

Brothers and Sisters,

As you may remember our parishes began the *Connected in the Spirit* process with the New Albany and Tell City Deaneries in late 2015. The process, in a nutshell, was asking parishes to take an account of where they are and reflect on how best they can have vibrant parishes moving forward. Recommendations by the Archdiocesan Planning Commission were made to the Archbishop in late 2016 with the expectation that the Archbishop would make a decision in early 2017. This was put on hold when Cardinal Tobin was announced as the next Archbishop of Newark in November 2016. Archbishop Thompson has now had an opportunity to look at the recommendations, but before he makes any final decisions he wishes to have a listening session in each deanery. The New Albany Deanery listening session will be Tuesday January 30th at 6 pm in Providence High School's Auditorium and you are invited to attend. You will notice in the recommendations that it is suggested that Sacred Heart and Saint Augustine remain linked parishes. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

God Bless,
Father Marcotte

Recommendations to Archbishop Thompson from the Archdiocesan Planning Commission

NOTE: These are NOT Final Decisions

New Albany Deanery

Mergers

St. Peter, Harrison County to be merged into St. Joseph, Corydon

Most Precious Blood, New Middleton to be merged into St. Joseph, Corydon

The rationale from the planning commission for this recommendation is:

“We make these recommendations based on the goals and criteria of Connected in the Spirit established by the Archbishop, their own parish study and Parish, Cohort and Archdiocesan data. Our thinking is also based on their desire and ours to have a strong Catholic presence in the area: While there is a strong desire to stay as they are the future does not show continued growth in this part of the county; the reliance on priests from St. Meinrad is getting more difficult as they are not sending that many priests into parish ministry as they have in the past; it is important that the parishes be less parochial and more cooperative with other parishes in their area as a show of collegiality and serve the parishioners more effectively; sharing of resources allows for continued growth in cooperation; no RCIA, little or no catechesis, no or little social outreach at Precious Blood and St. Peter parishes is a cause of concern; there have only been three baptisms at St. Peter and one baptism at Precious Blood in the last 5 years; there have been 18 funerals at St. Peter and six at Precious Blood in the five-year period; Most Precious Blood is relying on bequests to balance the budget which is not sustainable; between 2000 and 2010, the number of Catholics has declined by 30% in Harrison County while the population increased by nearly 15% in the same time period.”

Linkages

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville continue to be linked with St. Augustine, Jeffersonville

St. Bernard, Frenchtown continue to be linked with St. Michael, Bradford and with St. Joseph, Marengo

St. John the Baptist, Starlight to be linked with St. Mary of the Annunciation, Navilleton

St. Michael, Charlestown continue to be linked with St. Francis Xavier, Henryville

Partnerships

Holy Family, New Albany to be partnered with Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany and with St. Mary of the Annunciation, New Albany and with St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

St. Joseph, Corydon to be partnered with St. Mary, Lanesville

St. John the Baptist, Starlight to be partnered with St. Mary of the Annunciation, Navilleton and with St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyd Knobs

St. Michael, Charlestown to be partnered with St. Francis Xavier, Henryville and with St. John Paul II, Sellersburg

Recommendations to Archbishop Thompson from the Archdiocesan Planning Commission

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Tell City Deanery

Mergers

St. Martin of Tours, Siberia to be merged into St. Isidore the Farmer, Perry County

The rationale from the planning commission for this recommendation is:

“We make these recommendations based on their own study and concepts found on their Cohort Evaluation, Suggestion and Response Forms: Their desire and ours to have a strong Catholic presence in their area now and in the future; the steadily declining number of registered families at both St. Isidore and St. Martin of Tours; minimal sacramental participation (Baptisms, Confirmations, and Marriages) at St. Martin; their close geographic proximity; the fact that they are unnecessarily duplicating efforts by having stand-alone programs and trainings for catechists and liturgical ministers.”

Linkages

St. Augustine, Leopold will continue to be linked with Holy Cross, St. Croix

St. Meinrad, St Meinrad will continue to be linked with St. Boniface, Fulda

St. Michael, Cannelton to be linked with St. Pius V, Troy, St. Mark, Tell City and St. Paul, Tell City

Partnerships

St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad to be partnered with St. Boniface, Fulda and with St. Isidore the Farmer, Perry County