

May 25, 2021

What is Pastoral Planning? It is simply planning to pastor in the future. How will we pastor in the future? We have to plan for that.

Why do we need to plan for that? Right now, in the Diocese of Erie, we have around 100 active priests. We have 109 parishes and mission churches. By decade's end we will have 60 active priests. To prepare to pastor in the future, our parish structures need to be planned out to meet this challenge.

You will find two documents on this page: the slides from an informational presentation on pastoral planning that took place with Bishop Persico at Dubois Central Catholic School on May 24, 2021, and an outline of the steps of the Pastoral Planning Process.

The next step in this process is for St. Catherine's, St. Michael's, St. Bernard's, St. Mary's, and Assumption Parishes to appoint members to a Pastoral Planning Steering Committee. This committee will gather data towards presenting a Preliminary Plan to our 5 parishes. This plan will likely recommend some type of parish restructuring/and or merging to happen in future years. There will be an opportunity for feedback from yourself to this committee before any final plan would be presented.

I look forward to communicating with you as this new pastoral planning process begins and moves ahead. My door is always open. Face to face meetings are preferable. Phone calls are good, too. Letters and digital communications are less helpful, but as you feel the need, you can employ those avenues as you see fit.

Opportunities for involvement of our parishioners will be structured into this planning process also. It is a work in progress. Please, let us pray for each other, and that God's providence will guide us rightly.

Fr. Bill Barron