

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Pastoral Planning

ORIGINAL – 10/17/22 – THERE WILL BE UPDATES AS NEEDED

UPDATE #1 – 11/2/22 – In Blue

On Friday last week (10/29), I received an email from the Archbishop's office regarding our family pastoral planning. The archbishop decided that he will now provide his decision(s) for our Catholic Schools at the same time that he responds to our family's proposal. The Listening Sessions Report we have been anticipating since October will not be released until we receive the archbishop's decision. The only thing I know at this time is that no decision OR listening session report is going to be available until after November 15.

What is the process for making decisions for our family?

The Family Pastoral Planning Team (FPPT) was convened to make decisions regarding the workings of the new families. Wherever possible, the FPPT should make decisions by consensus (agreement by all members). If consensus cannot be reached, the FPPT should vote on the issue, record the results, and submit the decision to the Family's pastor(s) for resolution. If the pastor(s) cannot reach a decision and the FPPT is stuck, the team will consult with the Pastoral Planning Office of the Archdiocese of Omaha. If that consultation does not lead to resolution and the FPPT continues to be stuck, it will identify the issue and two options to resolve it, and submit the issue to the archbishop for a decision.

Was that process used in our family with the Catholic schools?

Yes until the last step. Our FPPT and priests *agreed not to propose anything other than the status quo for all of the schools in our family* to the archbishop. If we were held to the normative process for the last step, the FPPT will always propose the current system and the current system modified in some small way. If the archbishop rejected both of these proposals, the FPPT would again propose the current system and the current system modified in some other small way. This process would go on and on and on until what the archbishop found reasonable was finally determined. It seemed best to both the FPPT and the archdiocese to just have the archbishop decide what he wants.

How will the archbishop make his decision?

The first step was sending his delegation to our family for meetings in August. Additionally, his office is gathering data from our Catholic schools such as projected enrollment, cost per student and teacher allocation. He and his staff are currently reviewing the data and forming a decision that will align with the Archbishop's pastoral plan for the entire archdiocese.

When will a decision be made?

It is an involved process but hopefully by the [middle of December](#).

Once the decision is made is there a process to appeal?

No. Input was requested at the parish meetings held in August. The information collected will be made available to parishioners. It was from this information, along with data provided by the parishes and schools that the Archbishop made his decision. His decision is final.

What role does the FPPT play in the decision about the potential consolidation/closing of Catholic Schools?

None. That decision is entirely up to the archbishop. *The committee and priests refused to propose anything other than the status quo for our family schools.*

Who determined the members of the FPPT?

The pastors appointed members from their respective parishes to serve in this capacity.

What were the criteria for this appointment?

The following criteria were used to determine FPPT members:

- 1) Trusted for judgement and counsel, and respected in the community
- 2) Able to effectively represent and communicate pastoral planning developments
- 3) A prayerful and mature disciple with an openness to more deeply re-orienting your faith community for mission, with a perspective that prioritizes One Church above loyalty to a particular parish

Are the mass times set?

Yes. They will be re-evaluated after a year to see if adjustments are necessary.

What are the new weekend mass times?

Saturday – 5pm, St. Francis; 6pm, St. Michael’s; 7pm, Holy Family
Sundays – 8am, Holy Family, 8:30 St. Mary’s; 10am, St. Francis; 10:30am, Ss. Cyril and Methodius

How were these new times determined?

The FPPT met and decided based on criteria that the archdiocese mandates for weekend masses. Under these new archdiocesan directives, priests are only allowed to say either (a) 4 masses in two churches or (b) 3 masses in 3 churches. Under the new schedule, one priest will say the four masses in Humphrey and Lindsay while the other would say the

three masses in the three remaining churches, with time for confessions before mass. The priests would continue to alternate weekends.

It is important to note that many parishes in our archdiocese will no longer have weekend masses in their churches. We are blessed not to have this problem. However, all of us will need to adjust to working our lives around Jesus Christ rather than vice versa.

What are the new daily mass times?

M-Th – 8am, St. Francis – (school)
T-Fri – 8am, Holy Family – (school)
T, W, Fri – 2:30pm, Ss. Cyril and Methodius, (school)

Will there be other daily masses (e.g. First Friday)?

Yes, but their schedules will vary.

When will confessions be heard in our new family?

1 hour before the first weekend mass
30 minutes before the second weekend mass
30 minutes before daily mass

I noticed in the minutes that some meetings didn't have representation of all parishes. Were any decisions made at those meetings?

No. All decisions were discussed at length at nearly every meeting. All members of the FPPT from all parishes were in agreement about all the decisions made by the team. In most cases, this unanimous agreement was not because the option chosen was likeable but because it was the best of a bunch of unlikeable options.

How are the finances going to work?

Expenses that are shared in the family will be allocated to each parish in the family based on the percentage of families in that individual parish to total number of families in the new family of parishes. Everything else remains the same.

Will my contributions to my parish/school stay in my parish/school?

Yes, with the caveat that expenses for shared resources will be allocated to individual parishes as outlined above.

Will there be any combining of funds?

No. Regardless of if/when/how bookkeepers are consolidated each parish and school accounts will remain separate from each other. Only personnel will be shared, not

contributions. Only expenses resulting from family shared personnel/resources will be shared and nothing else.

Who decides what expenses result from family shared personnel/resources?

The pastor, guided by the advice of the Family Pastoral Council, will make these determinations.

Is my parish's/school's money going to stay in my community's bank?

Yes

How will bookkeeping work?

There will be one business manager responsible for overseeing all finances. This person will be located in Humphrey and also be responsible for the parishes and schools in Humphrey. Each parish with a school will have their own, local bookkeeper that will be responsible for the finances of the parish, but report to the family business manager with issues/questions. Each parish without a school will transition to having their bookkeeper be one of the three bookkeepers in the family. The hope is to consolidate as much as possible through natural transition and actual workload.

Why was it decided to do bookkeeping this way?

The archdiocese essentially offered us two choices to govern our parish (with an additional one not being recommended)

- 1) Family Model One applies to a Family of Parishes comprised of two or more separate parishes with a single pastor and centralized family leadership and administration.
- 2) Family Model Two applies to a Family of Parishes with a single pastor and takes the centralization in Family Model One a step further by merging two or more parishes into one canonical parish with multiple sites.

Family Model Two would lead to the combining of all parishes into one single parish with multiple churches. Under this model, all finances would be held at the family level and not the individual level. This was not acceptable to any of the FPPT members, which is why we chose Family model one. The guidelines for this model formed these decisions.

Where are the priests going to stay?

The hub for our family will be Humphrey because of the location at the center of the family and its relatively larger size. The priests' primary residence will be there.

Why did St. Francis just buy a house?

The goal of the Archbishop is that all priests in the family live in one location in the hub of the family, which will be in Humphrey. There are several long-term concerns about the current rectory in Humphrey. Some of them are...

- 1) Accessibility for elderly priests and parents/family that may want to visit their not so elderly sons in the current rectory in Humphrey.
- 2) Ability for priests to evacuate the rectory in Humphrey in the event of an emergency (fire).
- 3) The long-term maintenance upkeep with the current rectory in Humphrey.
- 4) Working and living in the same building.

When a house became available across the street from the current complex that would allow two priests to live in the same house separately with minimal renovation, it seemed natural to investigate. Once it was found ideal for the Archbishop's vision, an offer was made and accepted.

Did St. Francis receive any financial help in purchasing this house from the archdiocese of other family parishes?

No. This purchase was made entirely from their individual resources.

When will priests move?

Currently Fr. Olsen's primary residence is in Lindsay. When the rectory in Leigh became available in May, Fr. Olsen began staying there when he had masses in the morning in Humphrey. Once the rectory in Humphrey is available, Fr. Olsen will stay in Humphrey on nights where he has mass there in the morning and in Lindsay on nights he has mass in the morning in Lindsay. He will usually stay in Leigh on his day off and on the Saturday night he has mass in the morning).

When Clarkson is added to the family on 7/1/23, both the pastor and the assistant's primary residence will be in Humphrey, and potentially stay in other rectories if it is convenient for them.

What's the timeline for these changes?

All of these changes are part of a proposal that will be submitted to the Archbishop in November. The entire plan will either be accepted by the archbishop or returned to the committee to make revisions.

If the Archbishop approves our proposal, changes will be made as conditions merit. Some changes, such as mass schedule, will happen immediately on 7/1/23. Some changes, such as restructuring personnel, will occur as transition merits (e.g. the existing bookkeeper moves on). Other changes, such as whatever the archbishop proposes for the schools, may take more time to implement, but movement toward them will begin 7/1/23.