

# **ROUGH DRAFT**

## **I. Planning Steps Taken:**

- a. In the fall of 2015, Deanery Priests and Pastoral Coordinators were informed of the Long Range plan from Archbishop to have 1-3 less priests in the next 2-10 years in the North Seattle Deanery. An executive committee was formed with Fr. Bryan Dolejsi (chair), Fr. Brad Hagelin, Fr. Armando Guzman (at the time priest at St. Matthew), and Marti Lundberg (at the time pastoral coordinator at Christ the King).
- b. Demographics were gathered and sent to leadership. A Deanery convocation, conducted by the Catholic Leadership Institute and Fr. Dolejsi, occurred in February 2016 at St. Matthew. Roughly between 5-10 representatives from each parish attended: Demographics were provided in the large group setting and small group discussions occurred with reactions and input recorded for ongoing planning purposes.
- c. Roughly 20 proposals were drafted and brought to deanery meeting as follow up in March/April. Priests and Pastoral Coordinators expressed a desire in having time to discuss and have meetings with their own parishioners for input beyond advisory groups/staff. All were given until September to host such meetings and send in feedback.
- d. The executive committee received input from about 6-7 parishes during this time then met in early September to create a second round of proposals. These proposals were sent to pastors/coordinators for input prior to the Deanery meeting.
- e. Tangible proposals were discussed at Deanery meeting on September 23 with a great deal of input both emailed prior to meeting and at the meeting itself. This resulted in this edited and current document for consideration/proposals.
- f. Follow up discussions beyond this document are scheduled on the deanery level to find ways of potentially working in collaboration with other neighboring parishes around ministries such as youth ministry, young adult ministry, confirmation, baptism prep, marriage prep, etc.
- g. Over time we encourage parishes to look at consolidating masses or schedules for other possible sister parish relationships in the future.
- h. Two other larger proposals were brought up from various priests:
  - i. Consider bringing in more international priests/active senior priests in order to leave current parish/school structures in place.
  - ii. Consider strategically closing parishes/schools. many younger clergy feel strongly that the path of least resistance is a temporary fix, and that the writing on the wall is that half of our most generous donors will be dead in 10 years;

with the majority of parishes build in the Connolly era facing significant capital maintenance needs in 15-25 years, and the practice of the faith among Anglos and dependents of immigrants (Hispanics and Filipinos born in America) is declining at an alarming rate.

## II. Parishes/Ministry with No Change

- a. St. Luke: “suburban” size of parish/school and projected demographic growth.
- b. St. Andrew Kim: Cultural community serving Korean Catholics with their own priests/funding.
- c. Blessed Sacrament/UW Newman Center: parish canonically owned by Dominicans, “destination parish” that is large and able to staff Newman Center as well with priests.
- d. Our Lady of Fatima: Size of parish and school and geographical location in deanery.
- e. St. Margaret: Provide their own Polish priest.
- f. Carmelite Nuns: have been able to find ample priests for sacraments.

## III. Possible Proposals to Archbishop that would reduce current amount of priests in the Deanery (to be rolled out in a natural pastoral cycle of completion of Priest/Pastoral Coordinator term, retirement, ample planning/preparation time, etc.)

1. Assumption/St. Bridget share one priest/one school: 2 weekend masses and 2 weekday masses at each parish (1 of the weekday masses at Assumption would be for the school). Possible schedule: Saturday 5pm St. Bridget, Sunday 8am Assumption, 9:30am St. Bridget, 11:30am Assumption.
  - a. Pro:
    - i. Already share common governance of the school since roughly 1996. Only in recent years has the relationship been running “more smoothly” according to current pastor.
    - ii. Potential to share youth minister?
    - iii. Both churches have more capacity at their current masses although according to current pastor sizable increase at St. Bridget since new pastor arrival.
    - iv. Both parishes remain as individual parishes while collaborating with use of priest and school resources
    - v. Proximity of parishes and St. Bridget on ‘edge’ of the deanery so Assumption a natural fit.
    - vi. Models of transition and pastoral method available in other parts of the Archdiocese of Seattle (best practices and other parishes in similar models).

- vii. Flexible timing of potentially enacting this option.
    - b. Con:
      - i. Priest and possibly other staff sort out transition and pastoral presence at two locations.
      - ii. More 'work' (governance, meetings, administration, etc.) for the priest/staff.
      - iii. Mass times change impact local communities potentially resulting in a loss of parishioners.
      - iv. Disruption to local communities.
      - v. Possible concern over school enrollment.
      - vi. Unclear demands upon local priest in regards to Villa Academy sacramental needs and local hospitals (Children's and UW specifically).
2. St. Catherine shares one priest with EITHER St. Benedict or Our Lady of the Lake: 2 masses at each parish on the weekend. 2 weekday masses at each parish with one being a school mass. Many options on weekend mass schedule options. Current pastor of St. Catherine desires to remain at St. Catherine for pastoral consistency while potentially starting to share ministry/schedules/staff with neighboring parish.
- a. Pro:
    - i. Parishes and schools are generally similar in size and share similar ecclesiology.
    - ii. All church buildings have ample space to accommodate more parishioners at fewer masses.
    - iii. Potentially sharing parish staff resources, such as: pastoral coordinator, administrator, facilities, bookkeeper, youth minister, faith formation, etc.
    - iv. Geographically close (2-3 miles between parishes)
    - v. St. Benedict and Our Lady of the Lake both have a well-kept rectory. St. Catherine has no rectory.
  - b. Con:
    - i. Mass time transition- may lose some parishioners to neighboring parishes but demographics show those parishes could use more parishioners as well.
    - ii. Possible issues with collections\finances if shift from 3-2 masses but perhaps offset by sharing of costs for staffing?
    - iii. More demands on priest and potentially staff (governance, meetings, 2 schools, etc.).
    - iv. Parishes separated by major arteries such as I-5 and Lake City Way.
    - v. Currently rectory at St. Benedict is used for Vocation Office ministry.
3. Sacred Heart/St. Anne Covered by Redemptorist Priests

- a. Redemptorists continue to live in rectory at Sacred Heart with a mixture of active priest as pastor of Sacred Heart and perhaps 1-2 active senior/retired priests serving as “parish priests”/sacramental priests at St. Anne, Seattle.
- b. St. Anne’s continues to be run by a lay pastoral coordinator and maintains school. 1-2 senior/retired Redemptorist priests provide supply for weekend masses, school masses, some daily masses along with funerals/weddings, anointing of sick, confessions, etc. as needed.
- c. Sacred Heart works in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Seattle to consider best options around other buildings/property at Sacred Heart for revenue/renting. (Possible suggestions? Private school? CCS? Senior priest Housing? Other?).
- d. Redemptorist priests share daily mass scheduling at two parishes along with confessions before daily masses at Sacred Heart as pastoral resource for the downtown area.
- e. Both Sacred Heart and St. Anne may consider evaluating weekend mass schedules/quantity/needs of those in area, etc.
- f. Both Sacred Heart and St. Anne considering possibly petitioning to become part of the South Seattle Deanery.
- g. Pro:
  - i. Both parishes remain functioning while sharing priest resources. Retains Sacred Heart as a Catholic resource in the downtown and allows for continued ministry presence by Redemptorists in the Archdiocese of Seattle both at a specific parish and helping in local/nearby parishes.
  - ii. Both parishes are very open to exploring how they might collaborate in sharing staff and programs. These might include sharing Elementary Faith Formation staff and programs, Youth Minister and youth programs, Young Adult Ministry, sacramental prep programs and RCIA.
  - iii. Proximity as neighboring parishes.
  - iv. Current Diocesan priest ministering at St. Anne has been consulted and is open and supportive to whatever best serves the needs of the Archdiocese of Seattle, while stating that he does enjoy his ministry at the parish very much.
  - v. Allows current Diocesan priest availability to help in other local parish in the Archdiocese in part time capacity while continuing to serve as Judicial Vicar.
  - vi. Redemptorist priests can help one another share responsibilities of serving various (6?) nursing homes in the parish boundaries.
- h. Con:
  - i. Technically does not create a structure to have “one less priest” in the Deanery although does engage active retired Redemptorists in a common

and shared endeavor allowing current Diocesan priest to be utilized in other locations.

- ii. Uncertainty of amount of active retired priests staying at Sacred Heart in the distant future?

4. North American Martyrs relocated to another parish. Either sharing the parish or have sole use of parish.

- a. Expressed areas of need are:
  - i. Own parish building for community that comes from various locations in the northern part of the Archdiocese of Seattle.
  - ii. Traditional church building with a parish hall.
  - iii. No school.
  - iv. Ample parking.
  - v. Near I-5.
- b. No parishes in the North Seattle Deanery currently meet the above requirements unless the Archdiocese wants to explore making a school into a “private” Catholic school that is independently run outside of the parish. Potentially explore other locations in the Archdiocese?
- c. Priests express openness to helping with High School or Hospital Chaplaincy as needed.
- d. Difficult for current parish community to buy or build new parish due to low percentage of fully employed parishioners (e.g. that are not full time mothers or children).
- e. Current parishioners come from zip codes in following deaneries: North Seattle 32%, Eastside 25%, South Seattle 9%, Snohomish 34%.
- f. Needed renewal of the “New Evangelization” of the Ballard area with very high projected growth. For various reasons there are currently more households in St. Alphonsus parish boundary (zip codes 98107 and 98117) that go to other parishes than go to St. Alphonsus.

**IV. Other Possible Pastoral Suggestions that were brought up from this process which would involve priest resources and different areas of ministry but would NOT result in a decrease in priest resources in the Deanery as currently structured.**

1. Blanchet High School chaplaincy: Strategically assign a priest with gifts/desire to be a part time/1 day a week chaplain for Blanchet High School (potentially from St. Benedict, St. Catherine, St. John or Our Lady of the Lake based off which parish remains an independent ministry with only three weekend masses). Priest would be available for school masses, confessions, retreat masses, advisory boards, possible classroom visits, and other ministry of presence such as athletic competitions, arts performances, school auction etc.

- a. Pro:
  - i. Provides consistent priest presence at large Archdiocesan Catholic High School.
  - ii. Connects students/families to local parishes as priest is local pastor.
  - iii. Provides a point of contact for other priests of the deanery.
  - iv. Blanchet would supplement some of priest salary (20%?) so their parish only need pay (80%) of priest salary.
  - v. Blanchet leadership has requested a priest chaplain and have finances to support.
  - vi. Helps promote vocations.
- b. Con:
  - i. Priest scheduling a regular day to go to High School.
  - ii. Balancing needs of own school/parish and High School.
  - iii. Being well-scheduled regarding with campus ministry and other priest resources in the deanery.
  - iv. If priest from St. John should be noted the large size of their school compared to other parish schools.

2. Christ the King: Moves to a weekend mass schedule of 2 Spanish masses and 2 English masses. Possible mass schedule (Saturday 5pm English, Sunday 8:30am Spanish, 10:30am English, 12:30pm Spanish).

- a. Pro:
  - i. Currently only 1 Spanish mass in entire deanery. With projected demographic growth and increase in Spanish speaking Catholics to the area, this provides another option for the current mass of 482 mass attendants filling church building to 97% capacity.
  - ii. Instead of starting another Spanish mass at another parish, this allows for only one priest in the deanery to be fluent in Spanish along with complementary lay staff.
  - iii. English speaking parishioners from Sunday morning mass could attend other English masses at Christ the King with ample church capacity, or attend other neighboring parishes that also have ample seating capacity available at that time.
  - iv. Brainstorm potential need/timing in collaboration with closest parishes with Spanish speaking ministry (e.g. St. Pius X, Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Brendan) and the Archdiocesan Hispanic Ministry office.
  - v. Possibly add one weekday Spanish mass as well in place of an English daily mass?

- b. Con:
  - i. Catholic Schools Office, Scott Bader and Hispanic Ministry need to be included in the conversation if the Deanery recommends to go forward with that option

- ii. Sunday morning mass goers will be displaced to another mass/possible parish.
  - iii. Collections may decrease if English speaking parishioners attend other parishes.
  - iv. Holding unity and balance between two communities to prevent “white flight” or projecting Christ the King as the “Spanish parish” for the deanery.
  - v. Possibly impact school enrollment?
  - vi. More Spanish ministry for priest/staff with perhaps less financial resources.
3. Hospitals: Create a consistent on call priest protocol for Northwest Hospital/Children’s Hospital throughout the deanery (organized by the Dean).
- a. In the past the pastor of Christ the King covered Northwest Hospital or his parish staff would try to find a priest to go. The Dominicans have traditionally covered the UW hospital calls although local pastor of St. Bridget has also been contacted for the UW and Children’s recently.
  - b. Redemptorist priest currently serving at Children’s Hospital as a part time chaplain one day a week.
  - c. Pro:
    - i. All priests share the responsibility equally and collaborate with local lay chaplains.
  - d. Con:
    - i. Requires a consistent updating of contacts/schedules by the Dean?
4. St. Matthew: consider adding a Mass in Vietnamese.
- a. Current Vietnamese American Pastor. Potential need and area of growth in deanery and add revenue to parish community. Potential of tension in sharing resources between different cultural communities?
  - b. Is there a way to project if we can indeed have the priest personnel to keep it going beyond Fr. Khanh Nguyen’s term? If we don’t have a reasonable positive response, then I am not sure that we could consider starting a Mass that can’t be sustained for more than a few years
5. St. Mark/Christ the King/St. Matthew Schools plan:
- a. Proposed that Catholic Schools Department in collaboration with local pastors and principals leads a strategic planning specifically for parish schools at St. Mark, Christ the King, St. Matthew and other neighboring parishes outside of our deanery such as St. Pius X. Potentially consult Catholic Schools study done roughly 15 years ago in the North Seattle Deanery?