

Phase 2: Local Area Plan Report Form

To be completed by the Local Planning Area Facilitators.

E-mail completed report to the Office of Pastoral Planning: eneu@richmonddiocese.org by **May 31, 2008**.

A copy of this form can be downloaded from the Diocesan website

www.richmonddiocese.org/PlanningGuidelines.pdf

1. Local Planning Area: 4
2. Name of person completing this report: Neil Walsh
Phone # and e-mail address: 757-625-6763 x19, np.walsh@verizon.net
3. Describe staffing allocation changes to accommodate the reduction or increase of active priests for your local planning area in the next 5 years. Include the names of parishes that will be clustered and the model selected (reference a model included under "Cluster Models" page 29 or describe a model that your Local Planning Committee developed).
 - a. Planning Assumptions for Priests projected 2007 – 2012:
 - a. Total priests as of June 25, 2007 – Eight (8)
 - b. Projected priests in 2012 – Six (6)
 - b. Cluster 1: St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague
 - a. Model III – Separate Parishes – One Pastor
 - b. There will be one priest assigned to this cluster

St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague are being reduced from two to one priest. The staffing allocation proposed under this approach would be Cluster Model III "Separate Parishes – One Pastor," with the exception that the Shrine would not have a church Pastoral Council, but would retain a Finance Committee and representative on the Coordinating Council. A Cluster Parish Coordinator would be hired as soon as the decision to cluster is final.

- c. Cluster 2: Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary's Bower's Hill
 - a. Model III – Separate Parishes – One Pastor
 - b. There will be two priests assigned to this cluster

Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary's Bower's Hill propose Cluster Model III, also known as "Separate Parishes – One Pastor." With this approach, each parish would maintain separate Finance and Parish Councils.

- d. Cluster 3: St. Therese and Good Shepherd
 - a. Model III – Separate Parishes – One Pastor and One Pastoral Coordinator
 - b. There will be one priest and one pastoral coordinator assigned to this cluster.

It is proposed that the best inter-parish collaboration at this time is the current arrangement of The Church of St. Therese and Church of the Good Shepherd – Model II, "Separate Parishes – One Pastor and Pastoral Coordinator." The pastoral coordinator at Good Shepherd will continue to lead and provide pastoral care in all areas, except sacramental ministry. Retired priests will continue to

be scheduled by the pastoral coordinator for as long as they are able. In the event that the pastoral coordinator is unable to arrange for a priest on a regular basis, it will be necessary for the pastor of both parishes to preside at two Masses each weekend at St. Therese, and preside at one Mass per weekend at Good Shepherd.

- e. Cluster 4: Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr
 - a. Model I – Separate Parishes – Coordinated
 - b. There will be two priests assigned to this cluster – no staffing changes required to accommodate

St. Stephen, Martyr and Prince of Peace propose Cluster Model I, also known as “Separate Parishes – Coordinated.” With this approach, both parishes would preserve separate pastors, Pastoral Consulting Committees, and Finance Councils.

- 4. Describe other changes that are needed to support the staffing changes proposed.

- a. Cluster 1: St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague

St. Mary Presentation and St. Jude would maintain separate Pastoral Councils, Finance Committee, and parish staff. Shrine of the Infant of Prague would have no council, rather a Finance Committee with the Chair acting as a representative to the Coordinating Council. The Shrine’s Sacraments would be handles by St. Mary Presentation or St. Jude. All parishioners of the cluster would have the option to attend Mass, preparation classes and Sacraments at either St. Mary Presentation or St. Jude.

- b. Cluster 2: Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary’s Bower’s Hill

A cluster coordinator and cluster council is already in place and fully functioning. Each individual parish would maintain their own administrative staff. The cluster would cooperate and share RCIA, Christian Formation, Music, and other ministries wherever possible.

- c. Cluster 3: St. Therese and Good Shepherd

The establishment of a Coordinating Council is envisioned. The Coordinating Council would be implemented at the beginning of the New Year (January 2009) once the proposed plan is accepted. We recommend an equal number of representatives from each parish on the council and it should contain chairs from both Finance Councils and Pastoral Councils. The Coordinating Council Chair for the first meeting will be the pastor.

- d. Cluster 4: Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr

A Coordinating Council comprised of representatives from both parishes will be considered as a means of facilitating cooperation between the parishes and identifying areas where inter-parish programs and services might be shared for the mutual benefit of parishioners from both communities. Increased cooperation is envisioned in the areas of: Peace and Justice, Pastoral and Elderly Care, Youth Coordinator, Ministries and Programs, Adult Formation, Bereavement

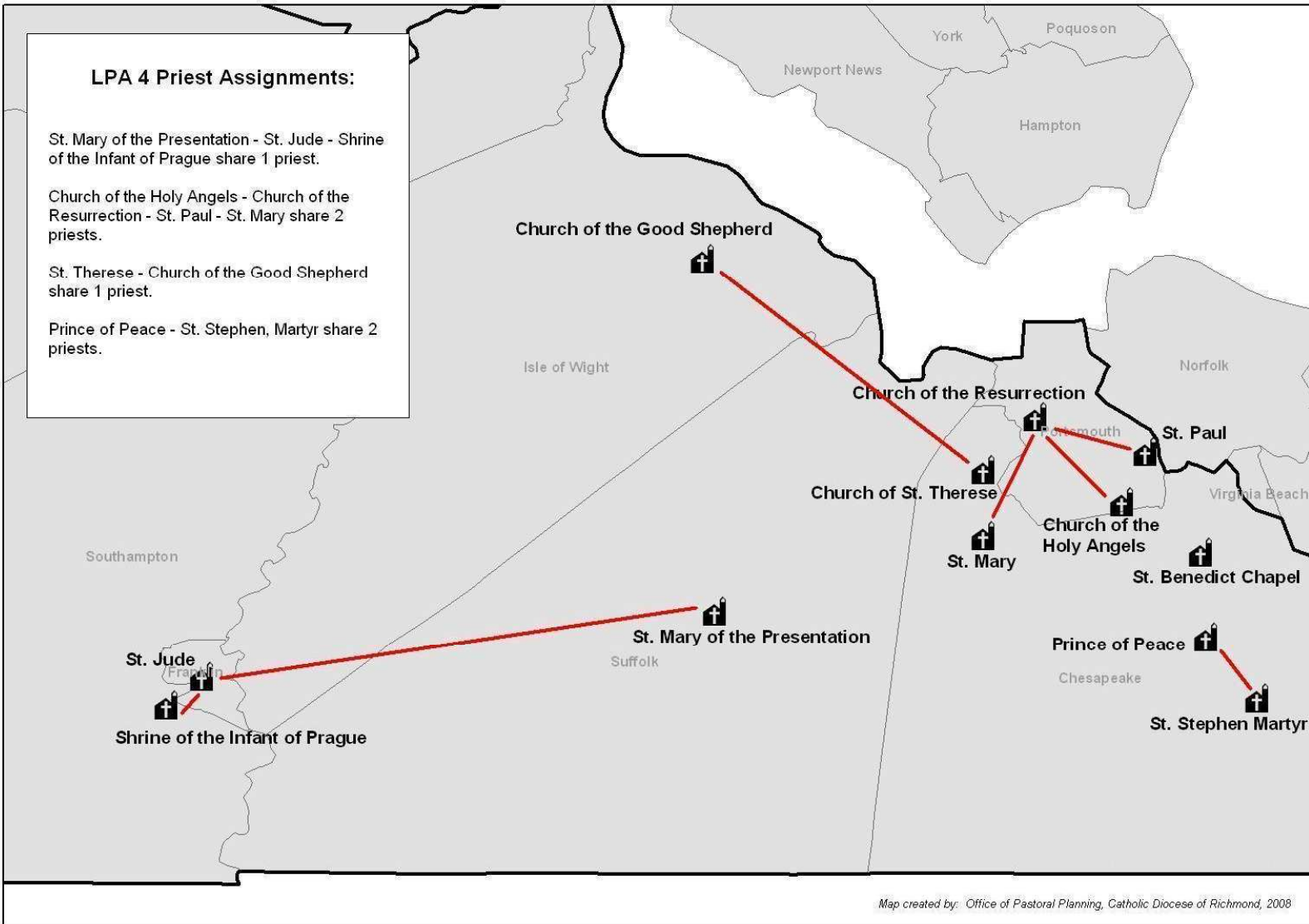
Ministry, as well as several other programs (e.g. K of C, Amazing Grays-Grand Group and Marion Rosary Group).

5. Describe other recommendations that will help parishes in your Local Planning Area provide better services and ministries through inter-parish collaboration.
 - a. Cluster 1: St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague
 - a. It is the hope that the cluster parishes will work with the Coordinating Council and the Cluster Coordinator to find ways to grow the parishes together.
 - b. Cluster 2: Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary's Bower's Hill
 - a. Development of a formal listing of cluster Masses.
 - b. Proactive volunteers are required to support the various aspects of all cluster ministries, as well as dedicated staff.
 - c. Establishment of a phone process initiated by calling the parish office that initiates pastoral or ministerial service/support.
 - c. Cluster 3: St. Therese and Good Shepherd
 - a. Remuneration for volunteers who must travel in support of clustered parish activity. The stipend amount should be standardized and agreed upon by the cluster parishes. Of note: in the case of Good Shepherd and St. Therese, the travel time is one hour – 30 minutes each way.
 - b. Develop each cluster Coordinating Council early in the implementation stage. Establishing the Coordinating Council will begin the constructive dialogue and foster a collaborative relationship between the several parishes. A good relationship is essential. Cluster 3 recommends equal numbers of cluster parish representatives on each Coordinating Council, including the chairs of both Finance Councils and Pastoral Councils with formation complete by January 2009.
 - d. Cluster 4: Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr
 - a. There are many occasions that require the unscheduled services of a priest, frequently resulting in multiple priests showing up for the same emergency. Developing a local coordination process to receive calls for service/support should result in efficiencies that: 1) ensure those in need get a priest as quickly as possible and 2) reduce the likelihood that multiple priests will respond to the same request.
 - b. Better utilization of available deacons to periodically assist with Mass.
 - c. Further development of "Community Life" events among clustered parishes to allow communities to develop a unique "bond" within their respective clusters.
 - d. Establishment of strong Coordinating Councils comprised of energetic and committed individuals.
6. If your Local Planning Committee did not reach consensus on these recommendations, please describe how closer your group is to consensus and explain the minority position and/or points of disagreement.
 - a. Cluster 1: St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague reached consensus on these recommendations. The representatives from the Shrine felt that this

- cluster would benefit from a deacon and while the other representatives agreed, they did not believe it possible.
- b. Cluster 2: Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary's Bower's Hill reached consensus on these recommendations.
 - c. Cluster 3: St. Therese and Good Shepherd reached consensus on these recommendations.
 - d. Cluster 4: Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr reached consensus on these recommendations.
7. Please include any other information that will assist the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Commission in evaluating your Local Plan (i.e. support by parish leadership, special challenges, etc.).
- a. Of note: Local Planning Area 4 has experience with two of the proposed models in place: Four (4) clustered parishes for three years (Cluster 2) and the pastor and pastoral coordinator model for eight years (Cluster 3).
 - b. Local Planning Area 4 respectfully requests that the diocese add longer range planning as a future commission. Such planning would be in addition to the 5-year incremental adjustments of the current plan. It is acknowledged that 5-year planning focused on inter-parish collaboration is essential to address the near term shortfall in active diocesan priests. Moreover, we view as essential the regular update and re-evaluation of that plan to reflect changing trends, actual experiences, and lessons learned. It is our view that longer-range planning would enhance an LPA cluster's capacity to assess options viable only within the framework of a 10, 15, or 20-year timeframe. Consolidation of parishes, divestiture of property, and new facility construction are several examples of planning that require a longer, more strategic, perspective. Other variables such as LPA boundary determination, cluster arrangements, staffing requirements, and distribution of clergy would also benefit from longer-range planning as well. It is recommended that the diocese develop a long-range plan that projects at least 15 years into the future to better allow for local planning that includes the broader range of planning options when the periodic review and update of this 5-year plan takes place.
 - c. Cluster 1: St. Mary Presentation, St. Jude, and Shrine of the Infant of Prague
 - a. The seating at St. Mary's Suffolk is insufficient to support only one Mass per weekend. Currently they have two. St. Jude and the Shrine both have one Mass. The pastor will have four Masses per weekend with significant distances between parishes. This cluster will require special dispensation from the bishop that one pastor can say four Masses per weekend.
 - b. Cluster 1 is concerned about how one pastor can have three growing parishes that are so far apart. The transit times are 32 minutes from St. Mary to St. Jude, 37 minutes to the Shrine, and at least 40 minutes between the Shrine and St. Jude.
 - d. Cluster 2: Holy Angels, Resurrection, St. Paul, and St. Mary's Bower's Hill
 - a. The Portsmouth cluster parishes are excited about remaining as previously clustered. The cluster has grown spiritually and understands each parish's strengths and weaknesses.
 - b. Parish staffs coordinate and work within a cluster staffing arrangement today, to include outreach initiatives within the local communities.
 - c. Portsmouth cluster would like to retain the Spanish Mass at Holy Angels, noting that attendance for this Mass has doubled in the past year. Additional help with this important outreach ministry to the Spanish-speaking community would be welcomed.

- e. Cluster 3: St. Therese and Good Shepherd
 - a. Parish leadership, councils, and parishioners at large have agreed to the proposed plan.
 - b. Diocesan dialogue (i.e. presentations/formations) is requested to update clustered parishes in the new structure and to share helpful information from within the diocese.
- f. Cluster 4: Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr
 - a. Feedback from the Prince of Peace and St. Stephen, Martyr communities has been constructive. Given the relative geographic proximity of the parishes (<5 miles), similarities in demographics, cultures, ethnic identities, parish traditions, economic and spiritual vitality, it is viewed that enhanced cooperation between the parishes could be spiritually enriching and beneficial for both communities.
 - b. All indications are that the parish and parish leadership are in agreement and feel positive about such collaboration.
 - c. In collaborating with various ministries, financial responsibilities will need to be established for each parish.
 - d. Deacon assignment should be assessed and examined for efficiencies across LPA 4.

Map Showing Inter-Parish Collaboration for LPA 4



Map created by: Office of Pastoral Planning, Catholic Diocese of Richmond, 2008

