

**Elmira Planning Team  
Wednesday, September 14, 2016  
Minutes**

**Present:** Lorie Brink, Fr. John DeSocio, Amy Finnerty, Armand Fusco, Melissa Kalec, Fr. Scott Kubinski, Tom Kubus, Ed Looney, Bill McCarthy, Mary Montanarella, Philomena Mrkus, Dave Quinn, Karen Rinefierd, Jeff Schmidt, Michael Smith,

**Excused:** Fr. Rick Farrell

<u>Action Items</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>By When</u>
• Ensure each church is counting Mass attendance weekly	Pastors	Ongoing
• Next Bulletin Article	Karen	9/28
• Get Parish Ministry Assessment in Survey Monkey	Karen, Tom	9/30
• Gather Elmira poverty statistics	Amy	10/5
• Create slides for 10/17 meeting (details in minutes below)	Karen, Dave, Tom, Lorie	10/5
• Re-formulate pastoral planning goal	Philomena	10/5
• Develop a Planning Prayer for Wisdom	Fr. Scott, Mary	10/5
• Develop petitions to be used in Prayers of the Faithful at weekend Masses	Mary	10/5 and ongoing
• Work with Parish Life Committee for 10/17 refreshments	Mary	10/12
• Test and enhance St. Charles Hall sound system	Fr. Scott, Melissa, maintenance staff	10/17
• Gather job descriptions for ministerial and administrative/support staff positions	Pastors, Dave	10/30
• Determine options for seniors who are not computer literate to take the survey at each parish	Pastors, pastoral council reps with Pastoral Councils	10/31
• Send Karen a list of everything parishes currently share	Mary	

**Welcome, introductions, opening prayer by Fr. Scott Kubinski**

**Any questions/input since our first meeting?**

- ***When Fr. John retires, can the other pastors be moved?*** Yes, but it depends on the parish configuration chosen. We will discuss this more at the October meeting when we look at the implications, advantages, and disadvantages of possible models.
- The article in the Catholic Courier about the Ovid/Interlaken/Trumansburg planning process is very good.
- South Deanery update: There was an informational meeting with all priests and other ministerial personnel this past Monday afternoon. The presentation is at <http://opr.dor.org/resources/deanery-demographics/demographic-reports/south-deanery-demographics-and-powerpoint-presentations/>. Ss. Isidore and Maria Torribia (with churches in Addison, Bradford, and Campbell) is dealing with the possible closing of a cheese plant.
- ***There appears to be an underlying assumption that Holy Family School will stay in the same location--is that true?*** This question was raised via email by one of the members of the planning team. Karen thought the entire planning team should receive the same response. The diocesan Vicar General and CFO have indicated that Holy Family School will remain on the St. Mary's campus. This position takes into account the geographic spread of the three Elmira

parishes and the research recently done regarding alternative school locations. The planning process being coordinated by this planning team will not directly focus on the school which is healthy and viable. That being said, one of the areas for Elmira-wide planning is to enhance the physical surroundings of the school, but the Holy Family administration and the diocesan school office would make any decisions with input from the planning team and school personnel/families. A follow up question was: ***Could there be compelling information that would change this decision?*** Karen's response was "yes." [After further conversations after this planning team meeting, there may be more flexibility regarding the location of the school than previously discussed.]

- We have a commitment to the Southside.

### **Review/modify draft timeline and action steps**

#### Determining a parish configuration/priest model to recommend to Bishop Matano:

- We will focus on this first.

#### Sacramental and ministerial responsibilities beyond the parishes:

- Once we have a preference for parish configuration/priest model (and maybe even later when we know what priests will be serving our parishes) we will focus on this area.

#### Determining weekend and weekday Mass schedules:

- We may need to do different versions (e.g. we don't know now if there will be a purchase offer for St. Charles Borromeo).
- We need to add music and demographics of each current Mass.
- Some but not all have been counting weekend Mass attendance every week all year. We need to count everyone except the priest (including children, choir, liturgical ministers, etc.)
- Currently Elmira has three 10:30 Masses plus 1 in Horseheads.
- Should a Mass schedule be tailored to serve the entire area or each parish?
- Mass schedule affects the Religious Ed program.
- People are open to change and realize the current Mass schedule needs to be reviewed. People loved having a 9:30 Mass at St. Casimir throughout the Summer.

#### Assess ministry needs

- Today we'll spend time on a ministerial assessment tool.

#### Re-align staffing

- We can start gathering job descriptions of current ministerial and administrative/support positions.
- We can start benchmarking staffing at similar parishes.

#### Long-term plan for building usage/capital repairs/selling properties

- Need to pay attention to how current buildings are used as well as associated costs and projected capital repairs.
- The Elmira parishes need a gathering space that is large and handicapped accessible. We have three locations currently: the St. Charles Borromeo church hall, the gym at St. Mary's, the former gym in the Faith Formation Center.
- Why are the October parishioner church hall meetings at St. Charles? Response: That is the only location with sufficient parking during the day.
- It was noted that some parishioners still think that the money from the sale of St. Anthony went to the diocese instead of to Blessed Sacrament. If/when St. Charles or any other building is sold, we will need to explain again that the money goes to the parish which owns the property.

- Smaller steps will be easier for people to take.

## **Preparation for 10/17 parishioner church hall meetings (2:00-4:00, 6:30-8:30)**

### Who will be at each meeting

- Afternoon and evening: Armand, Philomena, Dave, Mary, Ed, Bill, Fr. John, Fr. Scott, Mike, Karen, Tom
- Evening only: Melissa (although she may take vacation time to come in the afternoon), Jeff, Amy, Lorie
- We don't know Fr. Rick's availability because he is on retreat this week.

### Review outline of slides

- Welcome/introduction of planning team members/prayer
- Agenda and Purpose: **Karen will create slide**
- Elmira demographics: **Tom and Karen will pull together slides; Amy will get poverty stats from the school system.**
- Elmira Catholic parishes' trends and numbers: **Tom and Karen will pull together slides**
- Holy Family School—registrations, financial position: **Dave & Lorie to put together slides**
- Finances: **Dave will do slides**
- Diocesan-wide priest, deacon and lay ecclesial ministry demographics/projections: **Karen, Tom**
- Goal for pastoral planning: **Philomena re-write the goal to make it clearer.**
- Areas for planning and decision makers for each: **Karen, Tom**
- Questions/discussion: We will have a place at the entry with post-it notes for parishioners to write down questions. Notes will be taken at each parishioner meeting and available afterwards on the website. Questions which are not answered at the meeting will be responded to later on. Parishioner input is key.
- Closing prayer

Who will present each part of the powerpoint and facilitate at each meeting: We still need to determine roles.

### Logistics/details

- Setup: Karen, Tom & Dave (arriving 45 minutes before we begin)
- Sound system:
  - There is a sound system but some people who attended last night's meeting in the St. Charles Borromeo church hall said that it was hard to hear in the back. **Fr. Scott will ensure that the speakers are tested by our maintenance staff.**
  - **Melissa will bring portable mikes.**
- **Mary will work with the Parish Life Committee to provide some simple refreshments.**
- Setup theatre style.
- We agreed that there should be a common prayer for wisdom and guidance as we go through this planning process
  - Fr. Scott's opening prayer at this meeting was beautiful and could be adapted. **He and Mary will work to finalize a prayer** which we can use at the parishioner church hall meetings and throughout the planning process. The prayer could be used at meetings and printed on notecards for use by parishioners in their personal prayer.
  - **Mary will also work with those who write the intercessory prayers for each parish to develop one or more petitions which can be used at weekend Masses.**

## Ministry assessment tool and process

- We discussed the pluses and disadvantages of an online survey vs. a hard copy and who should complete it (i.e. offer it to all parishioners or just have pastoral council members respond).
- The decision was made to utilize an online survey through Survey Monkey. The diocesan Office of Pastoral Resources and Planning is intending to begin a subscription with unlimited responses. ***Karen and Tom will work with others in the diocesan Office to create the survey.*** Planning team members may be asked to complete a test survey to eliminate any bugs.
- All parishioners will be encouraged to complete the online survey. Concern was raised that those who are not computer literate would therefore potentially be left out. ***Each pastoral council will be asked to devise ways for its seniors to access the survey—e.g. have members with laptops available to help seniors after Masses or at other designated times.***
- We left it unclear whether the pastoral council would complete the survey prior to parishioners at large.
- It was noted that a discussion of survey results would be valuable at pastoral council meetings.
- Wide spread parishioner input is important and will reinforce that their input is needed and welcomed throughout this planning process.

## Communications

- Planning team members are asked not to share the content of our meetings with others until the planning team minutes are finalized. We will continue the process used after the first meeting: Karen and Tom send draft minutes out for everyone's review. It was agreed that the due date for review will be included in the subject line. Once the minutes are finalized they will be posted on the website and Karen will write a short summary for bulletins.
- It was agreed that action items should be listed at the top of the minutes.

## Other

- Mary noted that the three parishes already do many things together. ***She will send to Karen a list of everything the parishes currently share. Karen will forward to the group for additions.***
- We need a plan of how we look 5 years from now – with some assumptions (that could change) – and then start to work toward that vision.

**Next meeting: Wed., October 12, 7:00-9:00 pm**

## Agenda items

- Final preparations for 10/17 parishioner meetings
- Update on ministry assessment
- Parish configuration models: review/determine advantages and disadvantages

**Closing prayer: Intercessory prayers and the Our Father**