Ruth Demarse, Mary Hart, Molly McKee, Judy Pelkey, Neil Seymour, Linda Sprague, Madonna Champagne, and Darlene Livernois

Members Excused: Fr. Scott Belina and Andy Duso

Member Absent: Deacon Bryan Bashaw

Others Present: Malcolm Miner, Brent Charland, Jim Coughlin, Aimee LeRoy, Nick Haas, Mary Haas Samantha Poulin

Opening Prayer: Opening prayer was led by Fr. Joe.

"Going With The Flow..."

There was a brief overview of the maintenance vs. mission information that was compiled during previous strategic planning meeting.

What Is The Work of a Catholic Parish?

There was a brief overview of the ministries of the word & witness; spiritual & liturgical ministries; and the ministries of charity & community information that was compiled during previous strategic planning meeting.

What Do We Have To Work With?

There was a brief overview of the physical plant (properties & buildings); monetary asset (DLF savings); and the annual income and expenses (regular envelopes & ordinary expenses) information that was compiled. A budget proposal for 2016-2017 fiscal year was handed out and reviewed by the council which noted a deficit of \$124,336.04. The deficit for 2015-2016 fiscal year was proposed to be \$162,591.07, but due to the decrease in utilities expenses, what was budgeted for the Frassati House was less than what was anticipated, there was only a \$90,000 deficit. There was discussions on the Catholic School parish subsidy that is has been increasing ever so slightly over the years. The percentage of subsidy that is given to Holy Family School every year has gone from 35% (2012-2013 fiscal year) of the Sunday collection to 44% (2015-2016 fiscal year). St. André pays the school 82% of Holy Family School's budgeted parish subsidy, which amounts to approximately \$225,000.00 that comes from St. André's Parish.

Making a plan

a. there was a brief overview of the draft plan that has been developed so far and to make sure there wasn't any additions to the plan needed.

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b. additions that were discussed was adding sacramental preps (such as marriage, first communion, confirmation, etc. under the section of Spiritual & Liturgical under Sacraments. Also, was noted under Devotions of adding there being a half an hour set aside prior to Mass for the rosary to be recited. A suggestion was made to also add under Charity & Community under the Outreach a parish nursing program for homebound and elderly, and also the coordination of getting volunteers who would be willing to help out parishioners in need of small repairs or other things.

c. the necessities and implementations discussed where the selling of St. Joseph's Owls Head and St. Mary's Lake Titus churches. This process has already started but will need the approval of Bishop LaValley which then he will relegate the churches from sacred use. There was also discussion on the selling of the West Street Property but will first need to find out how much to sell for my getting a formal appraisal of the property. It was also mentioned of the possibility of also closing St. Joseph's Church and St. John Bosco Church. Some of the reasons that were discussed what financially, there being less people attending church, and that there seems to be a need for four churches. Some of the factors that were discussed was the sale ability of properties, operational cost, physical repair and maintenance, parking, seating capacity, diminishing number of priests and parishioners, use of auxiliary facilities (halls, offices, classrooms), room for growth, and church location and visibility.

Actions Steps

After much discussion it was agreed upon by all that Notre Dame and St. Helen's would remain open, and that St. Joseph's and St. John Bosco would close with a closing date of January 1, 2017. It was also agreed upon that St. John Bosco would close but will explore the possibility of using that space as a community center and to have space available for St. Vincent de Paul, a soup kitchen, and food pantry. There would also remain there the Frassati House and Catholic Charities. As for St. Joseph's it was agreed upon that closing the church and then selling the property would be in the best way to go. Before anything will be finalized, the suggestions of closing the two churches will need to be brought to Bishop LaValley to get his approval to do so. If approved by the Bishop, then it will need to be presented to the parish community. With thorough discussion, it was decided that there will need to be an announcement after all the Masses, a listening session provided, and a mailing to all the parishioners regarding the changes. As for the announcement at Masses, it will be presented to the congregation the weekend of July 30/31 which will come for Pastoral Council Members who will also be present to answer and follow up questions. After that there will be a mailing to parishioners which will include the long range plan that has been discussed over the past six months at the council meetings and a letter from Fr. Joe. A listening session will be offered to the parishioners and held on Monday, August 15th at 6:30pm at Notre Dame Church.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be determined at a later date.

Closing Prayer: Saint Brother André was led by Fr. Joe.

Respectfully Submitted
Darlene Livernois

**Addendum to the Minutes of June 20, 2016
as requested by the Pastoral Council on September 26, 2016**

**Parish Bulletin
February 21, 2016**

A major project just begun by our Pastoral Council is a process of strategic planning. We've long seen the need to do something like this, so at a special meeting on February 8, we started. The goal is to develop a long range plan that can guide parish life, rather than simply reacting to things when they come up. We began by discussing parish values and needs—who we want to be as St. André's Parish. The next phase is to brainstorm programs in line with those values and which will meet those needs. Finally, we will look at what resources (staffing, finances, and facilities) are required to provide such programs. We will keep you informed of our progress, and of course will be looking for your input. You can find the agenda from this recent meeting on the St. André's website on the Pastoral Council page. (Fr. Giroux)

**Parish Bulletin
June 26, 2016**

For six months, the Pastoral Council has been working on a long range, strategic plan for St. André's. (You can follow its progress in the agendas and minutes of the Council on the parish website.) The next stage of the process is to share with you what we've done so far and invite your reactions and input. Stayed tuned for details in late July... (Fr. Giroux)

**Email to the Pastoral Council
June 27, 2016**

I just got off the phone with Bishop LaValley. (I had somewhere between 10-12 hours of meetings Monday-Thursday last week, as well as three Funeral Masses, so I didn't have a chance to call him before this evening.) I briefly shared with him the fruits of our discussions over these last 6 months as we've been developing a long-range, strategic plan for St. André's. He's glad to hear of what we've been doing, and says it's what all the parishes of the Diocese will be asked to do in the very near future. One of Bishop's goals for the Diocese (announced a couple years ago, as you may recall) has been to develop a big picture pastoral plan for each and all of the parishes. The committee he has appointed to work on such plan is in the final stages of preparing a document/questionnaire that will guide individual parish communities through this process. From what he heard from me tonight, Bishop thinks we've already completed most of that process. He has asked, however, that we use the document (once it's released) and complete the process it outlines like everybody else (even if on an accelerated timeline) for the sake of unity and consistency. Also, given the rather drastic nature of what we're asking (potentially closing two churches currently in use for worship), he's going to want sufficient time to carefully

consider our request and make sure all essential procedures have been followed. All that means: we should not anticipate making any announcement at the end of July. God willing, when the planning document is released, we'll be able to quickly transfer the conclusions of our process up to this point into this new questionnaire and get right back on track. I'll keep you posted if/when I know more. As we mark the second anniversary of its founding this Friday, let us continue to pray for the future of St. André's Parish. (Fr. Giroux)

Parish Bulletin
July 10, 2016

A couple of Sundays ago, I mentioned the long range, strategic plan for St. André's Parish on which our Pastoral Council has been working for the past six months. (You can follow its progress in the agendas and minutes of the Council on the parish website.) We were expecting to be able to share with you what we've done so far, as well as seek your reactions and input, later this month. But in the meantime, I've discussed our draft plan with Bishop LaValley, and he filled me in on a process for long range planning that will be implemented in the all the parishes of the Diocese in the near future. Bishop asked that we put things on hold briefly here in Malone in order to align our plans with the diocesan process. I'm not sure when we'll be able to give you an update—but as soon as we can, we will. (Fr. Giroux)

Email to the Pastoral Council
August 17, 2016

I'm sure you recall that, when I approached Bishop LaValley about our Strategic Plan in late June, he asked us to put things on hold for a bit until his overall plan for the Diocese of Ogdensburg was released. Bishop's plan was just sent to priests yesterday afternoon, and has now been posted on the diocesan website: <http://pastoral.rcdony.org/Planning/index.html>. There are no changes in priest staffing proposed for Malone (as long as there are sufficient priests for us to continue to have a Parochial Vicar), nor any other parishes expected to be linked to St. André's in the near future. Bishop's letter will be included in this coming Sunday's bulletin.

I haven't been able to study the entire document yet in all its detail. It includes a form that Bishop has asked us to use to propose our Strategic Plan for Malone (and so be in line with all the other parishes of the diocese). Please God, it's won't take much for us to transfer the work we did in the first six months of this year into the new format—and there won't be need to do much additional work, either. We'll try to pick up right where we left off... (Fr. Giroux)

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Dear Friends in Christ:

In my pastoral letter, *Find Your Home in Christ*, promulgated in April of 2014, one of the priorities set forth was to “Build Parishes with Living Stones.” For the past two years, the *Living Stones* Planning Committee has been working diligently to develop a plan for our Diocese (“*Living Stones Plan*”) along with strategies for its implementation, in order to: 1) enhance parish vibrancy; 2) encourage greater participation among the laity in leadership roles; and 3) assess parish demographics in relation to the economic, human and spiritual resources available in each parish and those of neighboring parishes.

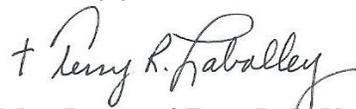
In the formulation of this *Living Stones Plan*, the Committee consulted extensively with pastors and parishioners. Every parish pastoral council in the Diocese was asked to conduct a self-evaluation, measure the vibrancy of the parish and suggest possible placement of priests in order to provide the best care of souls and meet the needs of the faithful in the parishes of the area. The fruit of consultation, deliberation, and prayer, the *Living Stones Plan* is sent to pastors this week and includes the reconfiguration of many existing parishes into parish groupings and the assignment of 34 available diocesan pastors. Although currently there are 49 resident pastors, the number 34 reflects the current estimate of available pastors in 2020. In the near future, the *Living Stones Plan* will be available on our diocesan website under “Planning”.

As you know, our Diocese covers an expansive geographical area with a limited number of priests available to minister. One of the major challenges in planning is to ensure that our faith communities have a pastoral presence, assigning our priests where they are most needed. Although all parish groupings will have a pastor and all parishioners will have access to Sunday Mass, your pastor may not reside in your community and the Mass location and time may not be what you are accustomed to at present. In situations where a priest is not in residence, it is imperative that someone be available to attend to pastoral needs through ministry that is not reserved solely to priests. Our pastors will be calling upon our permanent deacons and qualified laity to assume an even greater role in providing pastoral care through various ministries or service as pastoral associates. Also, in some particular situations, the bishop may assign a pastoral life coordinator to assume the administration of a parish. Each parish grouping will be called upon to formulate a detailed plan to address all the pastoral needs in their grouping.

The goal of this *Living Stones Plan* is to form vibrant parishes utilizing the gifts of all the baptized, both clergy and laity. In the coming weeks and months, your pastors will be asked to share with you details of the *Living Stones Plan* and begin the necessary collaboration with groups in your parish and with your neighboring parishes to formulate the pastoral plan for your parish grouping.

Change is not always easy but it is a requisite for growth. In appreciation of the fine work done by the *Living Stones Planning Committee* and acknowledging the great faith of the people of our Diocese, I am confident that we will continue to grow and to move forward as we work together to “*Build Vibrant Parishes with Living Stones.*”

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry R. LaValley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

RECOMMENDATION FOR ALIGNMENT OF EXISTING PARISHES INTO PARISH GROUPINGS AND THE ASSIGNMENT OF PASTORS

Recommendations by deanery, assuming 34 available Diocesan Pastors

This chart includes recommendations for parochial vicars or international priests but assignments will depend upon availability of these priests. Locations listed in parish groupings are in no particular order. No significance should be attached to the order in which they are listed within the grouping. The description of a grouping is derived from deanery maps, and includes the communities listed on the map, whether they be the location of a parish church, worship site, mission or oratory. The designation is primarily meant to define the Pastoral Care Area for each grouping.

Deanery	# of Pastors	Parish Groupings (responsible pastor)
Franklin	3	1. Malone, Chasm Falls, Lake Titus, Owls Head (+1 Parochial Vicar) 2. Fort Covington, Constable, Chateaugay, Westville, Bombay, Burke, Hogansburg, Trout River 3. North Bangor, Brushton, St. Regis Falls, Hopkinton

