

Parish Meeting after 10:30 Mass
Saint James the Apostle
January 31, 2016

Planning Team Members Present: Fr. Bernard, Scott Hamula (facilitator), Lee Anne Fox, Gerry Frank (notes), Karen Rinefierd, Kathleen Rourke, Barbara Willers

The prepared introduction was presented by Scott Hamula before comments, concerns and questions were heard.

Questions and Comments:

If the decision has already been made by the Bishop to close one of the three churches, why are we doing all this?

In his letter to Fr. Bernard, the Bishop indicated his reasoning why it made pastoral sense to have the three parishes join into one faith community. We are now following the process set in church law to consider that.

What will they be doing with the churches?

St. James the Apostle will not be closing but a question remains about whether there will be regular Masses at the two other churches.

If two of the three churches will be having Masses, what happens to the other church?

They would still be available for weddings and funerals.

Why not petition the Bishop to leave all three churches open?

At the last planning team meeting a majority of the members wanted to follow the Bishop's instruction to have regular Masses at only two churches. When the planning team puts together a proposed revised Mass schedule, there will be parishioner meetings once again to get input from parishioners to ensure the best possible scheduling for all parishioners.

At St. James there are three Masses, [the speaker is sure] that St. James would give up one Mass to keep St. Francis Solanus open.

Everyone should know the expenses.

Thought to save money but if all three buildings need to be maintained where will the money be saved?

Would tuition fees continue to go to Immaculate Conception?

Tuition fees would continue to go the schools where the students are attending from their parish.

Can you give a new Mass schedule now?

That is on the planning team schedule for February.

The Bishop's letter proposed a June deadline, are we going to meet that?

Canonically yes, we should be able to do that, merging the three existing parishes into one. Dealing with the legal merging making one corporation will take longer because it will have to go through the court system in two counties.

Operational efficiencies can save money; savings here are much more minimal that compared to larger churches, ie: there are less paid staff.

All three churches are on margin (expenses and revenues).

All three churches' attendance numbers are too small to continue as is with a priest and expenses.

There is a plan for a more long term future by merging the three churches into one parish. Together we have a chance to continue as a faith community.

How does the new parish get named?

The Bishop will make the final decision with input from the pastor and possibly parishioners. The names of the separate church buildings will remain the same.

The Capuchins have served the parish a long time, shouldn't they be contacted first?

There are ongoing talks between the Diocese and Orders ministering within the Diocese all the time; hopefully the Capuchins will remain.

The Diocese goes through planning decisions. The Capuchins go through planning also. The Capuchins are here at the invitation of the Bishop.

A parish that is too spread out could be taxing to older parishioners. – [Too great a distance between their home and Mass locations.]

Parishioners were told that if they had any other input to send it to Fr. Bernard.