

Developing Recommendations re: Families of Parishes per Deanery
Fall – 2015
Facilitation Process

Preamble:

Following are **guiding principles** for the implementation of this process. It is important that all deaneries follow this process as closely as possible. **If there are significant obstacles to implementing the process as outlined, please contact Father Paul Baillargeon or Connie Paré.**

- Participants include Priests, Deacons and Lay Ecclesial Ministers serving in the parishes, clusters and Catholic Communities of the deanery and any other members from other Catholic institutions/organizations such as school boards, hospital chaplains, etc. who regularly attend deanery meetings. **Members of Parish Pastoral Councils, Finance Committees or other volunteer leaders should not be invited to participate at this time.** These persons are to be consulted prior to the deanery process. (See outline for these steps.)
- This is meant to be a transparent process in that the recommendations that will flow from this process are expected to be shared with other parish leaders and parishioners.
- **One set** of recommendations is expected to go forward to the Task Force from each deanery. It will not be helpful if a series of options of how parishes **might** be grouped is developed. It is the work of the deanery leadership to present to the Task Force, the Council of Priests and, ultimately, to Bishop Fabbro, their **best** recommendations of how parishes/clusters or Catholic Communities should be grouped. If it is not possible for a deanery to reach consensus as to which parishes are to form Families of Parishes, optional steps listed should be employed or assistance should be sought from Father Paul Baillargeon or Connie Paré.
- Families of Parishes can be based on geography, affinity, past ministry collaboration, sharing of programs and/or resources, shared language and/or culture.
- Within all our deaneries parishes have diverse levels of resources. In the grouping process, it will be important to be aware of this fact in order that the Families of Parishes reflect this diversity and we do not create exclusive groupings.

A Family of Parishes is not to exceed 1000 registered families in rural areas, 7000 registered families in urban areas and/or 3000 registered families in combined town and country areas.

- It may become necessary in grouping parishes to break existing clusters. Leaders and members of clusters have generally spent much time and energy in bringing together the parishes in the cluster. Therefore, the breaking of clusters should only be done as a last resort.
- The Episcopal Vicar is to facilitate the meeting or, if is deemed opportune by the deanery executive, secure the services from an outside facilitator so that all members can participate fully.
- **Crossing Deanery Boundaries:** Traditional deanery boundaries should not hinder the formation of the new Families of Parishes. As deanery leaders develop their Families of Parishes, it may require that some Families cross traditional deanery boundaries. Should this occur, where a Family of Parishes takes in territory from two or more deaneries, the Episcopal Vicars and/or the Deanery Executives of the deaneries involved should be consulted and agreement on the make-up of the Family should be achieved. In the event that no agreement is possible, Father Paul Baillargeon or Connie Paré should be contacted. It will then be to the Task Force to finalize the make-up of this particular Family.

Process Outline: Prior to Deanery Meeting

- Materials required:
 - Copies of parish and deanery data for each participant
 - Chart paper
 - Markers
 - Refreshments
- Consulting Parish/Cluster Pastoral Councils (PPCs) , Finance Committees (FCs)and other parish leaders:

This past spring, Father Paul Baillargeon and Connie Paré met with members of Parish/Cluster Pastoral Councils, Finance Committees and other parish leaders throughout the diocese to update them on the work of the Task Force and to ask them to assist in the communication of information related to the work of the Task Force.

As a continuation of their involvement in this initiative, Pastors, Parish Administrators and Pastoral Teams are requested to consult their PPCs, FCs and other leaders prior to the meeting of deanery personnel to develop parish groupings.

The **purpose** of this meeting is to seek the wisdom of these groups and individuals as to which parishes and/or Catholic Communities they believe their parish should be grouped with. **This is an important step in transparency and in acknowledging that the wisdom and experience of all leaders can only enhance this process and foster ownership of this reorganization process in parishes.**

Process Steps:

- Invite PPC, FC members and others to divide into groups of five with representation from each body in each small group.
- Distribute June 2015 communiqué.
- Review the data provided on your parish and the deanery data.
- Detail for them past and present relationships your parish/cluster/Catholic Community has or has had with other area parishes (it could be that your parish is a “mother parish” to other parishes), shared ministries or resources, etc. ask each group to recommend one possible grouping of parishes/Catholic Communities that includes their parish.
- Receive feedback from leaders as to which parishes they believe would be the best partners for their parish.
- **Please note:** This is a consultation. Pastors and Parish Administrators are not bound to adhere to the suggestions provided by the PPC, FC and/or other members.

The hope is that the PPC, FC and others leaders will reach consensus as to which parishes should form this particular Family of Parishes that the Pastor/Administrator may take forward for presentation at the deanery meeting.

- **Pastor: if you are comfortable with the recommendation from your parish/cluster leaders, chart the recommended Family of Parishes and be prepared to present this recommendation to the members at the deanery meeting.**
- Advise leaders that you will again consult with them after you have attended the deanery meeting with the recommendation that will come from that meeting as to how all parishes and Catholic Communities in the deanery are to be grouped.

Process Outline: Deanery Meeting

- Time Frame: 3 hours
- Materials required: (Kit containing supplies (with the exception of refreshments) will be provided to each deanery)
 - Wall chart of deanery stats

- Copies of parish and deanery data along with a copy of this process for each priest, deacon and lay ecclesial minister.
 - Extra copies of parish and deanery stats for participants
 - Pad of Chart paper
 - Markers
 - Painter's Tape
 - Refreshments
- Welcome and Opening Prayer
 - Review of Process Goal:
 - Provide the Task Force, the Council of Priests and, ultimately, Bishop Fabbro with **one set** of recommendations as to how parishes in specific deaneries or across deanery boundaries might be grouped into Families of Parishes.
 - Recommend one Family of Parishes in the deanery as a possible pilot parish in the diocese.
 - Each parish/cluster posts the recommendation for their Family of Parishes from the meeting of their PPC, FC and other parish leaders. Participants take a few minutes to review charts.

The Pastor/Administrator/member of the Pastoral Team details the rationale that underlies the recommendation posted.

If there is consensus on how the parishes are to be grouped from the charts presented (parishes all agree that they are appropriately grouped), this will be a very short meeting.

If there is consensus of "some" of the groupings, place them aside and concentrate on the groupings that remain. If necessary, these groupings can always be brought back into the conversation.

- Where there is **no consensus** on the recommended parish groupings, follow these steps:
 - Participants detail pros and cons to each recommendation as they presently stand. Meeting leader or facilitator records pros and cons.
 - Participants clarify any concerns.
 - Participants offer new possibilities
 - Consensus is again sought on amended recommendations
- After each grouping has been addressed, if there is still no consensus, one of the following steps may be taken:

1. Parish leaders from the parishes/clusters involved caucus for 20 minutes to see if consensus can be achieved. **OR**
 2. The meeting is adjourned and parishes/clusters take time to consult with their PPCs, FCs and other parish leaders. A future meeting date is determined. **OR**
 3. The Episcopal Vicar and Deanery Executive caucus and bring forward recommendation to the group that is binding. **OR**
 4. Seek the assistance of Father Paul Baillargeon or Connie Paré
- Episcopal Vicar and Deanery Executive prepare recommendations that will be forwarded to the Task Force. Participants signify their agreement with these recommendations for the Families of Parishes in their deanery.
 - Deanery leaders decide on the date when they will advise Parish Pastoral Councils, Finance Committees and then parishioners of the recommended make-up of the Families of Parishes that will be forwarded to the Task Force, Council of Priests and to Bishop Fabbro. **Please note: Recommendations only will be forwarded.**
 - Pastors and pastoral teams share the recommendations with members of their Parish Pastoral Councils, Finance Committee members and other parish leaders who participated in the initial meeting.

Please note: Once the Task Force has received recommendations from all the deaneries, should it be necessary to amend any of these recommendations, Father. Paul Baillargeon will contact the Episcopal Vicar(s) for the deanery or deaneries and advise them of such action and the subsequent rationale. Deanery Executives will have adequate time to consult with the parishes concerned and appeal the change to the Task Force.

Once the Task Force has a complete set of recommendations, these recommendations will be forwarded to Bishop Fabbro for acceptance or further study. The Council of Priests will be involved in the consultation prior to Bishop Fabbro's announcing his decisions to the diocese.