

CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF SOUTH COUNTY



# **Final Cluster Report and Recommendations**

**From the  
Catholic Communities of  
South County**

**Prepared for Bishop Mitchell  
Rozanski**

**June 28, 2010**

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**Planning Process  
Final Report and Recommendation  
June 28, 2010**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In May of 2007 a Cluster Planning Team was formed in South Anne Arundel County to formulate a plan to provide pastoral care when only two priests are available to minister among the three parishes in the area, eventually to be called the Catholic Communities of South County. Parish charismas were explored along with a number of possible organizational scenarios. These scenarios and their strengths and weaknesses were presented to the parish staffs, the parish councils, and the laity at large with the preferred scenario of a Pastor and Associate Pastor for all three parishes emphasized. Additional refinements based on presentation feedback were made to the preferred scenario. These refinements included the recommendation to replace all pastors when the Plan is implemented, and the formation of a cluster Coordinating Committee to assist the incoming Pastor and Associate. A preliminary edition of the Plan was sent to the Seton Vicar, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski in March of 2010.

**INTRODUCTION**

In 2000, Cardinal William Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, established a committee to develop a plan for the allocation of priests that ensures high quality pastoral care throughout the Archdiocese and renews efforts for recruiting candidates for future priestly service. The committee issued a planning report in September 2001 entitled “The Hope That Lies Before Us.” One of the Pastoral Planning Strategies identified in the report was the recommendation that parishes in a particular area begin to work together in small groups known as “clusters” to engage in coordinated pastoral planning with the goal of continuing to provide quality pastoral care to their people in the context of the changing ministerial environment.

In late 2007, Monsignor Jay O’Connor met with the Pastors and staffs of Holy Family in Davidsonville, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Edgewater, and Our Lady of Sorrows in Owensville to explain the need to plan should all three parishes be served by two priests.

**SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS**

Following the meeting with Monsignor O’Connor, the Pastors of the three parishes began to meet to identify a plan for this planning process. They hired a facilitator and decided to invite parishioners from each parish to be a part of a Planning Team. The Planning Team consisted of the Pastor, Deacon, a staff member and a Pastoral Council member from each parish. This Planning Team began meeting monthly in June 2008, and called itself the Catholic Communities

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of South County (CCSC). One of the first things the team did was develop a mission statement that is presented below.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To provide quality pastoral care for the spiritual and physical needs for each of the three Catholic Communities in South Anne Arundel County with a reduced number of priests.**

General Assumptions and Explanations for the Planning Process:

- All three parishes will continue to exist as individual parishes.
- Sacramental life in each and all of the parishes is the priority - especially the availability of the celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.
- Pastors, Staffs and Pastoral Councils will identify and determine possible ways to collaborate.
- The premise is that there will eventually be two priests serving the three parishes. This is understood as two priests, one of who may not be a pastor.
- Current building projects will continue.
- Meetings involving parish life of the Cluster parishes, both on the local and Archdiocesan levels, should be attended by all Pastoral leaders including the Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Assistants and Pastoral Life Directors (PLDs).
- Where the priests live will be determined when 2 priests arrive to serve the parishes.
- Current deacons have full time jobs and family responsibilities in addition to their deacon responsibilities.
- It would be helpful if the Archdiocese would consider personalities of parishes and priests in future placements.
- The resulting cluster plan will result in formal recommendations to Bishop Rozanski.

Desired goal of planning process:

- 3 healthy and sustainable parishes (spiritually and physically) serving the Catholic Communities of South County
- All three parishes united in faith both within and among themselves
- Faith grows stronger
- Individual and parish involvement in the process strengthens the outcome
- Parishioners embrace Baptismal call to service

The Planning Team's role was to:

- Generate ideas, suggestions and options (be the architect and conduit of information)
- Generate initial thoughts about how to accomplish the goals
- Coordinate the process for larger groups as necessary
- Present the cluster planning information to the parishes
- Explore models, such as North Anne Arundel County and others
- Keep the process in everyone's prayers
- Communicate regularly to parishes through bulletins or bulletin inserts (at least quarterly)
- As background information, study "The Hope That Lies Before Us"

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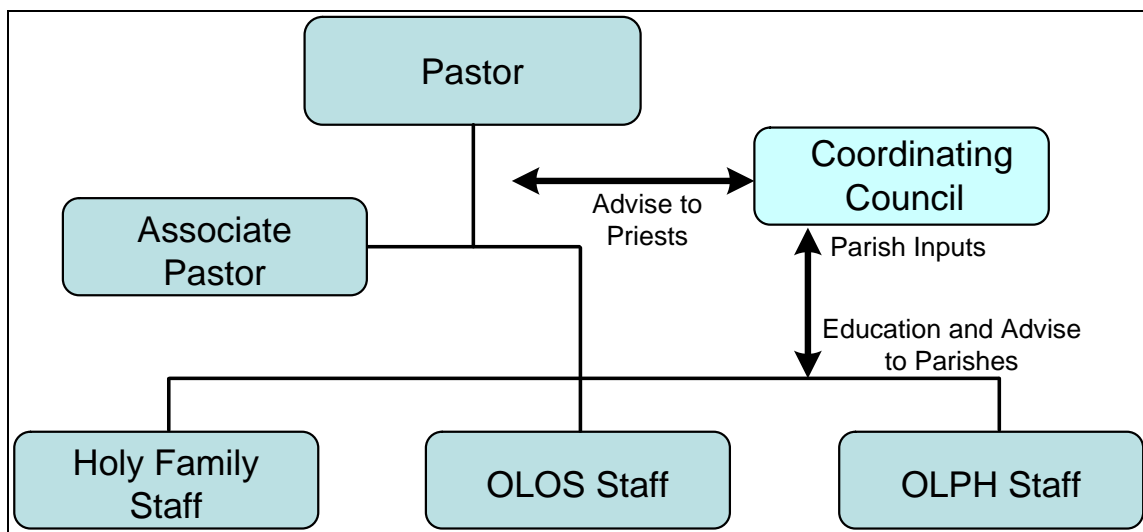
The Planning Team identified different scenarios and the pros and cons of each. These were later narrowed to three potential scenarios, all three of which might work, but one was strongly preferred and recommended by the Planning Team. After a year of planning and discussion, the Team presented their progress and plan to the parish staffs at a joint half-day meeting in June 2009, and invited their feedback, discussion and questions. Following that meeting, the Team presented their plan to the Pastoral Councils at a joint evening meeting in July 2009, inviting questions, discussion, and ideas for presentation to the parishes at large. After much preparation, the Planning Team invited the parishioners of the three parishes to a joint meeting in September 2009 to present the plan and to invite discussion.

### PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

After much prayer and discussion, the Planning Team respectfully recommends one scenario and has identified the issues and considerations needing attention. When possible, recommendations are made. When it was not possible to make or resolve recommendations, the issues were acknowledged and noted. These issues will be left to a Coordinating Council, to be formed in the future. This Council will potentially have more information at that later time.

### RECOMMENDATION

During the planning process, the Planning Team reviewed and discussed several operational scenarios with two priests serving three parishes. The scenarios considered are provided in Appendix A. The consensus of the Planning Team, supported by the three staffs and Pastoral Councils, is that one Pastor and one Associate Pastor serve the three parishes. This scenario may have staffing and financial implications to be individually addressed by each parish. Each parish will assess and address its individual needs and any additional staff needed to support this model. One parish may opt to hire a business manager, one may hire a Pastoral Life Director (PLD), one may hire a Pastoral Assistant with some administrative oversight, etc.



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It is believed that the CCSC would need a coordinating body, called Coordinating Council, to deal with any issues that affect the parishes within the cluster. The composition, role, and responsibilities of the Coordinating Council are discussed at length in a later section of this report.

The following pages list the guiding principles for determining priorities for sharing two priests among three parishes.

### **RATIONALE**

The Planning Team strongly believes that this model is the most effective way to provide pastoral care to all three parishes. It enables all three parishes to have equal access to the priests, and for the priests to minister equally in all three parishes. It gives all three parishes shared “ownership” of the priests, and prevents any one parish from feeling that they are sharing “their” priest with another parish. The Planning Team also believes that this model will be most successful if all three current pastors are changed simultaneously and replaced with the two priests suggested in this model. The Pastors were not a part of the discussion that led to this recommendation. It is noted that no one parish wants their respective pastor to leave, as all are loved and respected by their parishioners and staff. Nonetheless, the Planning Team believes that it is in the best interest of all three parishes to provide a fresh start for the two incoming priests and the parishes, and that it will provide the best opportunity for the recommended model to succeed. If any one of the current pastors stays, the Planning Team believes that it would be more difficult for parishioners to embrace the new model.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

After the Seton Vicar, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski accepts these recommendations; there are several logical steps to follow. Some joint collegial planning for sharing ministries between or among parishes could begin. The establishment of the Coordinating Council could begin to collaboratively oversee how the parishes continue to work together.

### **REPORT CONTENTS**

The report from the Planning Team contains the following:

- The definition, role and responsibilities of the Coordinating Council
- Recommendations and/or Guiding Principles for:
  - Joint parish scheduling for Priests’ time and Masses
  - Sacramental Life
  - Finances
  - Cluster Website
- Appendices containing all planning documentation

## CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF SOUTH COUNTY

### COORDINATING COUNCIL

The Planning Team recommends the formation of a Coordinating Council whose role includes cross parish scheduling, communication, and activity coordination. This group will have distinctly different responsibilities than the individual pastoral councils, finance committees, parish corporators and staffs. This Coordinating Council may make recommendations to the pastor, but does not have decision making authority. It is part of their role to ensure the suggested model continues to serve all three parishes, identify potential conflicts with the availability of priests, ensure the Sacramental continuity at all three parishes, support the respective Parish Councils, ensure 'cluster' issues are coordinated between the parishes, and identify and support tri-parish initiatives, such as the annual tri-parish picnic. The Coordinating Council is a ten member group comprised of equal representatives from each parish:

- One Pastoral Council member
- One staff member
- One lay person
- One Deacon from one parish on a rotating basis

The general responsibilities of this Council would be to:

- Oversee constant communication flow between and among parishes, and suggest any needed changes to further optimize communication;
- Ensure that all three parishes share scheduling of the priests' time, and identify places where obstacles may occur in scheduling;
- Continually assess the percentage of priests' time in each parish to identify any inequities and the reason for any inequities;
- Ensure that any issues that may arise from three parishes sharing two priests are identified and addressed by the appropriate body or Pastor;
- Receive suggestions from staff or parishioners for ways parishes could share resources or support each other;
- Trouble shoot any issues concerning communication, scheduling, and priests' time that affect any or all of the parishes;
- Recommend policy within the parameters of its responsibilities;
- Continue to share the responsibility of unifying all three parishes around the shared goal as epitomized in the Mission Statement; and
- Advise the Pastor when appropriate.

Initially, the Coordinating Council of the CCSC would meet frequently to work as a cluster, perhaps as frequently as every other week; with the objective and intention of reducing the frequency to monthly meetings after the system has been established.

The following issues are especially fitting for the Council's deliberation:

- those that affect the cluster;
- those that may impact the priests' schedules;
- those involving communication between and/or among parishes;
- those involving an activity requiring coordination among all three parishes.

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The Council does not approve, it only makes recommendations to the pastor. The pastor maintains all decision making and approval authority.

At the outset, we recommend that the current Planning Team become the Coordinating Council on a temporary basis. This will facilitate a smooth transition, since this group has established good working interrelationships, represents their respective parishes, and understands the needs and the rationale behind these recommendations and their implementation. Once the new Pastor has been named and established, the Pastor, in concert with the Pastoral Councils from all three parishes, will decide whether the Coordinating Council members will be appointed or elected and the length of their respective tenure. The Planning Team recommends that each member serve a three-year term, and that one person from each parish rotate off and be replaced on an annual basis so that membership changes are staggered both among parishes, and among positions on the Coordinating Council within each parish. As an example, the first year rotation may be:

- A staff member from Holy Family
- A Pastoral Council member from Our Lady of Perpetual Help
- A lay person from Our Lady of Sorrows

In the following years a different representative from each parish would transition off the Council until the fourth year when the pattern would be repeated. The Deacons will rotate annually, and may sit in for each other in the event of scheduling conflicts.



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### **SCHEDULING ISSUES**

#### **MASS SCHEDULES**

The Planning Team believes that the Eucharist is the MOST important need for parishioners. Our desire is “to keep all current weekend and weekday Masses”. If at all possible, no Mass will be eliminated due to the lack of priests. Parishioner attendance will determine whether any Mass at any of the three parishes is eliminated. Currently the weekend Mass Schedule consists of eleven Masses among the three parishes. We recommend that the Pastor and Associate be assigned three Masses each per weekend, spread between Saturday evening and Sunday. Saturday assignment of Mass includes Confession. We further recommend that Holy Days, Holy Week and holidays be planned far in advance as their planning is time and resource intensive.

#### Suggested Weekend Mass Rotations

How priests are assigned for weekend Masses will ultimately be the decision of the Pastor. The Planning Team hopes that the priests spend time at all three parishes on a rotating basis, so each parish has the opportunity to get to know the priests. Visiting priests (called weekend assistants) fill open slots each weekend. When a cluster priest is not available for a weekend Mass, scheduling weekend assistants is the responsibility of the parish. Parishes should share visiting priest names with each other and look to the Archdiocese for support if it becomes difficult to find priests to assist on weekends. We request the Archdiocese ask priests not serving in parishes, but in active ministry, to assist parishes or groups of parishes who have fewer priests than Mass schedules. Any schedule needs to include priests vacation/sickness or all exceptions

#### Weekday Mass

Daily Mass remains important to those who participate and to the pastoral life of the Parish. The Pastor and Associate Pastor will ultimately determine the times for weekday Masses. It may be helpful to establish a uniform time for daily Mass at each parish, or it may be helpful for one parish to have an early Mass and one a later Mass, with time for travel in between, if the priests desire that option.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Pastor and Associate Pastor celebrate at least one weekday Mass at each parish. Consider the current Funeral Mass schedule when making changes to daily Mass times. The celebration of Communion Prayer Services and the Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest (SCAP) ritual remain alternative approaches to fulfilling the sacramental needs of the cluster communities.

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In the occurrence of a priest's inability to celebrate Liturgy with little to no advance notice, a Communion Prayer Service should be held. The sequence of action when a priest does not appear for a scheduled Mass should be:

- Contact cluster priests
- Contact cluster deacons
- Contact a trained lay extraordinary Eucharistic Minister and/or Pastoral Care Minister to officiate

To ensure the orderly, consistent and reliable provision of Sunday liturgies, the following recommended activities are suggested:

- Schedule celebrants for weekend Masses in three or four month blocks.
- Initially, the Pastor and his assistant do the Mass scheduling.
- Each individual parish is responsible for scheduling weekend assistants.
- Train laity for Communion Service, in event that laity needs to officiate. That would default to the most qualified in the congregation.
- Deacons could officiate on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and parishioners need to be trained and educated should they need to officiate.
- Each parish assigns one person to develop relationships with priests who may be able to assist on a short term or long term basis. The names and contact information for these weekend assistants should be shared between parishes.

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### **PRIEST SCHEDULING ISSUES**

There is a need for a “Central Scheduling” function within the cluster once the Cluster Plan is enacted with two priests. Personnel who have access to priest’s calendars are responsible of booking their appointments.

The Pastor or his representative should be present at regularly scheduled meetings among the three parishes and particularly the following:

- Staff
- Finance Committee
- Parish Corporators
- Pastoral Council
- Liturgy Committee

This may require coordination among the three parishes.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Utilize the internet and/or website technology for calendaring.
- Initiate a Master calendar for the parishes and the priests that all parishes have instant access to, such as an online application.
- Maintain all parish meetings on a Master online calendar, that all have access to, but few have the ability to edit.
- Include parish secretaries since they communicate with each other about scheduling needs and issues. This could be accomplished via an early “pre-shift” conference call.

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### **SACRAMENTAL LIFE ISSUES**

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Sacramental life in each and all of the parishes is the priority - especially the availability of the celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- When possible, current Mass schedules for weekend and daily Masses should be retained. Any necessary changes should result from parish needs or Mass attendance and not priest availability. Adjustments to Mass times should be considered before canceling Mass because of the availability of priests (e.g., consider early morning and/or a late Mass).
- Parishioners in need of the Sacrament of the Sick and home/institution visitation should continue to call their individual parish until or unless the Coordinating Council and/or Pastor recommend a centralized system.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Initiate ongoing parishioner education about the role of Deacons and of the laity in the sacramental life of the parishes and in prayer services and communion services.
- Initiate ongoing education about the Sacrament of the Sick and Viaticum.
- Each parish should develop long-term relationships with priests who are currently not serving as parish priests.

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### FINANCIAL ISSUES

All three parishes share all expenses of the shared priests. The priests will decide living arrangements once there are two priests serving the three parishes. Currently, each parish owns a house in which the priest resides. Both priests may reside in one house; they may reside in two of the three houses; or a fourth house more centrally located may be purchased.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- All three parishes split the “cost” of the priest evenly, with each parish paying one-third of all expenses, including but not limited to:
  - Salaries and benefits
  - Retirement
  - Professional Development
  - Housing and any included expenses, such as housecleaning, capital improvements, etc.
- The Coordinating Council should periodically assess the priests’ time in each parish, and have the opportunity to make recommendations to change the cost allocation, if it seems appropriate to do so.
- Consider opening one joint bank account to which all three parishes contribute to the costs of the priests, and out of which the priests are paid.

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## CLUSTER WEBSITE ISSUES

There was much discussion about a shared website and whether the website is reached through each parish's respective website, or if it is the portal for the individual parish's website. A URL for the CCSC exists. The website can be a useful communication tool, as well as a Public Relations tool that helps people understand that the three parishes are united, even though they operate separately.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Coordinating Council makes recommendations about the use of the website.
- One person should manage and edit the website. They would be responsible for obtaining content from each parish and posting it.

Respectfully submitted:

### **Holy Family**

Deacon Tom Beales  
Colleen McGraw  
Meg O'Neill  
Fr. Joe Barr

### **Our Lady of Sorrows**

Deacon Tom Cook  
Mary Catherine Haines  
Anne Hayes (initially)  
Adele Hook  
Dr. Ruth Sanchez-Way  
Fr. Mark Logue

### **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**

Deacon Steve Cooley  
Dick Maio  
Teresa Rainey  
Fr. Joe Cosgrove

Catrese Brown, Facilitator

## CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF SOUTH COUNTY

### CONTENTS OF THE APPENDICES

Appendix A - The scenarios considered and rejected (see pg. 3)

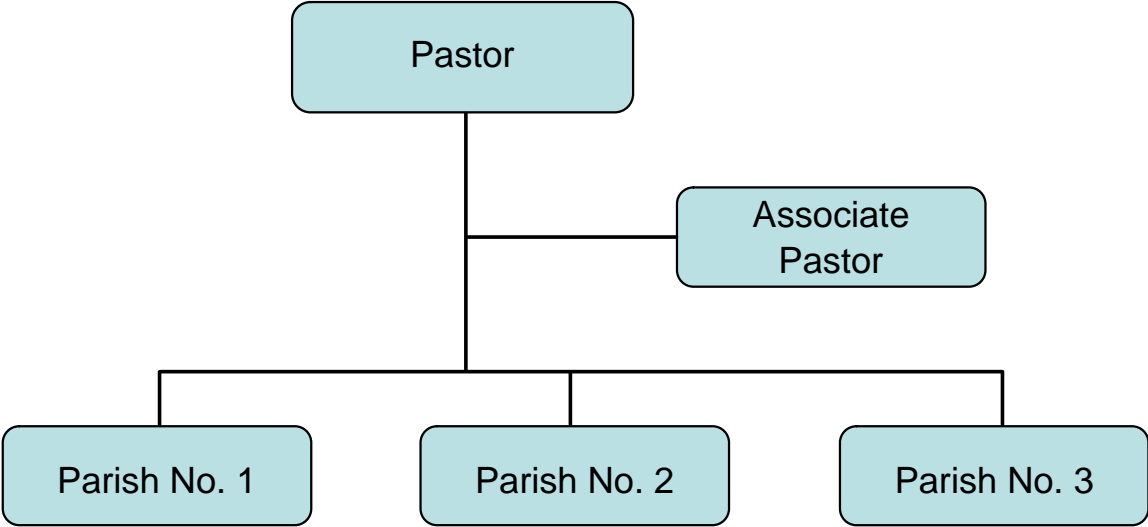
Appendix B - PowerPoint Presentations for:  
Staffs and Pastoral Councils  
All Parishioners

Appendix C - FAQ Sheet

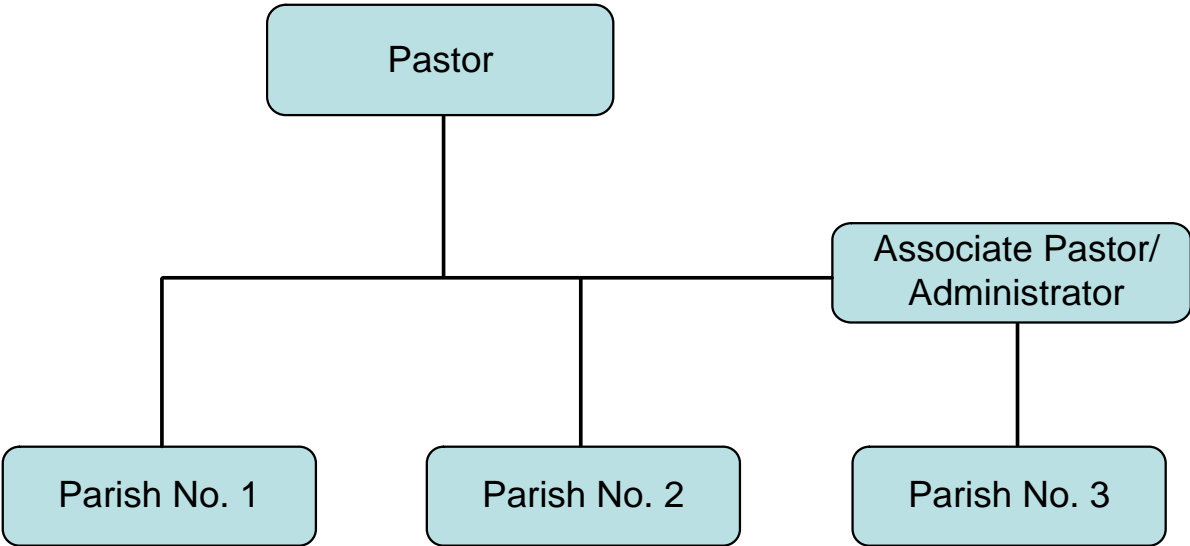
Appendix D - Timeline for Process

**APPENDIX A Scenarios Considered and Rejected**

**Scenario A**

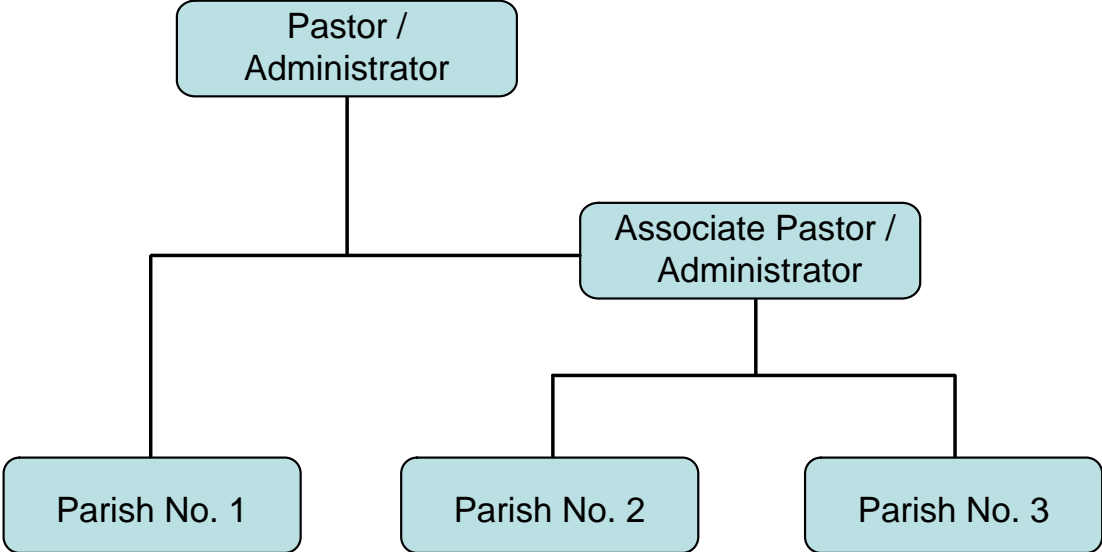


**Scenario B**

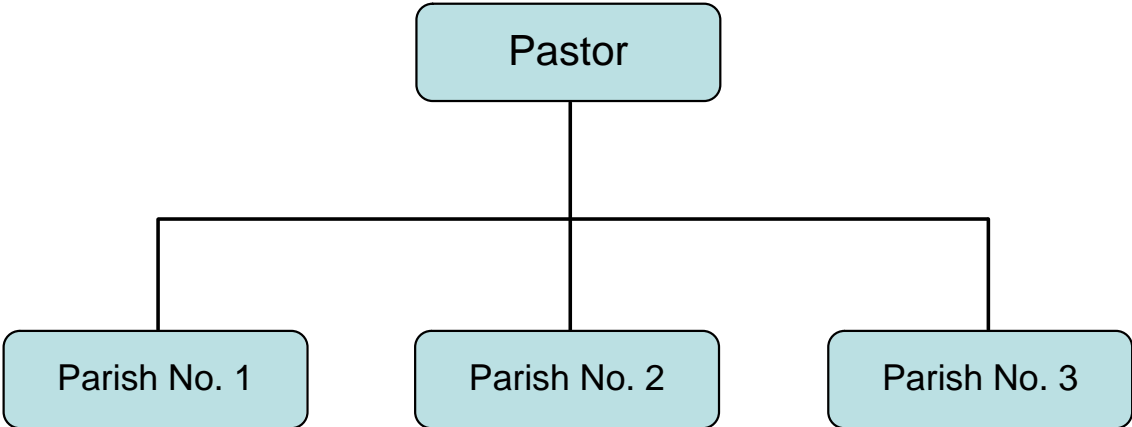




### Scenario C



### Scenario D



## **APPENDIX B Presentation to Parish Staffs and Pastoral Councils**

### **Presentation to Staff of the Parishes**

# Agenda for Staff Meeting

- History: why, issues,
- Outline process so far
- Current status of process
- Presentation of scenarios
- Discussion/questions
  - What we need from you
  - Ideas
  - Suggestions about roll out to parishes at large

## The Planning Team

- Pastors
- Deacons (except at OLOS)
- 1 staff member from each parish
- 1 Pastoral Council representative from each parish

## Goal

- **To provide quality pastoral care for spiritual and physical needs for each of the three Catholic Communities in South Anne Arundel County with a reduced number of priests.**

## Planning Team Role

- Keep the process in prayers (individual and parish)
- Study “The Hope That Lies Before Us”
- Explore models, such as North Anne Arundel County and others
- Generate ideas, suggestions and options (be the architect and conduit of information)
- Do the first thinking about how to accomplish the goal
- Coordinate the process and facilitate the “roll out” when ready
- Present the information to the parishes
- Communicate regularly to parishes through bulletins or bulletin inserts (at least quarterly)

## Assumptions and Explanations

- All three parishes will continue to exist as individual parishes.
- Not “merger parish,” but three stronger parishes.
- Pastors, Deacons, Staffs and Pastoral Councils will identify and determine possible ways to collaborate.
- Premise: there will eventually be two priests serving three parishes. This means two priests, one of whom may or may not be a pastor or associate pastor.
- Current building projects will continue.
- This process will result in formal recommendations to Bishop Rozanski.

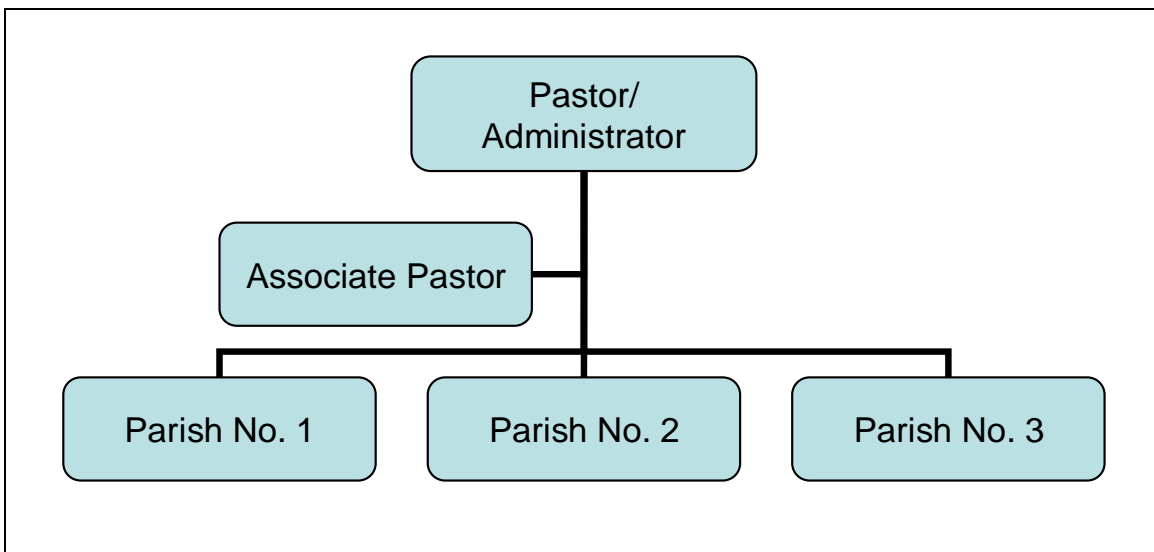
## Assumptions and Explanations (cont.)

- If any of the three parishes have a Pastoral Life Director (PLD), that person will be invited to all meetings where parish life is discussed, or where decisions are made about parish life, both on the local level, and the Archdiocesan level.
- The parishes are labeled Parish Number 1, 2 and 3 because the name of the parish in each scenario may depend upon when the changes actually take place, and who the priests are in the parishes at that time.
- Where the priests live will be determined after we have two priests.
- Most models necessitate that the Archdiocese consider personalities in future placements.

## Definitions

- Pastor: Role includes pastoral duties, managing human resources and administration. The Pastor is generally in charge of the parish.
- Associate Pastor: Priest who shares pastoral duties with the pastor, but is not responsible for managing human resources and administration unless his title also includes “administrator.” The associate pastor is called a parochial vicar and also must be a priest.

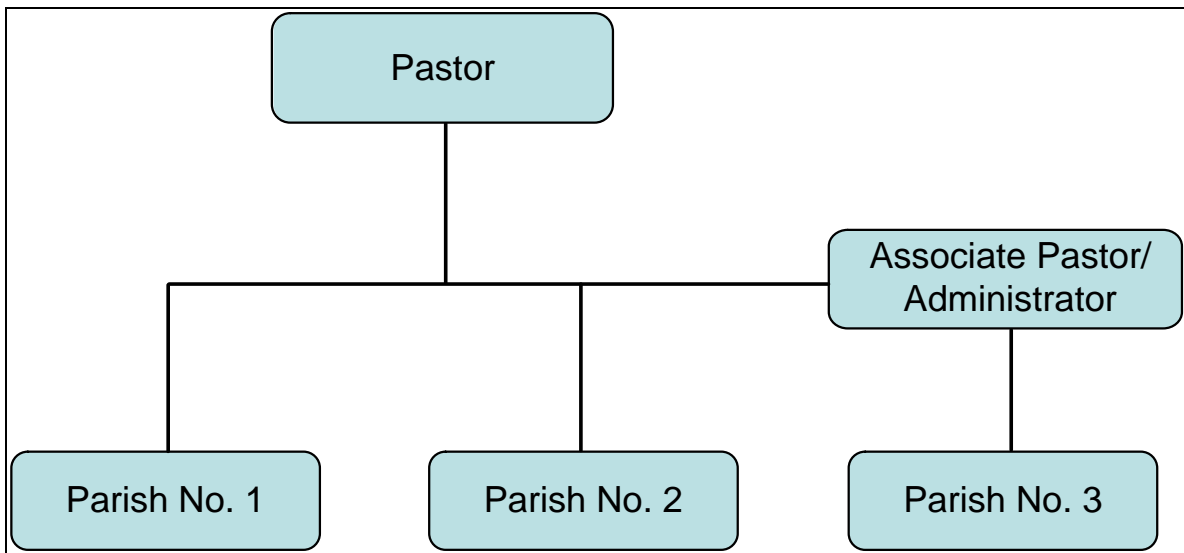
### Scenario A



# Assumptions for Scenario A

- There are 2 priests for 3 parishes, one pastor and one associate;
- The associate pastor will share the pastoral duties for all 3 parishes with the pastor;
- To facilitate the parish's operation each parish will hire an administrative type position to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish will decide the type of position needed, such as business manager, pastoral associate, etc.;
- The associate pastor is either inexperienced or an elderly priest, not available or able to assume full pastor duties for any or all of the 3 parishes;
- The current deacons for OLPH and Holy Family will continue their current level of responsibility.
- OLOS will have a deacon.

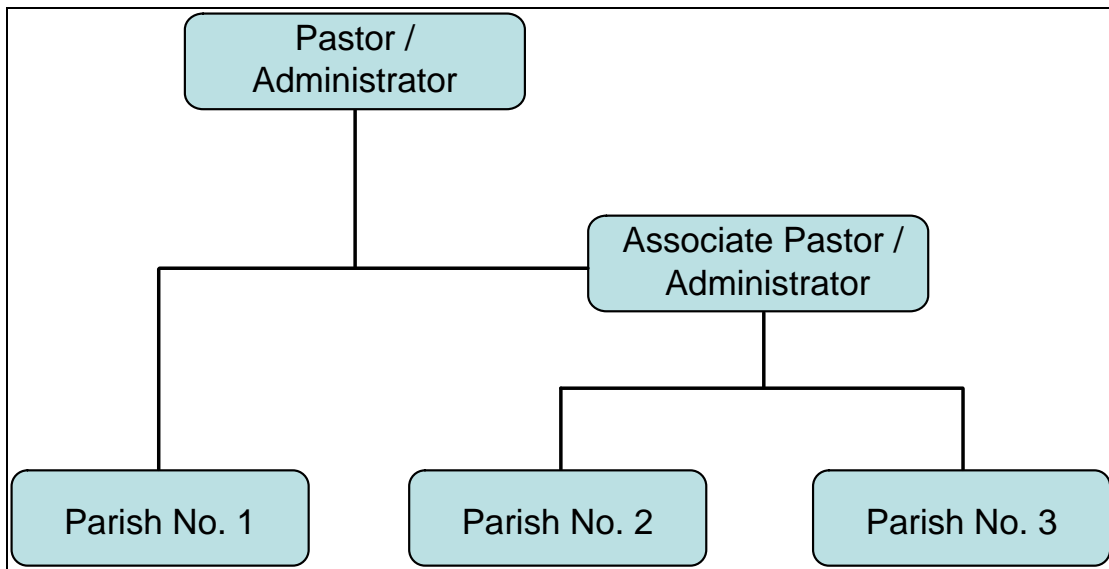
## Scenario B



## Assumptions for Scenario B

- One Pastor with oversight over all 3 parishes
- One associate pastor assumes administrative duties for one parish, lightening the load for the pastor.
- The associate pastor is experienced enough to take on this responsibility.
- Each parish will hire an administrative type staff person to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish will decide the type of position needed, such as business manager, pastoral associate, etc.

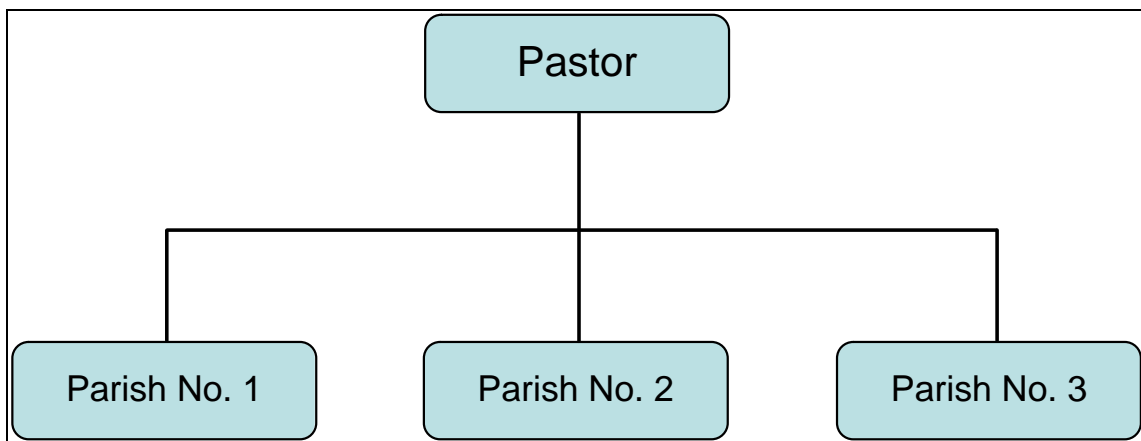
## Scenario C



## Assumptions for Scenario C

- One Pastor with oversight over all 3 parishes;
- Each parish will hire an administrative type position to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish will decide the type of position needed, such as business manager, pastoral associate, etc.;
- One associate pastor assumes administrative duties for two parishes, lightening the load for the pastor;
- The associate pastor is experienced enough to take on this responsibility.

### **Scenario D (Worst Case Scenario)**





## Assumptions for Scenario D

- This is the last choice of the Planning Team
- One Pastor and no Associate Pastor
- The Pastor is able and willing to handle 3 parishes
- Not enough priests to place 2 priests among the 3 CCSC parishes
- Each parish will hire an administrative type position to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish decides the type of position needed.
- Parishes will consider a Pastoral Life Director (PLD) or a full time paid deacon to organize/administer the regular life of the parish, the pastor administers sacraments and participate in meetings in which decisions are made that effect the life of the parish
- Depending upon title and duties of positions hired by each parish, the pastor may or may not attend meetings like staff meetings, and parish activities meetings.

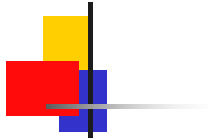
## DISCUSSION

- Initial reactions
- Pros and cons of each scenario
- Information that is missing
- How can we further clarify
- Ideas about roll out of info to parishes

**Presentation to the Pastoral Council of the Parishes**



# **Catholic Communities of South County Tri- Parish Meeting**



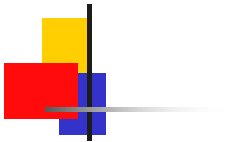
## **Agenda for Tri-Parish Meeting**

- Welcome and introductions
- Prayer
- Brief History: why, issues
- Role of the Planning Team
- Outline of Process
- Assumptions and Explanations
- Presentation of scenarios
- Discussion/questions
  - What we need from you
  - Ideas
  - Suggestions about roll out to parishes at large



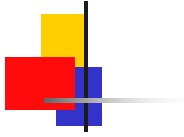
## Why?

- Prepare for when there are two priests serving all three parishes



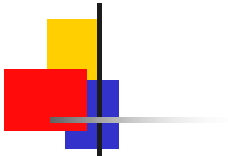
## The Planning Team

- Pastors
- Deacons (except at OLOS until 7/09)
- 1 staff member from each parish
- 1 Pastoral Council representative from each parish



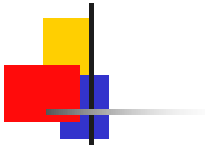
## Goal

- **To provide quality pastoral care for spiritual and physical needs for each of the three Catholic Communities in South Anne Arundel County with a reduced number of priests.**



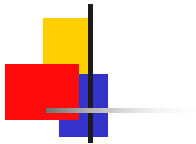
## Planning Team Role

- Keep the process in prayers (individual and parish)
- Study “The Hope That Lies Before Us”
- Explore models, such as North Anne Arundel County and others
- Generate ideas, suggestions and options (be the architect and conduit of information)
- Do the first thinking about how to accomplish the goal
- Coordinate the process and facilitate the “roll out” when ready
- Present the information to the parishes
- Communicate regularly to parishes through bulletins or bulletin inserts (at least quarterly)



## Process Timeline

- July, 2008 Planning Team convened and met monthly
- June, 2009 Staffs brought into the planning process
- July, 2009 Pastoral Councils brought into the planning process
- September, 2009 Planning Process and information introduced to parishes at large
- October, 2009 – March 2010 Planning Team identifies issues, considers how they might be addressed, and prepares report for Bishop Rozanski



## Planning Team Members

### **Holy Family**

Deacon Tom Beales  
Colleen McGraw  
Meg O'Neil  
Fr. Joe Barr

### **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**

Deacon Steve Cooley  
Dick Maio  
Teresa Rainey  
Fr. Joe Cosgrove

### **Our Lady of Sorrows**

Deacon Tom Cook  
Mary Catherine Haines  
Anne Hayes  
Adele Hook  
Ruth Sanchez-Way  
Fr. Mark Logue



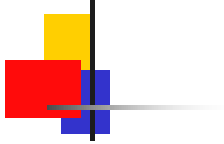
## Assumptions and Explanations

- All three parishes will continue to exist as individual parishes.
- Not “merger parish,” but three stronger parishes.
- Pastors, Deacons, Staffs and Pastoral Councils will identify and determine possible ways to collaborate.
- Premise: there will eventually be two priests serving three parishes. This means two priests, one of whom may or may not be a pastor or associate pastor.
- Current building projects will continue.
- This is a work in progress; there are still many unknowns

## Assumptions and Explanations (cont.)

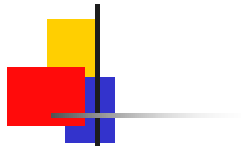


- The parishes are labeled Parish Number 1, 2 and 3 because the name of the parish in each scenario may depend upon when the changes actually take place, and who the priests are in the parishes at that time.
- Where the priests live will be determined after we have two priests.
- Most models necessitate that the Archdiocese consider personalities in future placements.
- This process will result in formal recommendations to Bishop Rozanski.

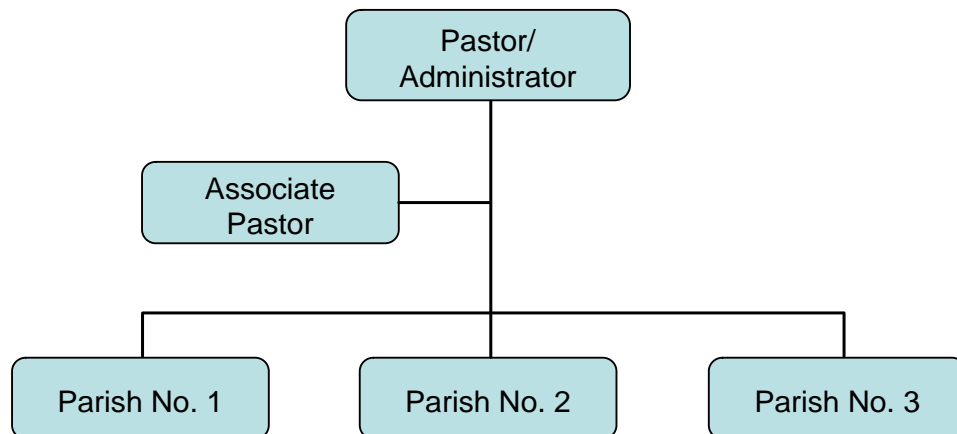


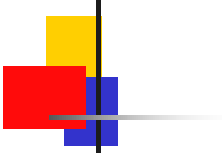
## Definitions

- Pastor: Role includes pastoral duties, managing human resources and administration. The Pastor is generally in charge of the parish.
- Associate Pastor: Priest who shares pastoral duties with the pastor, but is not responsible for managing human resources and administration unless his title also includes “administrator.” The associate pastor is called a parochial vicar and also must be a priest.



## Scenario A





## Assumptions for Scenario A

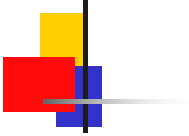
- There are 2 priests for 3 parishes, one pastor and one associate;
- The associate pastor will share the pastoral duties for all 3 parishes with the pastor;
- To facilitate the parish's operation each parish will hire an administrative type position to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish will decide the type of position needed, such as business manager, pastoral associate, etc.;
- The associate pastor is not available or able to assume full pastor duties for any or all of the 3 parishes;
- The current deacons will continue their current level of responsibility.



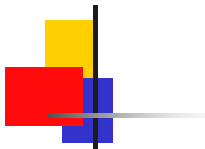
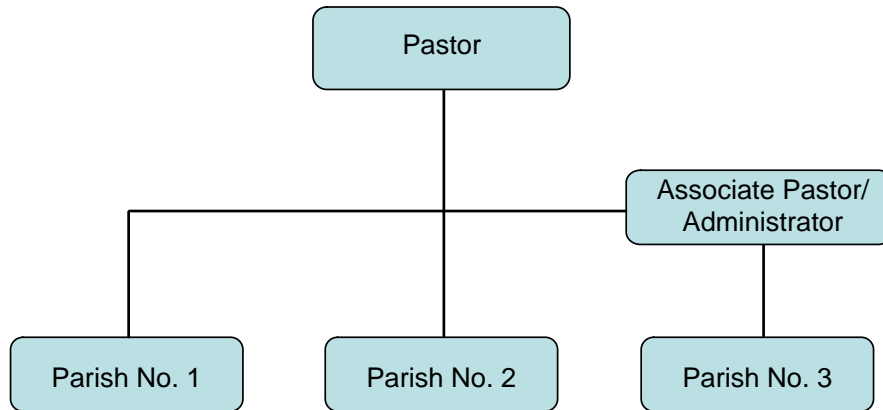
## Strengths of Scenario A

- Ensures equal priest coverage to all three parishes



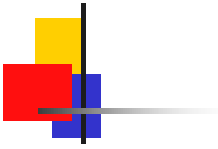


## Scenario B

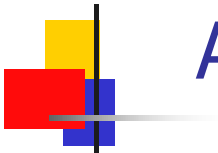
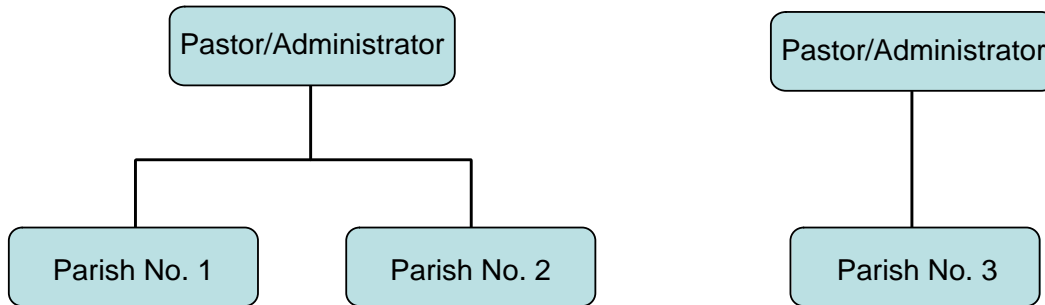


## Assumptions for Scenario B

- One Pastor with oversight over all 3 parishes;
- One associate pastor assumes administrative duties for one parish, lightening the load for the pastor;
- The associate pastor is experienced enough to take on this responsibility;
- Each parish will hire an administrative type staff person to supplement the priests' roles. Each parish will decide the type of position needed, such as business manager, pastoral associate, etc.



## Scenario C



## Assumptions for Scenario C

- The Bishop will determine which 2 parishes will share a Pastor;
- Each Pastor/Administrator will make decisions about the parish in collaboration and communication with the other Pastor/Administrator;
- The timing of this scenario will effect the decision of which parishes will share a Pastor.



## Discussion

- Small/large group guided discussion
  - Initial reactions
  - Questions



## **APPENDIX C Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Frequently Asked Questions About the South County Catholic Communities Cluster Planning Process**

- What is a cluster?

The cluster will be a permanent association of the three parishes of Southern Anne Arundel County. This association is being formed for the sharing of resources, first and foremost for the sharing of clergy personnel and, secondarily, for joint mutually beneficial projects. Currently, the three parishes (Our Lady of Sorrows in Owensville, Holy Family in Davidsonville and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Edgewater) are engaged in a planning process to establish this association which will be called “Catholic Communities of South County.”

- Why do we have to go through this Planning Process?

Bishop Rozanski tasked the three parishes with drawing up a plan to make sure the sacramental life of each parish continues for all 3 parishes when we lose a pastor. Later this Fall the planning team will present our plan to Bishop Rozanski for approval.

- What is the goal of the Planning Process?

To provide quality pastoral care for the spiritual and physical needs for each of the three Catholic Communities in South Anne Arundel County with a reduced number of priests.

- Who is involved in this Planning Process?

There are representatives from each parish on the planning team that have been meeting at least monthly over the past year at the three parishes to formulate this plan. This team has been chosen from the parish staff and the Pastoral Council. Pastors and Deacons are present as well.

- What is the role of the planning team?

The team does the early thinking about how to accomplish the cluster goals and is the conduit of ideas and information between parishes. The team discusses the best way that the parishes can work together, formulates these ideas into recommendations, and presents information and updates to each of the parishes regularly.

- How will it affect our parish?

The parishes will remain intact and individual. The intention is that no parish will be dissolved or combined into another. Masses and the sacraments will be available at each parish. Some adjustment may be made to schedules at a later date, but all three parishes will have a sufficient number of Sunday masses celebrated at each location for the needs of the congregation.

All three parishes will continue to determine their respective parish staffing needs.

## CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF SOUTH COUNTY

- When will this cluster be initiated?

The exact time for the loss of a priest is unsure, but it will happen within the next 3 years. The number of priests is diminishing in our Archdiocese and throughout the United States. As a consequence, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore is having difficulty placing available priests in all of its parishes.

- What has the committee accomplished?

We have carefully examined the important studies and background materials, including *The Hope That Lies Before Us*. We have met monthly as a planning group; we have reviewed the successes and challenges of other processes in the Archdiocese; we have defined several parish scenarios, the roles of pastors and the people involved. We have met with all three parish staffs as a group, and all three Pastoral Councils as a group. This has resulted in a proposal that is ready for presentation to the parishioners.

- How can I be involved?

You can pray for the process. You can support the recommendations and help us educate all of our parishioners about the opportunities we face. There are numerous ways in which you can volunteer at your parish to keep things alive and running smoothly.

For further information, please contact a member of the planning team.

## APPENDIX D Process Timeline

