

## **Pastoral Planning for the Northwest Catholic Parishes**

### **Pastoral Councils Gathering**

**Tuesday, October 30, 2018, 6:30-8:00 p.m., at St. Catherine Parish**

Pastoral Council members attending included Sue Neimi, Sue Armacost, Pat Lehman, Barbara Holt, Ralph Boeckl, Rick Korpela, Nicole Hartley, Les Paulson, Patrick O'Neil, Bill Protz, Sue Wassenberg, and Debbie Hintz from St. Catherine's, Penny Potter, Richard Krueger, Carla Kohlschmidt, Sandy Swanson, Margie Kaczmarek, Dave Dorgan, Peter Gray, Peg Harloff, Aruna Halala and Mary Muza from Our Lady of Good Hope, and Ron Buehner, Sister Pat Obremski, Sue Riedijk, Dave Tishim, Ginny McFadden, Janean Leahy, Fr. Greg Greiten, Mark Quever, Tom Schwalbach, and Bill Zirbes from St. Bernadette's.

Those attending the meeting were assigned to one of several tables to ensure that there would be a mixture of participants from the three participating Pastoral Councils (from St. Catherine, St. Bernadette, and Our Lady of Good Hope). Debbie Hintz, our parish director, welcomed those attending and led them in an opening prayer.

Mark Kemmeter, Director of the Office for Planning and Councils for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, offered an overview of the meeting, including a summarization of the Key Area Demographics and Parish Data participants would be discussing. 80% of parishioners live within the shaded area in the demographics closely surrounding the location of the three parishes. High poverty is one key characteristic of this area. Some folks within the area regard the Church as warm and friendly, while others regard it as judgmental and a turn-off. Older folks prefer communication in printed form, while younger folks tend to prefer digital media. Each of the three parishes has experienced to greater or lesser degree decreasing membership, decreasing attendance, decreasing baptisms and decreasing confirmations.

Those at each table spent some discussing which demographics and data points need attention, after which there was a sampling of the discussions in the large group.

Mark Kemmeter guided the group into a consideration of a worksheet on Potential Future Directions, after which he called on those at each table to follow the worksheet and Add to, Delete from, or Edit the Potential Future Directions. These were then discussed at each table. Following a significant period of discussion, summaries were presented to Mr. Kemmeter. From those willing to participate, a writing group was to be selected.

Bishop Jeffrey Haines presented some summary thoughts. In response to concerns, he insisted there would be no mandated mergers; mergers must be petitioned for by parishes. But we will have to work together. He insisted also that no option for action should move ahead without having been discussed. Bishop Haines concluded the meeting with prayer and a blessing.

Submitted by Les Paulson, Secretary