



RESOURCE MANUAL FOR PARISH RESTRUCTURING

A R C H D I O C E S E O F D E T R O I T





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Published: May, 2008

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I. HISTORY OF PLANNING IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

Since its establishment as a diocese March 8, 1833, the Archdiocese has faced continual change within the Church and the wider civic society. A steady stream of immigrants from various European, Hispanic, Mid Eastern and Asian cultures, as well as urban sprawl have all greatly impacted the Archdiocese.

Due to shifting populations, in 1989, 31 parishes closed. Immigrants continued to arrive, and urban sprawl continued as city and ring suburban populations moved to outlying areas.

In 1994, the Council of Vicars and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council made Vicariate Pastoral Planning one of our highest priorities. It was seen as a healthy channel to ensure planning would happen from the parish and vicariate level and not just from “the top down.”

In 2004 the *Together in Faith* process was designed with three major focus areas: (1) parishes and schools were asked to be **Mission-Minded** as they planned for ministry responding to the needs of all spectrums of the population. (2) **Developing Leadership**, both ordained and lay. (3) **Christian Stewardship**, a comprehensive plan to fully and fairly utilize human resources, talents and treasures.

During the *Together in Faith* process, all parishes and schools within the Archdiocese of Detroit were asked to assess their potentials and limitations, gifts and challenges. Such discussion never ends, in light of ever evolving needs and changes. The planning process put great emphasis on the local level—the parishes and their groupings as vicariates; from that local input, recommendations and timetables were formulated which respected the data regarding the number and age of available clergy, financial considerations and resources, as well as conditions of buildings and locations of schools. Literally thousands of people gave of their time and insight to help shape the future of our local Church.

We must always be ready to consider new challenges and new opportunities. With continued population shifts, reduced or changed employment opportunities, fewer priests, changes in ministry needs, and growth in immigration, some areas of the Archdiocese need new parishes and schools, while in other areas, there is need for better sharing of resources.

The *Together in Faith* process revealed some changes needed across the entire Archdiocese. Some parishes are clustering, merging or being closed (suppressed). These changes cause great pain, and those most affected are experiencing grief. In several other areas, communities are exploring the possibility of starting new parishes. This Parish Restructuring Manual has been developed to assist parishes in these transitions.

II. THE PROCESSES FOR PARISH RESTRUCTURING

The *Together in Faith* process required parishes and schools to assess their current and future status and vicariates were to identify the parishes that should change through clustering, merging, consolidating, suppression or building.

To provide as much guidance and support as possible, the Archdiocese of Detroit has put together procedures to assist parish leadership as they move through this process.

THEOLOGY OF CHANGE

Change is an unavoidable part of life; at times, we welcome it and at other moments, we fear it. *Together in Faith* has challenged us to come to terms with change on many levels – in our hearts, in our families, in our communities of faith and in the civic arena. For people of faith, openness to change is a vital part of hearing the Good News and living as disciples of Christ Jesus.

When facing change the first challenge is *discernment of God's will*. *Discernment* requires us to ask whether the change is good and necessary. Some things, such as Church doctrine and teaching cannot change. Other things, such as Church discipline and some structures, may change depending upon the circumstances and situations. Discernment, study, and honest dialogue are necessary whenever we face potential change in the Church. After we have gone through *discernment* about any potential change, the second challenge is *openness to implementing necessary changes*.

Many of our pastors, clergy, lay professional ministers, support staffs, and lay leadership will experience new configurations of parish life in the future. The key components for facilitating change in the structure of a parish community are prayer, vision and leadership. The pastoral letter, "*The Journey Before Us*," confirms that:

- Since change is ongoing, for the health and well-being of the Church, we need to be discerning and open in a spirit of prayer.
- No one parish or school can function apart from the rest of the Archdiocese. Each of our parishes and schools has gifts to offer and needs the support and expertise of other parishes and schools. No parish – no matter how large or financially strong – is exempt from the process.
- Well-trained, competent leadership—clergy, religious, and lay—is a critical building block for the Church of the future.
- Growth and diminishment, change and transformation make sense only against the backdrop of the Death-Resurrection of Jesus Christ, which we experience and celebrate daily in the Holy Eucharist.
- The Church is a spiritual reality, a communion for the sake of mission, which has visible expression in and through parishes, schools, and institutions. Changes of external structures are intended to build up, sustain, and renew our enduring commitment to share together in Christ's three-fold mission as priest, prophet and shepherd ruler.

Change in the organizational structure of the current parish may be clustering, merging, and/or closure (suppression) of parishes or opening (erection) of new parishes. Please note the sequence or order of these terms and their meaning:

- **Clustering**—two or more parishes, remaining somewhat independent, share a pastor—a first step in a process which may lead to a **merger** of parishes as one entity with one site (or with multiple locations with outreach centers and/or chapels for special/occasional purposes). Eventually, according to financial circumstances and appropriate ways to ensure pastoral care, there could even be reason to move toward the actual closing of a Church building or suppression of a parish.
- Conversely two large parishes could share a priest pastor for a specific length of time if individual pastors were unavailable. Staff and leadership would remain separate, but seek areas for collaboration. Once a priest became available, each parish would be assigned its own pastor and the cluster would be dissolved.
- Finally a vicariate may discern a need for a new parish to ease overcrowding of existing parishes, and/or in response to projected demographics. In this instance parishes work together to form a new community with the ultimate goal of erecting new church buildings.

KEY ELEMENTS OF RESTRUCTURING

The restructuring of parish communities should be “mission driven”, not “survival driven.” A mission driven process is grounded in prayerful discernment, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It embraces resistance, anxiety and potential barriers by recognizing the giftedness and difference in each other. No parish, cluster, merger, closing or opening is identical. Every parish community has its own individual personality that reflects the history, ethnicity, mission, values, and liturgical style of the members who share a common faith tradition. Restructuring identifies the best practices of each parish to develop something new by combining the ways of each. The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate identifies eight key elements for restructuring:

- **Set Goals** It is important to clearly distinguish between goals and strategies, between mission and structure. Develop a list of elements of a Sacramental, Strategic and Sustainable parish so that pastoral care, not priest availability, becomes the basis for making decisions.
- **Provide Leadership** Effective reorganization requires leadership of the Archbishop and his staff. Then it extends to active leadership at the parish level. Support and training for those involved in planning and implementing parish change is essential.
- **Adequate Preparation** Sometimes described as “planning to plan,” this step includes the work of gathering information, consulting on the design of the process, establishing procedures and criteria, and setting a timeline.

- **Educate the People** Provide information to help parishioners understand the need for reorganization: data about priests and parish life and facilities, a “theology of mission,” the role of lay leadership and ministry, and the parameters for what is possible.
- **Collaborate and Consult** The word most commonly used in advice about parish reorganization is “involve.” This process should include parishioners and the presbyterate as active and equal participants.
- **Move at a Deliberate Pace** There should be sufficient time for meaningful participation before making the final decisions and for the process of transition when changes are implemented.
- **Prepare for Emotional Difficulty** Every transition requires a parish letting go of something that is cherished, and this involves pain.
- **Remember the Importance of Prayer** For both bishops and parishioners, prayer is vital!

Adapted from The Cara Report Vol. 9, No. 4 Spring 2004

These are suggested ways to build dialogue, develop a plan and lead a community to new life through restructuring. Leadership is encouraged to adapt their own practices which reflect the communities which are transitioning together.

HOW TO USE THIS PARISH RESTRUCTURING MANUAL

This Parish Restructuring Manual is designed to serve as a step by step guide for the clustering, merging, closing or opening of parishes within the Archdiocese of Detroit. Pastors, clergy, religious, and lay leadership will find invaluable resources within each section of the manual. Within it also can be found the authorized procedures for clustering, merging, closing, and opening new parishes.

ARCHDIOCESAN CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

The Archdiocese of Detroit provides support and resources for pastors, religious, and lay leadership in clustering, merging, closing, and opening new parishes. In the first addendum you will find the names, phone numbers, and web addresses of Archdiocesan contacts who can answer questions regarding established processes, time frames, etc. The contact persons are available as support and are committed to making the transition processes within your parish successful.

If a parish that is going through a restructuring (clustering, merging or closing) has a school, leadership should contact the Office for Catholic Schools and the Department of Education for assistance.

OTHER RESOURCES

The Archdiocese of Detroit offers workshops and seminars to support parishes that may be experiencing change due to the transitions of pastoral leadership, or the forming of new parish structures through clustering, merging, closing or opening. Available workshops and/or seminars are: staff development, pastoral planning, leadership training and conflict management at the parish and vicariate levels.

COMMUNICATION

Open and honest communication is a key component for any transition to be successful. Throughout this process, whether the end result will be a new cluster, merger, suppression or erection of a new parish, the following should be implemented at every step:

- Ongoing parish communication between the pastor, staff, parish pastoral council, the vicariate pastoral council and the Archdiocese of Detroit;
- A special communication committee for the process;
- In addition to bulletin inserts, the pastor sends regular (monthly, quarterly) update letters to registered parishioners;
- Reinforce information at every step through communication at weekend liturgies;
- Send copies of all written communications to the Archdiocese of Detroit, Department of Parish Life and Services.

PREPARATION

Before a decision is made of whether parishes are going to transition, it is important that the *Together in Faith* information be reviewed at the parish and vicariate level. This step includes three very important activities and is designed to provide vicariate leadership an opportunity to complete intensive pastoral planning. Checklists and worksheets to guide you through these steps are available in the Addenda.

STEP ONE Facilitated discussion to study and discuss the need for change. The parishes and vicariate study the available data, including the Parish Evaluation Inventories and final *Together in Faith* plan, Archdiocesan demographics and sacramental data, financial information, building audits, priest retirement ages and availability, etc.

Education of, and **Communication** with, staff and parishioners at every step is critical.

COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION

STEP TWO Formulate Recommendations regarding possible changes for parishes within the vicariate. This includes developing different scenarios to respond to challenges or opportunities facing parishes.

If a potential cluster is identified, each parish should complete a parish profile and share the results with each other. They should also consider which model of clustering is appropriate for their situation.

Again, **Education** of, and **Communication** with, staff and parishioners at every step is critical.

IMPLEMENTATION

STEP THREE Pastoral planning continues in Step Three. This step is designed to put into motion the recommendations from Step Two. The following sections detail possible models for restructuring, along with implementation steps.

A complete outline, worksheets, and checklists to assist in the successful completion of Step Three are available in the Addenda, and from Resources.

III. CLUSTERING TWO OR MORE PARISHES

When the recommendation in Step Two is to cluster two or more parishes, the following procedures are to be followed. These procedures are designed to ensure a successful cluster.

DEFINITION OF A CLUSTERED PARISH

Clustered Parishes have one priest pastor. The priest may live within the boundary of only one parish and serve one or more parish communities as pastor of each. Each community has its own Finance Committee (Stewardship Commission), and may or may not have geographical boundaries. In addition, according to Particular Law, each parish has its own Parish Pastoral Council (See Synod 69 Statute 1, Canons 526, 518, 533, 536).

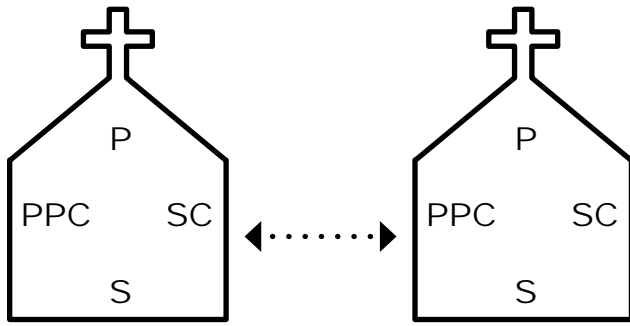
GOAL

The clustering of parishes allows the identity of each parish to be respected and maintained; finances also remain separate. Through good stewardship of resources by coordinating ministerial activities, the sharing of staff, program expenses and capital resources, parishes can sustain vibrant and life-giving communities.

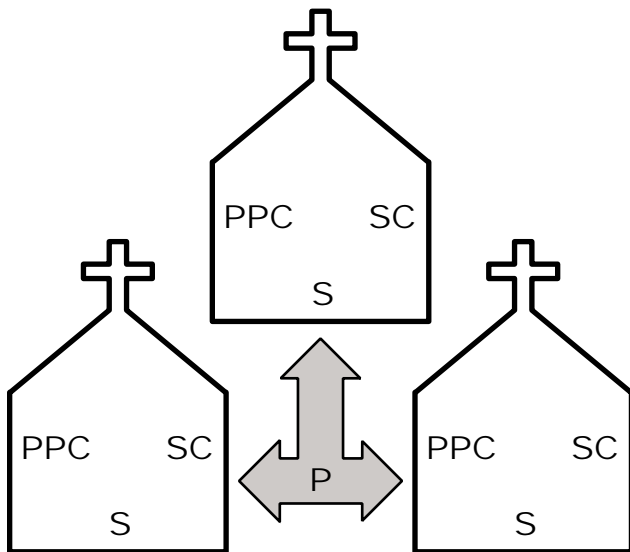
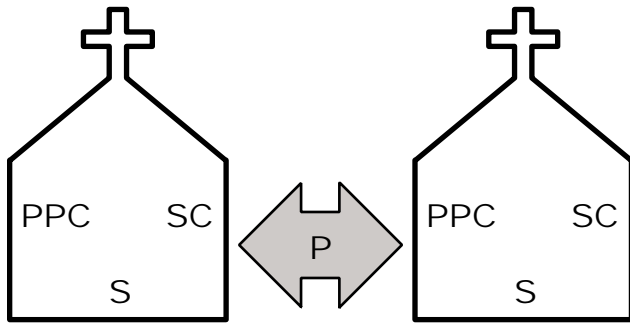
IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL CLUSTERS

- Vicariate pastoral councils (VPCs) in consultation with parish pastoral councils (PPCs) will submit to the Archdiocese a listing of potential clusters that may be implemented within the next five – ten years, or upon the retirement, reassignment or illness of a pastor;
- The VPC will require each PPC to compile a parish profile. The profile will be shared in discussions at the PPC and VPC tables, which will result in potential collaborative relationships and/or future clusters;
- All parishes within the vicariate boundaries consider ways to share liturgical celebrations, resources and /or to develop shared programs;
- When a vacancy occurs in the absence of a vicariate plan the Archbishop, Auxiliary Bishops, and the Assignment Board may propose parishes for a cluster;
- Parish openings for pastor or pastoral staff will be listed as cluster assignments, except in the Temporary Cluster Model. See Addendum B.

COLLABORATION MODEL



CLUSTER MODELS



MODEL I

ALLIANCE COLLABORATION

- Each parish has a Pastor (P), Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), Stewardship Commission (SC), and Staffs (S), and maintain separate finances
- Parishes collaborate on certain programs
- Parishes are not contiguous or in the same vicariate
- Each parish may also cluster with a neighboring parish in their own vicariate

MODEL II

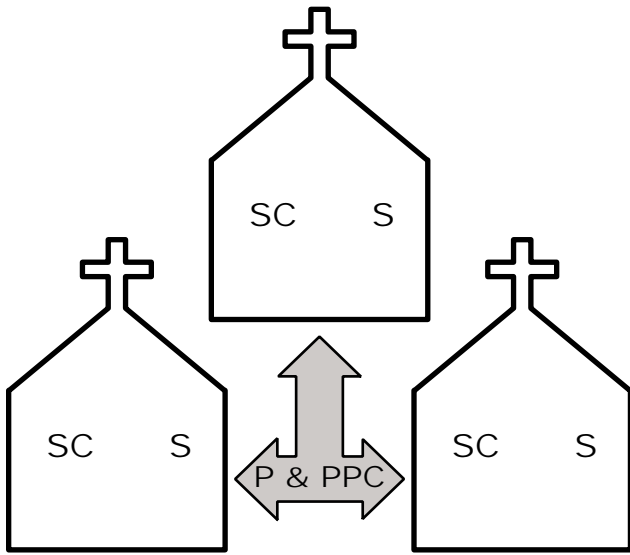
TEMPORARY CLUSTER

- There is one canonical Pastor (P) who provides leadership, sacramental and pastoral care for two parishes
- Each parish maintains separate finances and separate leadership structures: Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Stewardship Commission (SC) and Staff (S), which may meet occasionally to coordinate activities
- Parishes are contiguous and in (or move to) the same vicariate
- Once a priest becomes available, the parishes will each be assigned their own pastor and the cluster is dissolved, but continued collaboration is encouraged

MODEL III

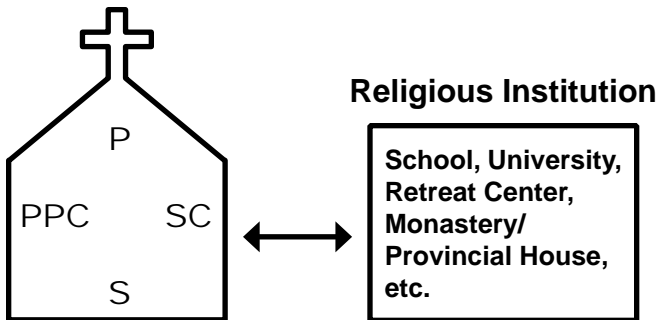
TRADITIONAL CLUSTER

- There is one canonical Pastor (P) who provides leadership, sacramental and pastoral care for two or more parishes
- Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC) meet together on a regular basis, eventually joining together as one
- Each parish maintains separate Stewardship Commissions (SC) and finances until they merge
- Staff (S) may work solely in one parish, some positions may be shared by all
- Parishes are contiguous and in (or move to) the same vicariate
- Eventually parishes may merge into one entity with one/more sites (see merge models)



MODEL IV TRANSITIONAL CLUSTER

- There is one canonical Pastor (P) who provides leadership, sacramental and pastoral care for two or more parishes
- Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC) join together immediately
- Commissions begin to combine
- Each parish maintains separate Stewardship Commissions (SC) and finances until they merge
- SC's meet quarterly together until the parishes merge
- Staff (S) may work solely at one parish, although most positions will be shared
- Parishes will combine some programs and activities
- Parishes are contiguous and in (or move to) the same vicariate
- Parishes eventually merge (see merger models)



MODEL V INSTITUTIONAL CLUSTER

- There is one canonical Pastor (P) who is a member of a Religious Order, who provides leadership, sacramental and pastoral care for one parish
- The Pastor is of the same order as the Religious Institution
- The parish maintains traditional leadership structures of a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), Stewardship Commission (SC) and Staff (S) and separate finances
- Parish is contiguous to the religious institution and in (or moves to) the same vicariate
- Eventually if the Religious Institution is unable to provide a pastor, the parish will merge or close (see merge models)

PREPARATION FOR CLUSTERING

Parishes should begin planning for clustering at least one full year in advance and a transition team from AOD Central Service Offices will work with the parishes to prepare for the clustering. This includes, but is not limited to: a financial audit, building audit and reviews of liturgical schedules, current and future staffing needs and parish calendars. In the case of necessity, the transition team will work with the clustering parishes as soon as possible, and throughout the first year.

- Parish leadership will come together with a facilitator in a series of meetings to:
 - Celebrate their history through prayer and dialogue
 - Review their parish profiles and determine their commonality in mission, worship, religious education and Christian service
- Staffs will meet together, using an outside facilitator at an independent site, to realize and recognize the gifts of all ministers and staff members.
 - Staffs will review the mission and vision statements of each parish and discuss how each person contributes to them
 - Staffs will identify areas for collaboration
- Leadership will develop a transitional plan to determine liturgical schedules, potential staffing needs and shared operational expenses to be submitted to the regional bishop and vicar for review and approval by the pastor elect.
- During the transitional process parish leadership will keep their congregations apprised of the cluster process through parish assemblies, parish bulletins and weekend announcements.
- The Vicariate Pastoral Council is made aware of and kept informed of the cluster as it progresses.
- Parish leadership will plan joint liturgical and social activities for the congregations to come together during the transition period.

PREPARATION FOR PASTORAL ASSIGNMENT

Every priest is asked to notify the Assignment Board of his intention to retire, renew his current assignment, or to request a change in the fourth of his six-year assignment. A pastor may request to become a cluster pastor if his parish has an established collaborative relationship with a neighboring parish. However it is preferable for a new pastor to be assigned to a new cluster. In emergency situations, an administrator may be assigned until a permanent assignment can be recommended.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS IN CLUSTERS

Parish leadership will determine the schedule for liturgies to ensure an adequate amount of time between liturgies. One liturgy for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter

Vigil, Christmas Eve, Christmas Midnight Mass, and Holy Days of obligation may be celebrated in clusters with parishes rotating as the host site, depending upon the size of the facilities and available number of priests. It should be noted that Holy Thursday and Good Friday must be celebrated in the same church site.

- Unless special factors come to bear, each priest serving the cluster celebrates not more than three Sunday Masses per weekend.
- The worship commissions of the cluster parishes will meet at least quarterly to plan combined liturgical celebrations (Reconciliation Services, Holy Days, Advent, Christmas, Lent, The Triduum, Devotions, Weekday Mass, etc.).
- Combined liturgical celebrations should reflect the cultural and ethnic traditions of each parish.

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Each parish in a cluster will maintain their separate legal and tax identity, and separate financial status. Parishes within a cluster should consider sharing resources and services, as well as combined purchasing, when possible, to reduce costs. In addition, the following Archdiocese of Detroit policies will be observed:

- Parishioners may contribute to their home parish by using their home parish envelope, and offering it at any of the parishes in the cluster.
 - There shall be an understanding in clusters that individuals may offer their marked envelope at any church of the cluster, with the understanding that the envelope will be forwarded to their home parish
 - Loose money stays at the parish in which it was contributed
- Each parish will file separate AOD Financial and Budget reports.
- Each parish will maintain separate LDP and MCC accounts.
- Each parish must maintain its own Stewardship Commission (i.e. parish Financial Council as stated in Canon 537)
- Each parish must maintain its own separate checking account and all revenue and expenses for that parish must go through its own checking or LDP account.
- While each parish in the cluster maintains a separate financial status, the Stewardship Commissions of the clustered parishes will meet at least quarterly to review the financial status of the parishes, to determine what costs can be shared jointly (i.e. staff, equipment and/or facilities, etc.), to eliminate duplicate expenses and to ensure a fair and equitable distribution between the parishes in the cluster.
- Pastor's salary and benefits will be shared equally by all parishes in the cluster.

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

At the end of each year of being clustered, the parishes will evaluate their cluster relationship using the evaluation guidelines found in Addendum C. Beyond the third year, the parishes will do an evaluation every five years:

- Bring staffs together from clustering parishes to conduct evaluation
 - Invite an outside facilitator to conduct the meetings
 - If possible, gather at an independent site
- Realize and recognize the gifts of all ministers and staff members
- Review the mission and vision statements of each parish and discuss how each person contributes to them
- With the approval of the Regional Auxiliary Bishop, clustered parishes may decide to combine their Parish Pastoral Councils into one joint council; however each parish will continue to maintain a separate Finance Committee
- Each year the parishes should evaluate the human and capital resources, use of buildings and duplication of services to determine if the parishes should begin a transition toward merging

IV. MERGING TWO OR MORE PARISHES

When the recommendation in the preparation stage is to merge two or more parishes, the following procedures are to be followed. These procedures are designed to ensure a successful merger by bringing closure to the existing parishes and establishing a new parish community.

NOTE: *Clustered parishes that have implemented the cluster guidelines of shared staffing, a combined parish pastoral council and commissions may have already addressed a number of preparation aspects listed below.*

DEFINITION OF MERGING

Merging is the joining of two or more parishes into a single new parish. The Archbishop can suppress a parish in consultation with the Presbyteral Council (Canon 515). The newly merged parish may consist of one site or have multiple sites (i.e., two church's, one church and one chapel, one site for worship and administration and one for outreach, etc.). The new parish has one parish pastoral council, stewardship/finance council and commissions.

It should be noted that most parishes are Territorial, established to care for the faithful in a certain geographical area of the diocese.

National parishes are established to serve the needs of the faithful by reason of a language, nationality, or for some other reason (e.g. university parish). It is a parish without geographical territory, so its members live within a different, Territorial parish's boundaries.

National parishes will rarely merge. When faced with a need to transition, a National parish is more likely to close, and its parishioners become members of a Territorial parish within whose boundaries they reside.

In these cases of complete closure, Canon 123 assigns the debts, assets and other obligations to the next "higher juridic person". For a National parish, this is the diocese.

PREPARATION FOR MERGING

- Pastors meet to develop a unified transition process for the parishes. If these plans were not in the *Together in Faith* plan they must be considered with the vicariate pastoral council and approved by the Archbishop before further preparation takes place and subsequent steps implemented.
- Pastors and Staffs meet to pray, share their stories, develop ways they will work together to lead their respective parishioners through the transition.
- The proposal to begin a merger discussion is brought to the respective parish pastoral councils for consultation
- A proposed timeline for implementation is determined by the pastor(s), staff(s) and parish pastoral council(s).

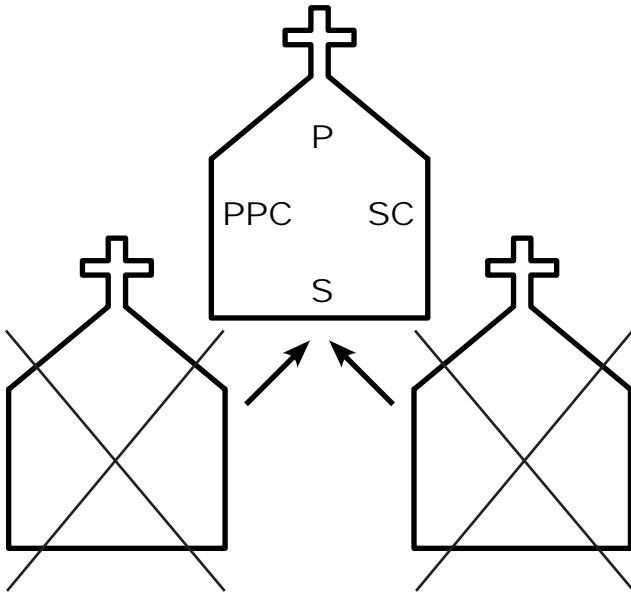
- The vicariate pastoral council is made aware of and kept informed of the cluster as it progresses.
- Parish pastoral councils meet:
 - To share history, build relationships; identify ways that the parishioners will come to know each other through liturgical and social events
 - To determine basic assumptions regarding the new parish
 - To define the mission of the parish
 - To make recommendations and provide feedback to the Transition Teams
- A Transition Team is established and convened by the pastor(s), and appropriate committees are formed, i.e. stewardship, worship, education etc.

The Team will:

- Identify ministerial needs
- To establish a uniform manner of communication to the parishioners.
- Make recommendations for the new budget, staffing and building usage or disposition
- Define the new worship environment and mass schedules
- Agree on a process for selecting a new name if appropriate (Addendum F)
- Plan joint liturgies, liturgy of closing, liturgy of unity, worship aids, closing celebrations and unity celebration
- Begin the convergence of programs, groups and chartered organizations by assessing their mission, membership and activities
- Must be flexible and willing to work for the common good
- A parish assembly is held, preferably with the Auxiliary Bishop or Episcopal Vicar, to inform the parishioners of the proposed merger.
- Joint parish pastoral council meetings will regularly take place with the transition team.
- A formal written request to merge with documentation (copies of PPC Minutes, bulletin announcements, etc.) is sent to the Archbishop at least three months prior to the implementation date.
- The pastor, in consultation with the transition team, the stewardship committee, and various AOD and MCC resources determines staffing needs, writes job descriptions, conducts interviews and realigns staff.

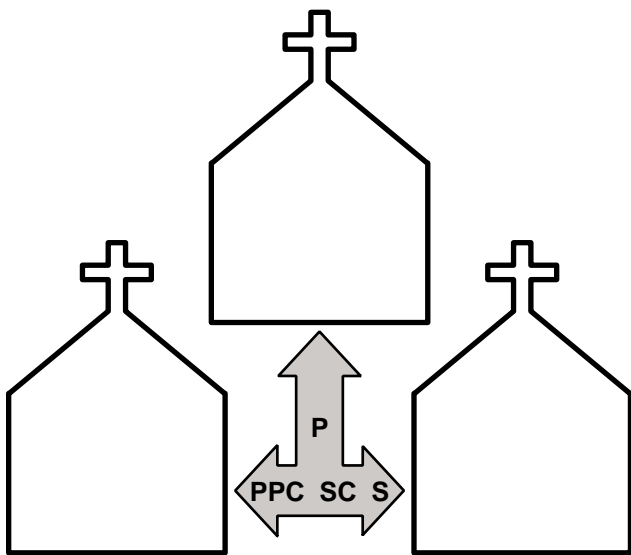
MERGER MODELS

The Archdiocese of Detroit has developed several merger models. The selected model should align with the needs of the involved parishes.



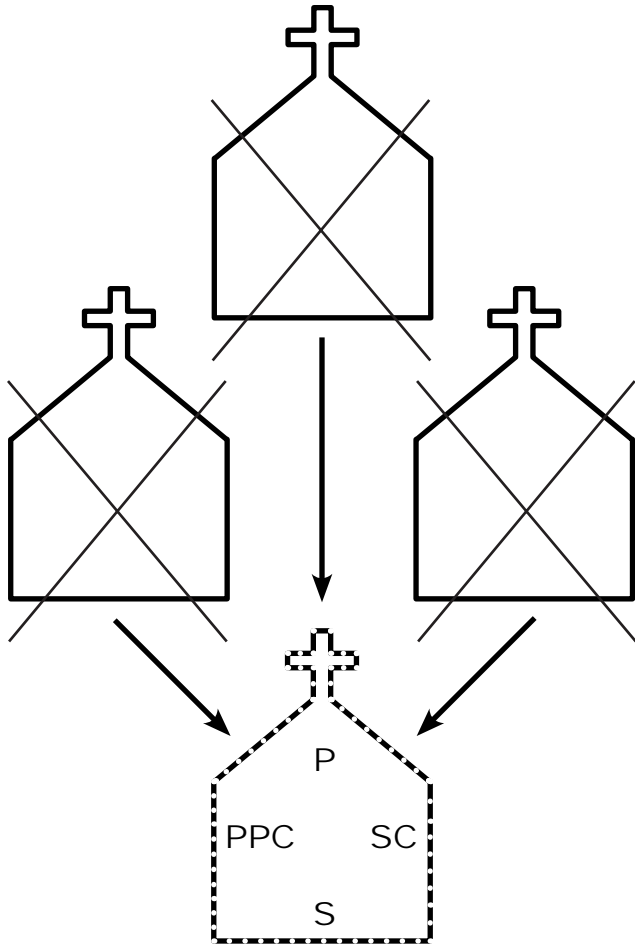
MODEL I MERGED PARISH WITH ONE SITE

- One pastor (P), staff (S), and traditional leadership structure with Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Stewardship Commission (SC)
- All finances, sacramental records, are merged together to create a new canonical parish
- One parish plant for all worship, administration, programs, outreach, etc.
- The newly merged parish assumes all geographic territory of the previous parishes
- The newly merged parish preferably assumes a new name, or assumes the name of one of the suppressed parishes



MODEL II MERGED PARISH WITH TWO OR MORE SITES

- One pastor (P), staff (S), and traditional leadership structure with Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Stewardship Commission (SC)
- All finances, sacramental records, are merged together to create a new canonical parish
- Two or more sites, one or more for worship and administration, remaining sites possibly for another purpose such as outreach, specific programs, etc.
- The newly merged parish assumes all geographic territory of the previous parishes
- The newly merged parish preferably assumes a new name, or assumes the name of one of the suppressed parishes



MODEL III

CLOSE AND BUILD

- All sites are suppressed, and together build a new church
- New Parish has one pastor (P), staff (S), and traditional leadership structure with Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Stewardship Commission (SC)
- One set of finances, sacramental records
- One site for all worship, administration, programs, outreach, etc.
- The newly merged parish assumes all geographic territory of the previous parishes
- The newly merged parish preferably assumes a new name, or assumes the name of one of the suppressed parishes

IMPLEMENTATION OF MERGER

- Liturgies of closure and appropriate celebrations take place.
- A mass for the new parish is celebrated, usually presided over by the regional bishop.
- New mass schedules are implemented.
- Historic documents that are to be preserved are sent to the archives at the Archdiocesan Central Services. The guidelines for archival material should be followed.
- Sacred objects of closed churches are moved and disposed of according to archdiocesan guidelines.
- Contents of buildings that will not be used are disposed of and buildings possibly sold with the assistance of the appropriate AOD offices.
- Debts and assets are merged into the new parish Loan Deposit Program with assistance from the Finance Department.

POST MERGER GUIDELINES

- The new parish staff develops a working relationship and vision as a ministry team.
- A parish pastoral council, consisting of members of all parishes is established, and new officers are selected.
- Parish goals are developed, including parishioners, leadership and staff in the process.
- Ministries and commissions are established.
- Parish programs, groups and chartered organizations are merged, eliminated, or replaced with new programs and organizations.
- During the first year, the parish continues to define itself, to heal the grief of the parishioners through spiritual renewal.
- On-going efforts to monitor and assess the emerging results, refine and revise aspects of the merger based on learning from the experience.

FINANCIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The business managers of the involved parishes will work with the designated staff person from the Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Parish Support Services to complete the following tasks. As of the effective date of the merger, the newly merged parish will be a new independent legal and tax entity, separate from the formerly existing parishes that were merged. As such, the newly merged parish will have one Stewardship Commission (i.e. parish Financial Council as stated in Canon 537) and file one AOD Budget and Financial Report for all activity.

The following steps will need to occur to establish the new parish as a separate legal and tax entity, and close out the merged parishes' as legal and tax entities.

NEW PARISH ENTITY MUST:

- Apply for a Federal Tax Identification number (Form SS-4) in the new parish name.
- Apply for state registration by filing Form 518 *Application for Registration with the Michigan Department of Treasury*.
- If the parish is located in a taxable city (Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Lapeer, Pontiac, Port Huron), contact the city Treasurer office to determine if a city registration application is required.
- Open a checking account in the new parish name
- Order checks and deposit slips in the new parish name.
- Set up LDP Accounts in the new parish name. Determine when merged parishes' LDP loan & savings account balances will be transferred to the new parish's LDP accounts.
- Have all employees fill out Form W-4, Form MI-W4, state Form 3281 New Hire Reporting Form, and Form I-9 for the new parish (even if they were formerly employed by one of the merged parishes)
- Establish a new MCC Unit and enroll employees under the new parish name.
- Prepare and submit an AOD Budget for the new parish
- Order contribution envelopes for the new parish

MERGING PARISHES MUST EACH:

- If building(s) are being closed to be sold, the Pastor must contact the Archdiocese of Detroit Buildings Department as soon as the building 'close' date is known. The AOD Buildings Department will prepare the building properly for closure and will take over the payment of bills related to the ongoing maintenance of the building, after the closure date. (See fifth item below)
- Inform vendors of the new parish entity, and that the merging parish checking account will be closed as of the date of the merger.
- Transfer cash from the parishes' checking accounts into the new parish checking account, as of the date of the merger. Close all bank accounts, including parish organization accounts.
- Destroy all unused checks and deposit slips (shredding is preferable).
- Reconcile the closed bank account(s) and give a list of outstanding checks to the pastor of the new parish. Checks may be reissued, as necessary, by the new parish.
- Terminate all benefits for all employees (giving consideration for severance benefits, if any).

- Pay all payroll liabilities through the date of the merger, including Flex Benefits and 403(b)/TSA amounts deducted from pay, and taking into consideration deductions for severance pay and/or benefits, if any.
- Reconcile payroll & payroll taxes and issue W-2s to all employees.

- Prepare payroll tax returns and mark as 'Final Return' (Form 941, Form 163-Notice of Change or Discontinuance for state, Form 165-Annual Return of Michigan Withholding and Sales/Use Taxes, City Annual Withholding Return, Form 945 if applicable, etc.). Submit Form 165 and city annual return with state/city W-2's and 1099's (see next two items).
- Transmit W-2's to Social Security Administration with W-3 no later than the due date of the final Form 941, to state with Form 165 annual return (due February 28, but should be filed when federal W-2's are filed), and to city government with city annual return.
- Issue 1099s to all applicable contractors, and transmit to Federal government with 1096 and submit state and city copies are transmitted with state and city annual return(s).
- Prepare a final AOD Financial Report through the close date.
- Review all existing equipment lease/rental agreements with the pastor of the new parish, and determine whether to terminate or transfer to new parish. Forward original equipment lease agreements to the pastor of the new parish.
- Submit all bank statements and financial records of the parish, including parish organizations, to the pastor of the new parish.
- Contact specific vendors to forward ongoing bills related to buildings (utilities, alarm service, lease payments, etc.) to the Archdiocese of Detroit (Attn: Buildings Department, 1234 Washington Blvd, Detroit, MI 48226). This process will remain in place until the parish buildings are sold.
- Set up mail forwarding to the new parish (through the post office), for all other mail and bills not related to buildings
- Prepare and distribute contribution statements to parishioners.
- Give computer with financial software and data to pastor of new parish.

V. PROCESS FOR OPENING (ERECTION) OF A NEW PARISH

If the current parishes in a given area are unable to accommodate the entire Catholic population, and demographic trends indicate continued population growth, it may become necessary to open a new parish. As in the other transition models discussed, education and communication are key components at every step.

DEFINITION OF ERECTION

Erection of a parish means to begin its existence. From time to time, as populations shift, new parishes are needed. Parishes can be erected to serve the needs of Catholics in a geographical area (territorial parish) or a group of Catholics that share a common bond such as language or ethnicity (national parish) (canon 518). Though the Diocesan Bishop is the only one who can erect parishes, he does so in consultation with the Presbyteral Council (canon 515§2). A parish is commonly understood to:

- be a territorial section of the Archdiocese
- have a proper church edifice
- have a Catholic population
- be assigned a pastor
- have responsibility for the care of souls in the assigned territory

PREPARATION FOR OPENING A NEW PARISH

- Vicariate Pastoral Council provides leadership and direction for the initial study together with appropriate Archdiocesan offices to determine need for a new parish.
- Leadership from the parishes in the immediate vicinity will meet to discuss the implications of a new parish, keeping the Vicariate Pastoral Council informed of its progress. Parishioners will be notified of the possibility and potential implications.
- The community may begin, with the approval of the Archbishop, to sponsor a non-traditional site for Mass, such as in a school or community center.
- The community will be overseen by a priest chaplain in consultation with the parish in which it geographically resides and with the vicariate pastoral council. The priest chaplain will be administrator of the goods. Any donations collected will be deposited into a Loan Deposit Program account with the Archdiocese of Detroit.
- The community will be connected to or sponsored by a territorial or national parish, similar to a mission.
- A Mass schedule for the community will be created and coordinated by the assigned priest administrator.
- A leadership council will be formed similar to a parish pastoral council. Members may eventually form the first parish pastoral council and Commission Chairs upon erection of the new parish.

COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION

Once the community has grown to a significant, stable number, they will begin the formal process of becoming a parish.

- After receiving the support of the Vicariate Pastoral Council, a formal written request to erect a new parish is sent to the Archbishop at least one year prior to the implementation date.
- The community and vicariate will request and obtain approval from the College of Consultors to search for property for a new parish site, working with the Archdiocesan Properties Office (Addendum D), and eventually to begin a capital campaign (Addendum E).
- A proposed timeline for implementation is determined by the leadership council.
- An assembly is held to inform the regular Mass attendees, leadership and parishioners of neighboring parishes of the proposed new parish, preferably with the regional bishop.
- Regular Mass attendees should be registered, although they should continue to be registered at their originating parish until a new parish is erected.
- Offertory envelopes should be used.
- The community, under the authority of the priest chaplain (who could be the pastor of the parish in which the community geographically resides), will provide normal parish ministries and activities such as Religious Education, sacramental preparation, etc. at the site where Mass is held.
- Sacraments may be celebrated as authorized by the Archbishop, and will be registered in the sponsoring parish.
- Parish boundaries are proposed, in consultation with the Vicariate Pastoral Council and neighboring pastors.

IMPLEMENTATION FOR OPENING A NEW PARISH

- The parish will work with the Archdiocesan Properties Office to purchase property and begin designing the new building. (see Addendum D)
- The leadership will identify and hire the architectural firm(s) and a liturgical consultant. (see Addendum D, E)
- All registered parishioners will be engaged in the capital campaign.
- Once the pastor is named, in consultation with the new parish pastoral council, Stewardship Commission, and various AOD and MCC resources, he will
 - Determine staffing needs, write job descriptions, and conduct interviews
 - Develop the new budget
 - Finalize building usage for each phase of building

- Upon implementation the Leadership Council becomes the new parish pastoral council and will work to:
 - Agree on a process for selecting a new name (Addendum F)
 - Build relationships; identify ways that the parishioners will come to know each other through liturgical and social events
 - Define the mission of the parish and identify ministerial needs
 - Determine basic assumptions regarding the new parish
 - Establish a uniform manner of communication to the parishioners
 - Form appropriate commissions and committees, i.e. stewardship, worship, education
 - Make recommendations and provide feedback
 - Help design the new worship environment and mass schedules
 - Plan liturgies, worship aids etc
 - Begin identifying programs, groups and chartered organizations by assessing their mission, membership and activities
 - Provide representative to the Vicariate Pastoral Council

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR OPENING A NEW PARISH

When a parish is opened (erected), the pastor or Business Manager should contact the Director of the Archdiocesan Audit Department and plan for the following steps to open the parish as a legal and tax entity.

- Apply for a Federal Tax Identification number (Form SS-4)
- Apply for state registration (Form 518 Application for Registration) with the Michigan Department of Treasury.
- If the parish is located in a taxable city (Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Lapeer, Pontiac, Port Huron), contact the city Treasurer office to determine if a city registration application is required.
- Open a checking account in the new parish name
- Order checks and deposit slips in the new parish name.
- Set up LDP Accounts in the new parish name.
- Have all employees fill out Form W-4, Form MI-W4, state Form 3281 New Hire Reporting Form, and Form I-9 for the new parish.
- Establish a new MCC Unit and enroll employees under the new parish name.
- Prepare and submit an AOD Budget for the new parish.
- Order contribution envelopes for the new parish.
- Include financial support for work of the Vicariate.

VI. CLOSING OR SUPPRESSION OF A PARISH

DEFINITION OF SUPPRESSION

Suppression of a parish is another way of saying that the parish has ceased to function or that the parish entity no longer exists. The Archbishop can suppress a parish, in consultation with the Presbyteral Council (canon 515). The parishioners are invited to go to neighboring parishes until an agreement can be reached with local pastors to officially redraw parish boundaries.

PREPARATION FOR SUPPRESSION

- As in the other transition models discussed, education and communication are key components at every step
- Pastor meets with staff and leadership to develop the process and timeline for suppression
- After receiving the support of the Vicariate Pastoral Council, a formal written request signed by the pastor and parish pastoral council Chair is sent to the Archdiocese of Detroit at least three months prior to implementation. Include copies of appropriate documentation i.e. PPC Minutes, bulletin announcements.
- Plans for the closing liturgy are developed

COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION

- A communication plan is developed, including letters to parishioners, bulletin and pulpit announcements, etc.
- A parish assembly, preferably with the Regional Bishop or Episcopal Vicar, is held to inform the parishioners of the need for suppression. Parishioners are invited to visit neighboring parishes to attend liturgies
 - Neighboring Pastors may write letters of invitation directly to registered parishioners, indicating the newly drawn parish boundaries and communication through the vicariate structures could also be helpful
 - Transportation issues are addressed

IMPLEMENTATION

- One or several grief sessions are held for parishioners and leadership (Addendum G).
- Liturgies of closure and appropriate celebrations take place (Addendum G).
- Historic documents that are to be preserved are sent to the Archdiocesan Archives. The guidelines for archival material should be followed (Addendum H, I).
- Sacred objects of closed churches are moved and disposed of according to archdiocesan guidelines (Addendum J).

- Contents of buildings that will not be used are disposed of and buildings possibly sold with the assistance of the appropriate AOD offices (Addendum J).
- Debts and assets are held in a separate account with assistance from the Finance Department. Once the parish boundaries have been redrawn the assets and debts are allocated accordingly.
- Pastor and Stewardship Commission work with Finance Department to resolve any outstanding financial issues.

FINANCIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR SUPPRESSION

- When a parish closes (is suppressed), and there is no merger involved, the pastor or Business Manager should contact the Director of the Archdiocesan Audit Office and plan for the following steps to close out the parish as a legal and tax entity. (See fourteenth item below)
- The Pastor must contact the Archdiocese of Detroit Buildings Department as soon as the building 'close' date is known. The AOD Buildings Department will prepare the building properly for closure and will take over the payment of bills related to the ongoing maintenance of the building, after the closer date.
- Issue final paychecks to all employees, including accrued vacation pay due, and severance pay, if applicable.
- Pay all remaining payroll liabilities, including remitting Flex Benefits and 403(b)/TSA amounts deducted from pay, and taking into consideration deductions for severance pay/benefits, if any.
- Reconcile payroll & payroll taxes and issue W-2s to all employees.
- Prepare payroll tax returns and mark as 'Final Return' (Form 941, Form 163- Notice of Change or Discontinuance for state, Form 165- Annual Return of Michigan Withholding and Sales/Use Taxes, City Annual Withholding Return, Form 945 if applicable, etc.). Submit Form 165 and city annual return with state/city W-2's and 1099's (see next two items).
- Transmit W-2s to Social Security Administration with W-3 no later than the due date of the final Form 941, to state with Form 165 annual return (due February 28, but should be filed when federal W-2's are filed), and to city government with city annual return
- Issue 1099s to all applicable contractors, and transmit to Federal government with 1096, and submit state and city copies with state and city annual return(s).
- File payroll tax returns and mark 'Final Return' on each tax form (941, State Annual Return, City Annual Withholding Return, 945 if applicable, etc.).
- Contact MCC to terminate all employment programs (giving consideration for severance benefits, if any).
- Inform vendors that the parish is closing and the checking account will be closed as of the date of the parish closure.
- Transfer cash from the parish's checking accounts (including parish organization accounts) into the parish LDP Account, as of the parish closure date. Close all bank accounts, including parish organization accounts.
- Destroy all unused checks and deposit slips (shredding is preferable).

- Reconcile the closed bank account(s) and give a list of outstanding checks to the Archdiocese of Detroit Audit Staff. Checks may be reissued, as necessary, by the Archdiocese of Detroit.
- Terminate existing contracts, subscriptions, equipment leases, and rental agreements with proper notice.
- Contact specific vendors to forward ongoing bills (utilities, alarm service, lease payments, etc.) to the Archdiocese of Detroit (Attn: Buildings Department, 1234 Washington Blvd, Detroit, MI 48226). Set up mail forwarding at the post office to the same address.
- Prepare and submit a final AOD Financial Report.
- Prepare and distribute contribution statements to parishioners.
- Retain computer with financial software and data for Archdiocesan Audit Office

OF SPECIAL NOTE: SCHEDULED MARRIAGES

Marriages that are scheduled to take place in a parish after the suppression date must be rescheduled. Ideally, the marriage should be rescheduled at the parish designated to accept parishioners from the suppressed parish, with the same celebrant. Often, this solution is not possible, but a solution must be found. It is very important that pastoral staff work closely with the couples involved to arrive at a suitable solution.

The following guidelines have been developed to assist in rescheduling of marriages:

- Once the final suppression date is known, contact the Welcoming Parish to determine if the scheduled marriage dates are available.
- Contact the couples whose marriage dates fit the schedule of the Welcoming Parish to determine if the new site is acceptable. If the couple agrees to the change, confirm the date and time with the Welcoming Parish.
- Contact the couples whose marriage dates conflict with the schedule of the Welcoming Parish to assist them with selecting a new date or location for the marriage ceremony.
- Contact the parishes identified by the couples whose schedules do not fit the Welcoming Parish's schedule to advocate for the couple.

ARCHDIOCESAN STAFF RESOURCES

Parish leadership should create committees during the transition process to prepare for and deal with specific issues. The following archdiocesan offices can provide resources and work directly with parish leadership during the transition.

Catholic Social Teaching and Christian Action

A Christian Action committee to converge the social action ministries and programs.

<i>Michael Harning</i>	<i>313-237-5978</i>	<i>harning.michael@aod.org</i>
<i>Joyce Hyttinen</i>	<i>313-237-5905</i>	<i>hyttinen.joyce@aod.org</i>

Education

Faith Formation/Catechetics Committee to converge the faith formation programs.

<i>Maureen O'Reilly</i>	<i>313-237-4805</i>	<i>o'reilly.maureen@aod.org</i>
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Youth Ministry Committee to converge youth ministry programs.

<i>Joyce Francois</i>	<i>313-237-5812</i>	<i>francois.joyce@aod.org</i>
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Stewardship

A Finance Committee to prepare the new budget, to provide an evaluation of the debts and assets from a merger, establishment of an endowment from property sales and savings.

<i>Fran Ashe</i>	<i>313-237-5903</i>	<i>ashe.fran@aod.org</i>
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A Building and Properties Committee to evaluate building usage, sale of property and the disposition of non-sacred objects. To assist parishes with verifying taxes and appraised value, initiating leases, and to sell or purchase property.

<i>Frank MacDonell</i>	<i>313-237-5829</i>	<i>macdonell.frank@aod.org</i>
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Human Resources

A Human Resources Committee to review job descriptions, staffing needs.

<i>Pamela Beech</i>	<i>313/237-5947</i>	<i>beech.pamela@aod.org</i>
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Worship

A Worship Committee to plan the closing liturgies and the liturgies of unity, and a Celebration Committee to plan final events, communication, memorabilia, etc. and to plan the celebration of unity

<i>Sr. Georgette Zalewska</i>	<i>313-237-6064</i>	<i>zalewska.georgette@aod.org</i>
<i>Louis Canter</i>	<i>313-237-5782</i>	<i>canter.louis@aod.org</i>

A Sacred Objects and Environment Committee to determine the transfer, placement and disposition of church goods. The parish leadership will also need to meet with the diocesan Architectural Review Committee, who will provide consultation and recommendations for design elements, in particular for the Worship space.

<i>Dan McAfee</i>	<i>313-237-4697</i>	<i>mcafee.dan@aod.org</i>
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Archives

Archive committee to preserve and discard documents

Marie Wilkie

313-237-5833

wilkie.marie@aod.org

Clustering, Merging, Suppressing Parishes

The Office of Leadership Services is a resource to the pastor, parish pastoral council and Transition Team to answer questions, assist in facilitation and as a liaison to resources available from the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Lucy Zalewa

313-237-5765

zalewa.lucy@aod.org

Opening New Parishes

Lory McGlinnen

313/237-5798

mcglinnen.lory@aod.org

Grieving and the Loss of a Parish, and Support to Pastoral Ministers

Jim Kiefer

313-237-4690

kiefer.jim@aod.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Clustered Parish?

Clustered Parishes have one priest pastor. However the priest may live at another location and be pastor of more than one community. The communities each have a Parish Pastoral Council, and may or may not have geographical boundaries. (See Canons 516, 517, 518, 536, 905).

Why do we have to cluster parishes?

The church of the Archdiocese of Detroit cannot continue to operate as did the church of the last century because of the continuing impact of urban sprawl, fewer priests, the new immigrant and constant changes in economics and ministry needs. The clustering of parishes and the collaboration of parishes within vicariate boundaries will allow for a more effective expression of Church through the sharing of human and capital resources and the coordination of ministerial activities.

What is merging?

Merging is the joining of two or more parishes in a single new parish. The newly merged parish may consist of one site, or one for worship and administration with one for an alternate purpose (i.e. outreach), or have multiple worship sites (e.g., one church and one chapel) etc. The new parish has one parish pastoral council, one stewardship/finance council and commissions.

How does merging differ from clustering?

Clustering involves two or more parishes, remaining somewhat independent and sharing a pastor. It is a step which could lead to a merger of parishes (see above).

Why not remain as a cluster?

We must ask ourselves, “Is clustering the best use of our time, talent and treasure?” Many pastors in a cluster situation find that the duplication of administration and meetings are very taxing on them physically. They are getting burned out and ask “does it make sense to expand our resources for ministry by merging?” In a cluster, parishes may be eliminating ministries to maintain unnecessary buildings.

What are the benefits that come out of clustering?

- Parish communities become more life giving and self-sustaining through the establishment of common goals and the sharing of resources while maintaining individual parish identity.
- New friendships and new small faith communities will emerge within the larger community when collaboration occurs across generational, racial and cultural lines.
- New lay leadership will emerge taking on new roles and responsibilities.
- Parishes will maintain a neighborhood presence of an evangelizing Catholic community especially in areas with few Catholics.

What are the greatest challenges when clustering?

- Scheduling of pastor’s time, and the many meetings he has to attend
- Mass schedules will have to change
- Communication/administration issues between parish sites
- Need for administrative/secretarial assistance for pastor at both/all sites
- Territorialism and Parochialism between parishes

What are key issues for clustering parishes to address?

- Communicate and plan with staffs, parish councils and lay leadership at every step
- Identify common goals, missions and programs and ways to work together
- Provide support and training for lay and staff leadership
- Minimally a Secretary and Pastoral Minister (at least part time) is needed at each site
- In some cases the parishes will need sacramental priest assistance
- Review and redefine job descriptions for all/shared staff

When a merger occurs does the parish take a new name?

Often a new name brings unity to the members of the merging parishes. A prayerful process that includes the parish community is encouraged. The Archdiocese has guidelines for choosing a name. It is important to note that the parish recommends a name(s) to the Cardinal; he then names the parish by formal decree. A merged parish may choose to keep the name of one of the parishes, especially if it has historical significance or was the Mother Church in a geographic boundary.

If two or more worship sites exist, how does one refer to the parish?

It would be referred to as _____ Parish, which contains the church buildings of _____ Church and _____ Church (e.g., St. Mary Parish contains St. Peter Church and St. Paul Church).

How are sacramental records and parish membership handled when parishes merge?

One site is to be designated the main church of worship and administrative site for the parish. The sacramental records of all the parishes are brought to this site. The membership is consolidated to form the new parish list.

Where are archives kept from a merger?

Historic documents that are to be preserved should be sent to the Archdiocesan Archives (1234 Washington Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226). The guidelines for archival material should be followed.

What about sacred objects?

If one of the sites is to be shut down and not used by the newly merged parish, a worship environment committee is formed by the newly merged parish to determine which significant sacred objects the new parish should retain, and how the items will be incorporated into the main worship site. Remaining items to be disposed of will adhere to the Archdiocesan guidelines regarding the disposition of sacred objects. The Office for Christian Worship is available to assist parishes with this transition.

How are finances handled, especially the merging of assets and debts?

The Office of Parish Support Services will assist parishes during this transition. In a merger, the new parish acquires all assets and liabilities of the parishes from which it was formed. In the pre-merger discussions it is important to determine building needs and use, staffing, and budgetary requirements. All finances are consolidated into a new Loan Deposit Program account. In January, new envelopes should be distributed to the consolidated list of registered members.

Will people lose their jobs in a merger?

Some jobs may be eliminated and new positions may be created. Discernment needs to be done by the pastor of the new parish, staff, and the joint stewardship commissions and parish pastoral councils to determine what is needed for ministry in the new community. New job descriptions should be written to reflect the ministry needs of the parish. The pastor will make the final decisions concerning the staffing of the parish. Assistance is offered to the pastor and staff during this transition by Archdiocesan central service departments.

How do we handle differences of ethnicity, cultures, worship styles, youth etc.?

No parish, cluster, or merger is identical. Every parish community has its own individual personality that reflects the history, ethnicity, mission, values, and liturgical style of the members that share their Catholic faith together. The Office of Leadership Services can provide discernment and transition resources. A discernment process will outline suggested ways to build dialogue, to develop a plan and to lead a community through the transition of a cluster, or merger of a parish. Leadership is encouraged to adapt their own practices into the process that speak to the communities that are transitioning together.

What are the key elements for a successful merger and leading a parish through change?

The key components for facilitating change in the structure of a parish community are prayer, vision and leadership. Cardinal Maida's pastoral letter, *The Journey Before Us*, confirms that:

- Since change is ongoing, for the health and well being of the Church, we need to be discerning and open in a spirit of prayer.
- No one parish or school can function apart from the rest of the archdiocese. Each of our parishes and schools has gifts to offer and needs the support and expertise of other parishes and schools.
- Well-trained, competent leadership—clergy, religious, and lay—is a critical building block for the Church of the future.
- Growth and diminishment, change and transformation make sense only against the backdrop of the death-resurrection of Christ, which we celebrate daily in the Holy Eucharist.

The Church is a *spiritual* reality, a communion for the sake of mission, which has visible expression in and through parishes, schools, and institutions. Changes of external structures are intended to build up, sustain, and renew our enduring commitment to share together in Christ's three-fold mission as our priest, prophet and shepherd ruler.

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

At the end of each year, leadership and staffs will come together to evaluate the cluster.

First Year

- During the first six months, the parishes will work with the pastor to implement the operational and liturgical recommendations made in the transitional plan.
- In the first six months, the pastor will get to know the staff in the parishes and the gifts of each individual and how they may be used for the common good of the cluster. A “Cluster Staffing Model Worksheet” is available to facilitate this.
- The pastor is encouraged to implement cluster parish staff meetings and informal gatherings such as luncheons. This will allow for:
 - Staff to come to know each other.
 - Staff to share in ministry together.
 - Staff to come to know the parish communities and their needs, as well as the neighborhood needs.
 - Staff to determine additional training and development that they need as a team.
 - The development of team ministry within the cluster.
 - A better use of the pastor’s time.
- The parish staffs will participate in a one-day planning retreat to evaluate all the ministries in the cluster and to determine where possible ministries should be consolidated. For example: an evaluation could be made to determine if one Senior program, one bookkeeper, etc. would serve the cluster of parishes more effectively than would individual ministries or staff in each parish in the cluster. Staffing recommendations will be made to the stewardship commissions for budget consideration for the coming fiscal year.
- The Parish Pastoral Councils will evaluate their parish using the evaluation *What a Parish is, What a Parish Does, and What a Parish Needs*; they will create or reclaim a mission statement and develop a parish plan with goals and objectives for the next three years.
- The Parish Pastoral Councils of the cluster parishes will meet to share their parish plan, to develop joint goals that will foster collaboration between the parishes for the mission of the church, and to review parish calendars to eliminate overlapping events. The Parish Pastoral Councils need to keep in mind and respect the time of the pastor. For example, two fundraisers should not occur within the same month.
- Each Stewardship Commission of the cluster parishes will meet at least quarterly with the pastor to review the parish budgets and plant operations to determine good stewardship of resources. They will identify systemic ways to streamline or eliminate duplicated costs; for example: snow removal, maintenance, supplies, etc.

Second Year

- The parish staffs will implement staffing recommendations determined in year one. They will continue to work cooperatively and develop collaborative programs for the common good.
- The Parish Pastoral Councils of the cluster parishes may begin to form one joint Parish Pastoral Council.
- The cluster parishes will maintain separate Stewardship Commissions and continue to meet at least quarterly.
- At the end of the fiscal year the Parish Pastoral Councils will evaluate their cluster arrangement, determine its strengths and weaknesses, and develop additional cooperative goals. They will report their findings to their parishioners and the vicar, regional bishop and the Vicariate Pastoral Council.
- The Pastor of the cluster parishes should provide a “state of the cluster” address for parishioners, which would articulate a pastoral vision for the cluster parishes.
- Each Stewardship Commission of the cluster parishes will continue to meet at least quarterly with the pastor to review the parish budgets and plant operations to determine good stewardship of resources. Special consideration should be given to the use of the buildings in relationship to the cluster. If there are schools involved in the cluster, then they should evaluate enrollment, tuition, and financial liability in each parish.

Third Year

- In the middle of the fiscal year the pastor, pastoral staff, and parish leadership will come together to evaluate and to determine if, as a parish and a cluster, they are building a life-giving and healthy parish community. They should use the criteria set forth in *What a Parish is, What a Parish Does, and What a Parish Needs*. It is important that they review the past four years (status before becoming a cluster, the transition period and the past two years as a cluster).
- The parish leadership of the cluster parishes will come together and share their evaluations. They will develop ways to build on their strengths and to address their weaknesses.
- A written cluster evaluation should be shared with the parishioners, the vicar, regional bishop and the Vicariate Pastoral Council for feedback.
- If it should be determined that the cluster arrangement is not life-giving then the parishes need to reformulate the parish/cluster within the next two years with the assistance of the Department of Parish Life & Services.

PURCHASING PROPERTY

The Leadership Council of the community must request and obtain approval from the College of Consultors to search for property for a new parish site. Upon approval, the community will work with the Properties Office to determine the best site for the new parish, and conduct all aspects of the actual purchase.

The Properties Office will work with the community leadership to:

- locate possible sites
- choose the final site
- obtain approvals from the neighboring parishes, Vicariate and College of Consultors to:
 - have the property appraised.
 - The Properties Office will order the appraisal, and present an Offer to Purchase, prepared by the Properties Office

When the Offer to Purchase is accepted

- The seller will provide the Properties Office with:
 - A Seller's Disclosure (if property is improved residential and this has not yet been provided)
 - A Lead-based Paint Disclosure (if property is improved residential and this has not yet been provided)
 - Tenant Disclosures (if not already provided)
- The Properties Office will perform due diligence:
 - Order an appraisal (if not already obtained)
 - Review lot splits or land division (if applicable)
 - Conduct a survey (if not provided by the property owner)
 - Check title commitment and zoning information
 - Check that the following do not exist:
 - ▶ code violations
 - ▶ tax liens
 - ▶ delinquent utility bills
 - If property is improved and improvement will be utilized:
 - ▶ building inspection
 - ▶ city inspection (if required)
 - ▶ termite inspection
 - ▶ radon inspection
 - ▶ asbestos survey (depending on building age, required if property will be utilized or demolished)
 - ▶ environmental assessments as required:
 - ▶ Transaction Screen
 - ▶ Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
 - ▶ Wetland Survey
 - ▶ flood plain information
- If a new structure is to be constructed, the Buildings Office will:
 - percolation
 - geotechnical surveys

The final step is to proceed with closing:

- The Leadership Community will work with the Properties Office for coordination with the archdiocesan lawyers and title company regarding closing documents.
- NOTE: ALL documents pertaining to the purchase of property are to be reviewed and signed by the Director of Properties or the Deputy Director of Properties.
- ALL property purchased for use by a parish is to be titled in the name of the current archbishop in office (i.e. Adam J. Maida, Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit)

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Throughout this Four Step process the archdiocesan Buildings and Properties Offices will work closely with all involved parties to ensure successful completion of the building project.

Specifically, the Offices will be responsible for:

- Facilitating the process
- Being a resource for the parish community, Architect/Engineer, Construction Manager or General Contractor
- Assisting the parish's interaction with the College of Consultors

The Parish Community will be responsible for:

- Establishing the vision
- Fundraising
- Design Approval
- Awarding contracts
- Paying for the project
- Keeping the Vicariate Pastoral Council informed of plans and how they fit in with the Pastoral Plan of the Vicariate

The College of Consultors will:

- Review and approve the program at all critical junctures

The Architect/Engineer will:

- Develop the design
- Prepare construction bidding documents
- Analyze bids and awards
- Provide construction support for the Construction Manager or General Contractor

The Construction Manager or General Contractor will:

- Build the project
- Install, schedule and manage the work
- Provide cost estimating
- Guarantee the construction

Step One: Feasibility and Visioning

Meet with the Buildings Office to determine what you want and how much it will cost:

- Form a building committee
- Solicit community-wide input, buy in and support (surveys, focus groups, town hall meetings)
- Retain Architect or Engineer on an hourly basis
- Complete a programming study
- Project total program costs
- Balance scope of project to budget
- Seek feedback from the Vicariate Pastoral Council
- Request College of Consultors' approval to proceed

Step Two: Fundraising and Design

Upon approval by the College of Consultors, establish the project scope and begin fundraising

- Begin the design process
- Begin a formal fundraising process
- Obtain municipal approvals
- Complete schematics and design development, update total program cost projection
- Assess the community's capacity to raise the necessary funds
- Retain fundraiser as required
- Confirm balance of scope to budget
- Confirm funding in place (75% to 100% cash in hand)
- Request College of Consultors' approval to proceed

Step Three: Construction

Upon approval by the College of Consultors, the community will direct the Architect or Engineer to proceed with implementation of the project

- Complete construction documents for competitive bidding
- Determine project delivery method (Construction Manager or General Contractor)
- Obtain bids, analyze them and award contract
- Construct project
- Observe activities
- Monitor budget and change orders
- Approve materials and equipment submittals as needed

Step Four: Occupancy

Once the project is complete, the community will take possession and move in, however several tasks will need to be completed.

- Monitor completion of punch list
- Coordinate move-in and delivery of parish provided furniture, fixtures and equipment
- Receive training on building systems
- Obtain operations and maintenance manuals, record drawings, warranty and contact information
- Obtain Certificate of Occupancy from the municipality and health department
- Close out contract, final waivers and payment with Construction Manager or General Contractor

GUIDELINES FOR NAMING A NEW PARISH

Often a new name brings unity to the members of merging or new parishes. A prayerful process that includes the parish community is encouraged. The Archdiocese has guidelines for choosing a name. It is important to note that the parish recommends a name (at least a first and second choice) to the Cardinal; he then names the parish by formal decree. A merged parish may choose to keep the name of one of the parishes, especially if it has historical significance or was the Mother Church in a geographic boundary. In some instances a hyphenated name of two parishes may serve in a transition time when the planning process calls for future parishes to join the merged community at a later date. At that time a new name would be determined for the parish.

If two or more worship sites exist, it would be referred to as the Parish of _____ comprised of the church of _____ and the church of _____. For example The Parish of St. John comprised of the church of St. Peter and the church of St. Paul.

In selecting a new name for a parish the following canonical guidelines apply:

1. Canon law requires that our sacred buildings (churches, oratories and private chapels) must be blessed or dedicated and given a title of (1) the name of the Trinity, or (2) the name of Christ, invoked under a mystery of his life or under his name already used in the Mass, or (3) the name of the Holy Spirit, or (4) the name of Mary, under a given title already found in the Mass, or (5) the name of the Angels, or (6) the name of a canonized Saint in the Roman Martyrology, or (7) the name of a Blessed provided the Apostolic See has given it's permission.

Canon law is silent on the matter of naming parishes but clarification was provided by the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments on 10 February 1999, stating, "The name of a parish may commonly be the same name as the title of the parish church".

2. Canon law leaves it to the diocesan bishop to erect, suppress, or notably alter parishes. Since it is his prerogative to establish parishes, it is also his prerogative to name them.
3. Though there is no ambition on the part of anyone in the Archbishop's Office to attempt to stop the popular use of the phrase "Catholic Community" that, in some cases, has unofficially replaced the term "Parish" (e.g., St. Roman Catholic Community), no such designation will appear on an official decree of erection/ merger/suppression or subsequent decrees and correspondence relating to the parish. The phrase "Catholic Community" is a modern convention that could wane in future use. Furthermore, canon law gives legal personality to a "Parish", not a "Catholic Community". At this point in time, it would be imprudent to use the phrase beyond the level of common parlance.

4. The practice in the United States is to give a parish the name of a canonized Saint or other name listed in #1. The question of whether or not the merger of three parishes can give rise to a name such as “Fairhaven Catholic Parish” is an interesting one, especially if there is a plan to maintain three churches within the new territorial parish. At this point in time, however, it would break from the practice of giving a parish the name of canonized Saint or other name listed in #1. Such a change would create an inconsistency in the Archdiocese and, perhaps, confusion to our people inside and outside the parish in question.
5. In the case of parish mergers, the churches in the former parishes, in fact, retain their title; however, if a church building was simply blessed, and not dedicated, the name of the church can be changed by the diocesan bishop, for a grave reason, at the request of the pastor and parishioners. In the case of a dedicated church building, the name can only be changed with the permission of the Apostolic See.

If it happens that one of the churches within a newly merged parish will become the main worship site, as a rule, the parish should be given the name of that church. Nevertheless, there may be dynamics that make such designation contentious, in which case, it could be permitted that the parish be given a name different from the churches within the parish.

6. To revive those names that were used by parishes closed in 1990 and subsequent years, though technically allowed, may cause confusion in the minds of the faithful and in the records of the historical archives.

If the pastor (or administrator) and parishioners would like to submit more than one name, the Archbishop can certainly choose one or discuss with the pastor and parishioners other appropriate names.

PREPARATION OF LITURGIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE CLOSING OF A PARISH

The closing of a parish church building is a traumatic event for all of its parishioners. In many ways it can be likened to the death of a person. Parishioners, both those now participating in this parish's life and those who claim a certain identity with the parish because of growing up there, feel a great loss. When the parish community makes the final decision to close this parish building it is incumbent on the parish leadership to help parishioners grieve their loss and move on.

Very important to this grieving process is the recognition that theologically the church is not dependent on any building. "The church is the People of God that exists in local communities. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's body." As Christ's body, the church continues her existence even though the building in which this local assembly gathers no longer exists. Her existence, however, is changed. She must be assimilated into a new assembly. She must bring the gifts of each individual member into new relationships. What does not change is the ultimate purpose of the church itself...the mission which Christ gave us: "Go now, teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

This Guide for the Preparation of Liturgies on the Occasion of the Closing of a Parish is modeled after the Order of Christian Funerals. As such, it contains suggestions for three services:

1. A Vigil Service of Grieving provides a time to gently accompany the community in its adjustment to the fact of the death of this church building
2. The Closing Celebration of the Eucharist provides a time to solemnly celebrate the life of this community
3. The Rite of Leave Taking is a time for the community to bid its final farewells, to leave the building, closing behind it the doors that had housed it for its existence

A VIGIL SERVICE OF GRIEVING

Introductory Rites

- Greeting
- Opening Song
- Invitation to Prayer
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- Gospel
- Homily

Prayer of Intercession

- Litany
- Lord's Prayer
- Concluding Prayer

Concluding Rite

- Blessing

SAMPLE VIGIL SERVICE OF GRIEVING

The community gathers. A few moments before the beginning of the service the bells of the church toll... or the organ can simulate the tolling of bells. The presider enters in silence and greets the gathered assembly.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Greeting:

- May the God of hope give you the fullness of peace, and may the Lord of life be always with you.
- The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
- May the God of all consolation be with you.

Opening Song:

Suggestions:

*Be Not Afraid
The Cry of the Poor
Eye Has Not Seen
You Are Near
Day is Done
The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Litany of the Saints*

Prayer of Intercession:

Lord Jesus, by your resurrection, you renew the universe;
you change our death into your life;
we pray to you:

RS. Jesus Christ, risen Lord, have mercy on us.

Give us kindness wherever you find bitterness,
confidence wherever you find distress,
joy wherever you find sorrow;
we pray to you:

RS. Jesus Christ, risen Lord, have mercy on us.

Give us humility wherever pride reigns,
pardon wherever offense abides,
grace wherever sin abounds;
we pray to you:

RS. Jesus Christ, risen Lord, have mercy on us.

Give us love wherever hatred burns,
hope wherever despair is crying,
faith wherever doubt prevails;
we pray to you:

RS. Jesus Christ, risen Lord, have mercy on us.

Give us a new spirit,
a new heart,
and new hope in your holy resurrection;
we pray to you:

RS. Jesus Christ, risen Lord, have mercy on us.

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom as Jesus taught us:

Our Father....

Concluding Prayer:

Lord God,
you are attentive to the voice of our pleading.
Let us find in your Son
comfort in our sadness,
certainty in our doubt,
and courage to live through this hour.
Make our faith strong
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Before we leave this place it is important to remember all the people, all the events, all the good times and bad times that have forged us together as the parish of

name

Members of the community are invited to share stories about the people, events, etc. of this parish.

CONCLUDING RITE

Blessing:

May the God of hope fill us
With every joy and with peace, in the faith! RS. Amen

May hope overflow in us
Through the power of the Holy Spirit! RS. Amen

May almighty God bless you,
The Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

Amen

SAMPLE CLOSING CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

This will be the last celebration of the Eucharist in this building which has housed the parish community. As such it needs to be a celebration of joy and thanksgiving for all the good memories which the congregation will take with it. Cardinal Maida has given permission that for this celebration the parish may choose to use the prayers and readings from the patronal feast of the parish...provided that this celebration does not occur during Advent, Lent, the Easter Season, or solemnities of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and saints listed in the General Calendar.

Introductory Rites *After the greeting the presider speaks to the assembly in these or similar words.*

Presider: We are God's temple, God's holy people. Today we gather to give thanks for the _____ years that this building St. _____ has been our home. It is here that we have gathered each Sunday to hear God's word, to praise and thank him for his presence in our lives, to receive his body and blood as our food for the journey of life. It is from here that we have been sent forth, transformed, to be Christ's presence in our community. Today we gather here for the last time, and prepare ourselves for a journey to a new home. Let us prepare our minds and hearts for the mystery we will celebrate and for the peace and mercy of God we will need on our journey.

Penitential Rite *A sung version of the Kyrie might be appropriate for this celebration.*

Gloria *This needs to be festive and accompanied by the ringing of the bells, where possible.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Prayer of the Faithful *A sung response would be appropriate
[Some possible petitions]*

1. For the Pope and local bishop, that God may bless them with wisdom and insight as they continue to shepherd the Church, we pray to the Lord.
2. We remember with particular tenderness the pastors and local leadership who have served in this parish throughout its history. In gratitude, we pray to the Lord.
3. For other parishes, schools, and institutions throughout the country facing significant changes and transitions, that the love and solidarity of all Catholics may overcome all fear and sadness, we pray to the Lord.
4. For the founders, benefactors, and all past parishioners of this parish; for all those whose faith, vision, and generosity has been the cornerstone of our parish's history, we pray to the Lord.
5. For the priests and vowed religious who have faithfully served this parish through preaching and teaching, prayer and pastoral care, we pray to the Lord.
6. For the ability to rejoice in the blessings we have received through this parish and for the courage to move onward with hope, we pray to the Lord.
7. For the unsung heroes of St. _____ Parish who have contributed so much of themselves for the success of the parish, we pray to the Lord.
8. For the dead, especially those buried from this church over its _____-year history, we pray to the Lord.

Presider:

Lord God, in Christ you made us your people, a chosen race, a royal priesthood. Wherever you lead us we will continue to be your holy people, your imperishable temple. Hear us as we raise our minds and hearts to you through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Mass proceeds as usual.

At communion time, Eucharistic ministers consume all the remaining Eucharist... both the bread and wine. The tabernacle doors are open and all vessels are purified.

At the end of the Liturgy of the Eucharist two Eucharistic ministers remove the altar cloth. The presider incenses the altar one last time...or places coals in the brazier and places the brazier on the altar.

A hymn of thanksgiving is sung by the entire assembly. All stand for the singing of this hymn.

The Prayer after Communion is said.

Final Blessing

The Lord of earth and heaven
has assembled you before him this day
to bid farewell to this house of prayer.
May he fill you with the blessings of heaven. Amen

God the Father wills that all his children
scattered throughout the world
become one family in his Son.
May he make you his temple,
the dwelling place of his Holy Spirit. Amen

May God free you from every bond of sin,
dwell within you and give you joy.
May you live with him for ever
in the company of all his saints. Amen

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Final Hymn: *A hymn of praise and thanksgiving would be appropriate.*

THE RITE OF LEAVE TAKING

During the singing of the final hymn all are invited to come forward and kiss the altar as a gesture of leave taking. The assembly leaves following the cross and gathers outside close to the front doors.

When the presider arrives at this place he faces the doors of the building:

Here we and those who have gone before us have celebrated our joys and sorrows. In this church we have encountered Jesus Christ in Word, sacrament, and one another. Now after _____ years of faith, with thanks to God for the good accomplished here, I declare this Church of St. _____ closed.

The presider closes and locks the doors. Several parishioners seal the doors with purple ribbon.

All depart.

RITE FOR THE MERGING OF PARISHES

BEFORE MASS BEGINS

Hospitality: Ministers of welcome should be stationed outside and inside the welcoming church (as the situation permits).

Ministers: There should, if possible, be an equal number of ministers from both parishes involved in this liturgy. Worship commissions of both parishes will work together to develop liturgical procedures based on the traditions of both parishes. Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and servers will have to be trained in the combined procedures.

Altar: The altar should be bare as the liturgy begins. It will be dressed at the Preparation of the Gifts. Representatives of both parishes will take part in this rite.

Water and Oils: A large container that can be carried, of blessed water from each of the merging churches. This water will be mixed and used in the Sprinkling Rite. The Holy Oils may be mixed together and placed in the Ambry, if possible.

Participation aids: It would be helpful to have a special program printed for this occasion which could contain a message of welcome, the music for the celebration with the proper copyrights, and especially the people's responses for the Blessing Over the Water and the Proclamation of Consent.

Introductory Rites

The liturgy should begin with a full procession including cross, candles, incense and Book of the Gospels. It is important that the Entrance Song (as well as all the music used in this celebration) is well known to and reflects the diversity of both communities so that there may be full participation by everyone present. Representatives from both merging parishes carry in the large vessel of blessed water from their parish as part of the procession.

The procession moves to a visible place where the two containers of water can be slowly poured into a single vessel or font.

The Celebrant greets the people and welcomes them.

Invocation Over Blessed Water

Celebrant: My dear brothers and sisters, we have been called to this water that we may share in the faith of the one Church and that we may have eternal life. By the mystery of this consecrated water, may we rededicate our lives to the Gospel as a new community of faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Celebrant: Father, God of mercy, through the waters of baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

All: Blessed be God. *(All sing or say this or another suitable acclamation.)*

Celebrant: From all who are baptized in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united by your Son Jesus Christ.

All: *(Sing or say the acclamation as above.)*

Celebrant: You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Spirit of your love, that we may live in your peace.

All: *(Sing or say the acclamation as above.)*

Celebrant: You call those who have been baptized to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people every where.

All: *(Sing or say the acclamation as above.)*

Celebrant: You call us to this cleansing water and to new birth. By sharing the faith of your Church may we have eternal life.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

All: Amen.

----- Sprinkling of the people with Holy Water -----

Gloria:

Sung, the church bells may be rung to add to the festivity.

Opening Prayer:

In Ordinary Time the Opening Prayer may be taken from the Rite of Dedication of a Church and an Altar.

Celebrant: Lord, fill this place with your presence, and extend your hand to all those who call upon you.
May your word here proclaimed and your sacraments here celebrated strengthen the hearts of all your faithful.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

In Ordinary Time the readings for the Dedication of a Church and an Altar might be used. Lectionary [701 – 706].

Homily

Renewal of Baptismal Commitment

Celebrant: My brothers and sisters, God our loving Father calls us together to be one body in Christ our Lord. As we come together as one community let us renew the promises we made in baptism, when we promised to reject sin and to serve God in faith as his holy people, his Church.

Celebrant: Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?

All: I do

Celebrant: Do you believe I God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

All: I do.

Proclamation of Consent

Celebrant: I ask the people of _____ and _____ is it your intention to become one faith community.

All: It is.

Celebrant: Do you promise to walk together for the unity of the Church?

All: We do.

Celebrant: Are you resolved to unite yourself more closely with Christ, and try to become more like him?

All: We are.

Celebrant: Do you promise to celebrate the sacraments together with sincere devotion?

All: We do.

Celebrant: May the Lord in his love keep you close to him always, and may he bring all of you to eternal life.

All: Amen.

Decree from the Archbishop:

The opening paragraph of the decree from the Archbishop is read ending with the name of the new parish.

INSTALLATION OF THE PASTOR

Presentation of the Pastor-Elect

Presider: My dear friends, because I am aware of your pastoral needs and am confident of Father N's qualifications for the office of pastor, I now commend Father _____ to you as your new pastor.

Welcome by the people.

Alleluia.

----- Pastor comes to stand before the bishop -----

Presentation of the Parish Clergy and Staff

Presider: N._____, my brother, Father(s) N_____, Deacon N_____ and N_____ (other staff members) will assist you in the pastoral care of the people of this parish. Share this ministry in a spirit of mutual trust, common prayer, and genuine concern.

----- The new pastor is greeted by his associates in the parish ministry -----

Presentation of the Parish Council

Presider: Father _____, this is the pastoral council of _____ parish. It is the voice of your people and will assist and counsel you as you minister to this parish. They bring with them the names of all the baptized. Always be attentive to the needs that your council expresses.

Pastor: My friends, I pledge to seek your counsel, guidance, and advice in the spiritual and temporal care of my pastorate.

The members of the parish council immediately come forward and greet the new pastor.
The parish registries from the merging parishes are brought forward and placed on the
table in front of the altar by a member of each of the parishes.

PROFESSION OF FAITH AND OATH

Presider: Remember, my brother _____, always be a loving father, a gentle shepherd, and a wise teacher of your people, so that you may lead them to Christ who will strengthen all that you do.

General Intercessions:

The General Intercessions should be carefully composed to address the new parish situation. The following are some suggestions that might be modified to fit the situation.

For the Holy Father, our Bishop and priests, may they have the courage to lead the church in faith, we pray to the Lord...

For the people of _____ and _____ as they come together as _____ may they be a living sign of the presence of God to all whom they meet, we pray to the Lord...

For patience and understanding as we grow together as a family of faith, we pray to the Lord...

For all who have gone before us in faith, especially the deceased members of _____ and _____, may we always remember their faith and their good works, we pray to the Lord...

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Members of both communities should be a part of the procession of gifts and the dressing of the altar. The altar might be clothed with a new altar cloth, candles, etc. If possible use incense.

Mass proceeds as usual.

Concluding Rites

After communion devotional items may be brought forward and placed in shrines or other appropriate places. The celebrant or another might explain what the items are, why they are important to the community and where they will be placed as a sign that two communities have become one.

A Solemn Blessing should be used.

PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFER OF PARISH ARCHIVE MATERIAL TO THE ARCHDIOCESAN ARCHIVES

The Regional Auxiliary Bishop will examine sacramental records of the parish before its canonical suppression (closure) or merger. At that time, in consultation with the pastor (administrator) or delegated parish staff member, the Chancellor's representative from the Archdiocesan Archives will make arrangements with the parish, regarding collection of pertinent archival records for the Archdiocesan Archives. The following materials, where possible, should be placed in labeled boxes:

1. All **sacramental registers** (baptism, marriage, death, confirmation, first communion) and any indices or lists that pertain to them.
2. All **sacramental files** pertaining to the celebration of the sacraments, especially marriages; e.g., all pre-nuptial files ("A" forms, etc.).
3. **Sunday bulletins**, chronologically ordered and bound, where possible.
4. All parish administrative or legal office files that have been kept, as well as any **office files** of historical significance. For example, all correspondence with diocesan offices; files on the construction of parish buildings; annual reports; membership lists; any materials having to do with a school (past or present); correspondence with religious communities, etc.
5. Records of **parish committees** (e.g., parish committees, parish council, and commissions) and records of **parish organizations** (e.g., rosary-altar society, sodalities, etc., past and present). Of greatest importance are constitutions, minutes of meetings, reports, membership lists, financial reports, souvenirs of event, etc.
6. Any books, photographs, photo albums, audio or video recordings -- anything that bears witness to the ongoing life of the parish over the years.

OVERALL GUIDELINES

Identify the materials

- In every instance above (1-6), it is very important to remember that records will be of historical interest and value only if they are identifiable and someone is able to explain them. The most obvious case is a photograph. If no one knows who is in the picture, what the picture depicts, or when it was taken, it can become worthless. The same principles also apply to files. Any identification information should be done in pencil. If possible, please give the name, address, and phone number of the person(s) who best knows the contents in case questions arise in the future.

Respect the order (or disorder) that exists

- Collect the records as they are, without trying to separate what is important from what appears to be unimportant. Eventually the Archdiocesan Archives will discard some things, but the operating principle is that records are best understood in their original order or context.

Try to assemble a complete picture

- Ask yourself: Of all the records that exist at this moment, whether in the rectory, among parish organizations, or with private individuals, what can be saved to present as well-rounded and complete a picture as possible of the parish's life from beginning to end?

Although the closing of a parish can be painful for its members, especially for the more active parishioners, these members can help the Archdiocesan Archives fulfill its function of permanently preserving the memory of their parish for history. Any artifacts in their possession (e.g., photographs, souvenirs of parish events, etc.) can be of great value. Parishioners of long standing can also be helpful in identifying photographs, etc. For this reason, parishioners should be invited to assist in preparing their parish archives for transfer to the Archdiocese.

When in doubt, ask the Archdiocesan Archivist for advice (313-237-5846) if there are any questions about preparing the records. When the records have been collected in one place, please let the Archivist know so that arrangements can be made for the transfer of the records.

PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFER OF SCHOOL RECORDS TO THE ARCHDIOCESAN ARCHIVES

In terms of student records, only the health and permanent records need to be retained; however, any class lists, yearbooks and pictures should also be submitted.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Graduates and Former Students

1. The name of the school should be on each record.
2. The name of the student should be on each side of the record.
3. All grade levels should be combined into one alphabetical file.

Present Students (and students whose records are being transferred)

1. Photocopy the permanent record.
2. Put the photocopy in the student's folder.
3. Insert the original permanent record in alphabetical order with the other transcripts.
4. If no other grade school has requested the cumulative records, send the entire folder to the Archdiocese.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Graduates and Former Students

1. The name of the school should be on each record.
2. The name of the student should be on each side of the record.
3. The complete date of graduation should be noted.
4. If there is a space for a signature for the principal, be sure that is signed.
5. All records should be typed or written with black ink – blue ink does not photocopy well.
6. All grades, test results, and activities should be recorded.
7. Elementary school records should be separated from high school records.
8. All grade levels should be combined into one alphabetical file.

Present Students (and students whose records are being transferred)

In addition to the above items 1-8:

1. Photocopy the permanent record.
2. Put the photocopy in the student's folder.
3. Insert the original permanent record in alphabetical order with the other records.
4. Make a list noting the name of the student and where the cumulative records were sent.
5. If no other high school requests the cumulative records, send the complete folder to the Archdiocese.

PROCEDURE FOR THE DISPOSITION OF SACRED OBJECTS

The following procedures will be used in the Archdiocese of Detroit to determine the proper disposition of the sacred objects which are owned by a clustered, merged or closed parish or church.

Sacred Objects: any item that the Church or the faithful regards as holy by way of blessing or veneration by the faithful. This includes, but is not limited to the altar, tabernacle, ambo, baptismal font, ambry, statues, images (icons), relics of the saints, Mass vessels, Mass vestments, liturgical books, altar linens, etc.

Cluster

A cluster is a group of two or three parishes that share a priest as pastor. A parish in a cluster retains its property, which should not be moved from one parish to another.

Merger

A merger refers to two or more parishes joining together to become one new parish. The new parish takes in all the people of the former parishes and may sometimes preserve the Church buildings and facilities that were used by the former parishes, with one Church being identified as the primary place for parishioners to regularly worship.

Should the merger plan call for the closure of a church or chapel, within thirty days of the announcement of the merger, a team consisting of the pastor (administrator) of the closing church or chapel, a well-reputed parishioner from the closing church or chapel, and the director of the Worship Office of the Archdiocese will make an inventory of the sacred goods. Private property will, of course, be returned to the rightful owner(s). Within the week following the final Mass, the team will meet to review the inventory.

Sacred objects that are not relocated to another church or chapel within the merger will follow the protocol for goods in suppressed parishes as described below. The Worship Office of the Archdiocese will coordinate efforts in this regard.

Suppressed Parish – Closed Church

In the rare case of a parish suppression, the Archdiocese will be responsible for the sacred objects of the closed church. Within thirty days of the announcement of the closure, an inventory of the sacred objects will be taken by a team consisting of the pastor or administrator of the parish, a well-reputed parishioner from the closing church, and the director of the Worship Office. The determination of which items are considered sacred is within the purview of the Worship Office of the Archdiocese. Private property will, of course, be returned to the rightful owner(s).

All items are to remain in the church until after the final Mass. Within the week of the final Mass the team will meet to review the inventory.

All requests for sacred objects must be made in writing to the Worship Office.

For a three-week period following the closure, pastors (administrators) of neighboring parishes in the vicariate will be allowed to remove items for use in their own parishes. Removal of sacred objects will be facilitated by the Worship Office. Inventories will be provided to pastors (administrators) on request. All costs related to the removal of these items will be paid by the parish taking the sacred objects.

For a three week period following the period reserved for the vicariate all other pastors (administrators) of the Archdiocese will be allowed to request inventories of remaining items for use in their own parishes. **Requests for specific items must be made in writing to the Worship Office** and the responsibility and costs for removing the items falls to the requesting parish. All items secured on behalf of a parish become the property of the parish.

When dealing with an altar, the relics must be removed from the altar stone and transferred to the Archdiocesan Archives. An altar is never to be sold or handed over for public use.

After six weeks the Worship Office will determine the disposition of any remaining sacred objects.

PROCEDURE FOR THE DISPOSITION OF NON-SACRED OBJECTS

Once Sacred Objects have been removed from the church, the pastor or business manager should call the Buildings Office to schedule a walk through with the Director of Buildings. The intent is to understand special needs for the building(s) and set a firm date for turn-over. Please contact Frank MacDonell's assistant, Marcia Myrand, at 313-237-5845 to set a date for the walk through.

Disposition of Parish Buildings and Property

In all situations, whether the Parish is Clustered, Merged, or Suppressed, the furnishings/fixtures and other residual property shall stay with the Parish. As a general rule, items that were donated years ago cannot be salvaged by the donor since it is the property of the Parish and will be sold or leased as a component of the property. The Archdiocese does not remove and “warehouse” non-sacred objects for use by other Parishes.

- **Cluster** - A Parish designated for a cluster will retain its property. Property shall not be moved from one Parish to another unless approved by the pastor or respective Parish Councils.
- **Merger** – The pastor (administrator) of the merged parish retains responsibility and administration of the property of the former parishes, with due observance of Archdiocesan policies. Should the merger plan call for the closure and sale of a portion of the parish campus, the pastor (administrator) may make a written request to the Archbishop for the pertinent Archdiocesan departments to intervene to administer the property. Upon the acceptance of such a request, the procedure for disposition of non-sacred goods is the same as that of a suppressed (closed) parish.
- **Suppression (Closure)** – Upon final turn over from the Pastor, the Buildings Office will secure all buildings and property associated with the Parish.

Beyond the turn-over date, the Buildings Office will have total custody over the buildings and property. Access to the building(s) from this point will be controlled by the Buildings Office.

The Archdiocese of Detroit will lease or sell the buildings following the closing of a Parish. The lease or sale terms are defined “as-is” in that remaining property in the church such as pews, stained glass, miscellaneous fixtures and furniture will be sold/ leased with the property.

Please refer to the “Top 11” list in preparing for the final turn over to the Buildings Office.

THE TOP “11”

IN PREPARATION FOR THE TURNOVER DATE:

1. Compile copies of all contracts for security, landscaping, mechanical systems and office equipment. If a building improvement over \$10,000 was completed within the last year, please provide documentation for the same.
2. Provide a list of all remaining items, if any, that will be transferred to another parish.
3. Provide a list of key personnel with phone numbers for use by the Buildings Office for property questions.
4. Provide contact information for the local police and fire departments.
5. Provide a list of security codes, contact names and telephone numbers that service the security systems.
6. Compile all keys and garage door openers for the property. Please take the time to label all keys.
7. Plan to cancel all telephone accounts with the exception of those that service the security systems.
8. Plan to contact utility providers to send all invoicing AFTER the turnover date to:

The Archdiocese of Detroit
Buildings Office 5th Floor
1234 Washington Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48226
Attn: Marcia Myrand

9. Prepare a hand drawn map indicating the location of utility meters for water, gas and electric.
10. In the event the turn-over is to occur in the winter months do NOT shut off the boiler. Please set the thermostat for 50 degrees.
11. Inform neighbors or other interested parties that the Buildings Office will have custody for the property. (Often times, neighbors serve as a great resource to report problems. Please give them the Buildings Office phone number below.)

Call the Buildings Office (313-237-5845) with questions regarding this process or issues that develop after the turnover of the property.