

Connected in the Spirit Planning Process Update

The first three steps in the *Connected in the Spirit* process are completed.

- STEP #1 -- Conversation** at the Archdiocesan, Parish and Cohort level
- STEP #2 -- Suggestion** of a particular Model (Linked Parishes, Merged Parish, Partnership Parishes, In Solidum/Team) with a rationale to the Archdiocesan Planning Commission by the Cohort Core Team.
- STEP #3 -- Preliminary Recommendations** of the Archdiocesan Planning Commission with a rationale back to the Cohort of Parishes.

The Cohort Team (composed of St. Anthony, Holy Trinity, and St. Christopher) received the preliminary recommendation from the Archdiocesan Planning Commission on October 15. (Their Preliminary Recommendation is different from what the Cohort team suggested in Step #2.)

Preliminary Recommendation from Archdiocesan Planning Commission:

MODEL: Merged Parishes – Holy Trinity parish merges into St. Anthony parish. Holy Trinity Church is to be available for existing parishioners for weddings and funerals, and during the Slovenian festival.

MODEL: Partnership Parishes between St. Anthony parish and St. Christopher parishes.

The Planning Commission recommended further that:

1. Develop a coordinated Mass schedule with St. Anthony.
2. A well-integrated and comprehensive catechetical plan be developed for the partnered parishes.
3. Using available Archdiocesan resources, a focused and sustainable plan for outreach to the unchurched, alienated, and inactive of the area be developed jointly by the two parishes.
4. Strengthen training for liturgical and lay ministries.
5. Plan and implement vocation awareness programs including clergy, vowed religious, marriage and single life.
6. Recognize the gifts of the people from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds and reach out to meet their needs.
7. Take active steps to study a joint RCIA, Youth Ministry Program, Social Outreach, Adult Religious Education Programs, and promotion of Catholic schools in the area.
8. Begin to discuss the appropriate working group(s) structure (e.g. task force, steering committee, etc.) to develop specificity in plans for partnership.

What does this partnership mean to St. Christopher?

This partnership will require that we develop relationships beyond our St. Christopher parish community. We will collaborate with St. Anthony to explore ways we can be stronger and more effective through our partnership.

In order to be successful, the members of the St. Christopher, St. Anthony and Holy Trinity parishes must work together to enable the partnership mission. The lay community must take ownership to make this partnership successful.

What are the next steps?

The next step (**Step #4** in the process) is to begin Conversations about the Preliminary Recommendations. We will discuss our concerns and other ideas we may have.

As the kickoff to the Conversation step, parishioners were invited for sharing and discussion about the recommendation after Masses last weekend. If you were not able to attend or have additional feedback for the Core Team, please direct your message to Dan Krodel at dankrodel@hotmail.com. Your input is needed as the Cohort Team (St. Anthony, Holy Trinity, and St. Christopher) prepares its response.

Step #5 is our Response to the Preliminary Recommendation which is due by December 8, 2013. The Response is made by the Cohort Core team (St. Anthony, Holy Trinity and St. Christopher) to the Archdiocese. This response will include the Cohorts expressing our rationale for our response.

In January the Planning Commission will review the Cohort Responses and make final recommendations to the Archbishop. The Archbishop will consult with the Priests' Council and other advisory bodies. He will pray about the recommendations and the advice he gets from the Priests' Council and others. The Archbishop will make a decision about the reconfiguration of parishes in the Indianapolis Deaneries of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in the spring of 2014.

Please continue to pray for the success of the Connected in the Spirit process that the Holy Spirit will guide the Cohort Core Team as they look for ways to suggest good stewardship practices for our parish and our cohort partners.