

Pastoral Planning

Pastoral planning continues in our area of the Archdiocese, the last meeting was on November 10th and the next meeting will be January 26th, hosted at St. Francis. As noted in prior updates, the pastoral planning group consists of eight parishes, including St. Francis and OLMC, their pastors and two representatives from each parish. The eight parishes and pastors are as follows:

St. Francis (Neligh) – Fr. Pat

Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Tilden) – Fr. Pat

St. John the Baptist (Petersburg) – Fr. Tomaszewicz

St. Boniface (Elgin) – Fr. Vogel

St. Bonaventure (Raeville) – Fr. Vogel

St. Theresa (Clearwater) – Fr. Norman

St. Peter (Ewing) – Fr. Norman

St. John the Baptist (Deloit Township) – Fr. Norman

The parish representatives for St. Francis are Amy Baker and Bob Eggerling and for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel are Cindy Decker and Deb Navratil. I appreciate their willingness to be part of this as we continue pastoral planning efforts.

Importantly, a focus of the group is how the eight parishes can best continue with fewer priests, given the anticipated decline in active priests in the Archdiocese, likely only 2 priests at the eight parishes at some point in the future. The goal is for each parish to stay open and resulting then with only one weekend mass at each parish. The pastoral meetings in ways are focused on how to promote collaboration best to support the eight parishes with fewer priests.

As greater collaboration is hoped for between the parishes, Fr. Norman, Fr. Vogel and I will rotate some weekend masses over the next several months. On the weekend of Feb. 2/3, I will cover Fr. Vogel's masses at St. Boniface and St. Bonaventure, Fr. Norman will be covering my masses at St. Francis and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Fr. Vogel will cover Fr. Norman's masses at St. Theresa, St. Peter and St. John's. We will do another rotation the weekend of Feb. 23/24.

My anticipation is we will not rotate any over the Lenten Season. We may begin again after Easter, maybe about once a month or so. Our hope is this can be one step to help build familiarity with the priests, for us to get to know the surrounding parishes and to be a helpful foundation for future collaboration. Plus it will provide different homily styles!! Being the only priest here, that is a concern I have, there not being variety, different perspectives and approaches with homilies. I welcome any input or comment you may have. Please feel free to contact me or our parish representatives.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel pray for us!

St. Francis of Assisi pray for us!