

CONTINUING TO PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE

Implementing the Fourth Plan for Parishes 2020 and Beyond

“Through pastoral planning, the merging of parishes is resulting in greater numbers of worshippers at fewer weekend liturgies, a reasonable workload for our priests, and parishioners actively involved with the New Evangelization.”

WE CONTINUE TO MAKE MUCH PROGRESS

The Diocese of New Ulm continues to implement the *Fourth Plan for Parishes* in union with priests, deacons, religious, parish and diocesan staff, and parishioners throughout the diocese.

In implementing the *Plan* over the last four years, I have been in consultation with the diocesan Committee on Parishes, the Priests’ Council, the Priest Personnel Board, and many others. Tom Keaveny, the director of Pastoral Planning, and I, have met with priests, parish leaders and staff, committees and parishioners in every region of the diocese to address the necessity of parish mergers. Since I became bishop, four of our 77 parishes have been closed and four are considered merged with receiving parishes as we continue to address parish population declines and fewer diocesan priests to celebrate weekend Masses.


These and other efforts have enabled increased collaboration of staff and the efficient sharing of parish resources and talents in many of our area faith communities. Some of these area faith communities are beginning new initiatives to reach out to inactive Catholics and to others we want to welcome into our parishes. I am especially grateful for the efforts of the pastors, staff and parishioners who have worked so hard to move forward with these challenging pastoral planning transitions. Through pastoral planning, the merging of parishes is resulting in greater numbers of worshippers at fewer weekend liturgies, a reasonable workload for our priests, and with parishioners actively involved with the New Evangelization.

WE ARE LIVING IN DIFFERENT TIMES

When the diocese was founded in 1957 there were 68,094 Catholics, 98 priests, 86 parishes, seven Catholic high schools, and 37 Catholic grade schools. Sixty-five percent of U.S. Catholics were attending Weekend Masses.

Today the statistics look much different.

1957		2017
285,394	•General Population	280,243
68,094	•Catholic Population	53,329
98	•Active Priests	34
86	•Parishes with Weekend Masses	69
44	•Catholic Schools	17

 Today only 33% of U.S. Catholics attend Weekend Masses compared to 65% in 1957.

Projections show that the number of active priests serving in the diocese, age 70 and under, will decline in the next five years to a total as low as 27. In addition, due to deaths and smaller Catholic families, the diocese is losing over 1,000 parishioners per year. About 33 percent of registered Catholics in our parishes attend Mass on the weekends and the decrease in active parishioners usually means a decrease in financial support for parish facilities, as well as fewer people to plan and work at parish activities.

Prayer - Planning - Possibilities
(back side)

For a copy of the *Diocesan Plan for Parishes: From 2013 to 2020 and Beyond* visit www.dnu.org/fourthplan/ or call 507-233-5339.

Prayer - Planning - Possibilities

THE NECESSITY OF PARISH MERGERS

Clearly, it is not feasible to continue operating with as many small parishes as we have in the past. The merging of our parishes and support for efforts to strengthen our area faith communities is a priority as we plan for our future.

It is significant to note that with just 17 fewer parishes with weekend Masses since the inception of the diocese, the number of priests has declined by 64, which means increased expectations for our priests. I observe the effects of this stress on our priests. With weekend schedules that include weddings, funerals and three or more weekend Masses at multiple locations, we need to continue to merge our smaller parishes. Many of our weekend Masses have fewer than 100 participants and our smaller parishes have very few children, signaling major declines in parish populations. Many weekday Masses in our diocese have fewer than 15 participants.

Merging some of our small parishes is a necessity. In a merger, the assets of the merged parish – such as its church building, its cemetery (if it has one), and other financial resources – become the responsibility of the receiving parish. Parishioners are engaged in the receiving parish and they join where their families attend school or participate in other area faith community liturgies and activities. It is NOT true that the church building of a merged parish automatically shuts down once a merger takes place. Baptisms, funerals, weddings, special weekend Masses, and other forms of divine worship still occur. Weekday Masses are celebrated depending on the availability of our priests.

THE OVERALL GOAL

The goal of the Fourth Plan for Parishes and our pastoral planning is to look honestly and prayerfully at the situation in the Diocese of New Ulm. Parish mergers are only part of the Plan. Parishioners are being asked to invite back home those who have left the church and to welcome those who are new to our communities. More parishes are working together with strategies for a New Evangelization as they plan for the future.


As I visit parishes, I see a new vibrancy already evident in area faith communities where weekend Mass schedules have been adjusted in light of attendance declines. Due to fewer Masses, the number of people at each Mass has increased. The sense of community is stronger. The worshipping communities are more robust. The Mass participation and singing is more vigorous. Priests are less stressed. I believe these changes are positive. With prayer and proper planning, there can be stronger parishes and area faith communities, even though there is real pain and sadness involved as we leave some of the past behind, especially in our smaller merged parishes.

A PRAYERFUL AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

A significant part of the *Plan* is to encourage young men to consider the priesthood and to pray that more young men answer God's call to be priests. Currently, the diocese has nine men in the seminary. Most still have many years of formation ahead. Please pray for their continued priestly formation and that more men will answer God's call.

As the bishop of the diocese, I need help as we continue to make decisions about pastoral planning. I value the input from everyone in the diocese: priests, deacons, parish and diocesan staff, parishioners, and so many who volunteer on committees and in their parishes. Please share your ideas with your pastor, pastoral planning staff, and parish leadership. Be supportive of their efforts to address these issues. All of us are members of the diocese and all of us are called to work together. Prayer and honest dialogue will help me to discern what God's will is for us as a diocese. Please continue to support pastoral planning efforts to create realistic weekend Mass schedules, consolidate parish operations, and merge parishes when necessary. Through pastoral planning, we are not losing our history. Rather we are changing our structures and the way that we celebrate our faith based on an honest and prayerful look at what is happening in our parishes and in our diocese.

May Jesus Christ be our guiding light.


+ John M. LeVoir
The Most Reverend John M. LeVoir
Bishop of New Ulm

Area Faith Communities in the Diocese of New Ulm

CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS AS OF JUNE 26, 2018

KEY:

- Current Agreement between the Dioceses of St. Cloud and New Ulm 2/1/14
- AFC With One Pastor
- Independent Parish
- Quasi-AFC With One Pastor
- AFC With More Than One Pastor or Pastoral Administrator
- Parish
- Cratory
- Power of faculties in main territory of FC
- Power of faculties in other territory of FC
- No Weekend Mass
- Hispanic Worship Site
- Pastor serving as administrator
- Pastor serving in the AFC

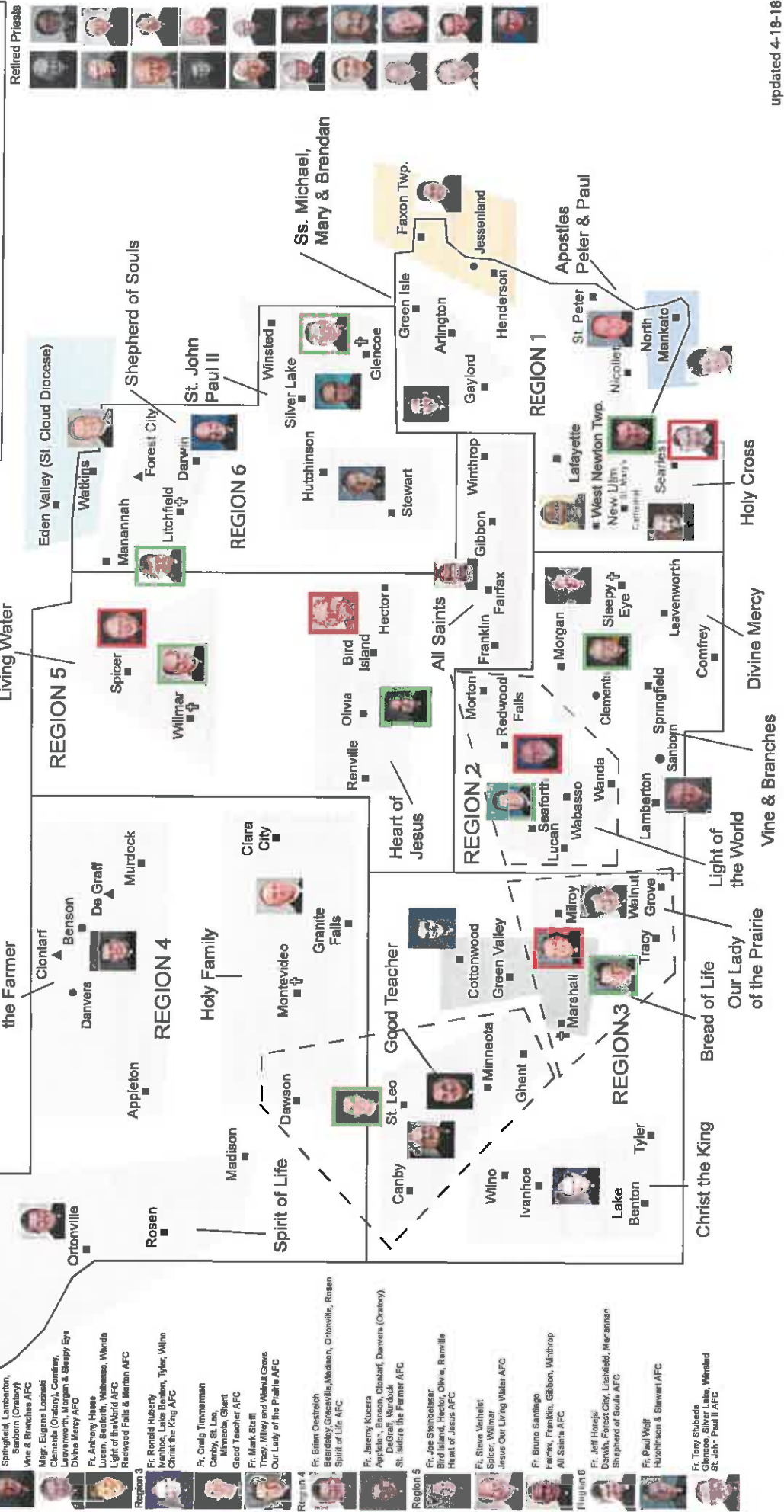


Figure 4.1

Diocese of New Ulm Parish Vitality Index

Source: Annual Parish Self Study, Annual Parish Financial Reports

Parish	PVI Score	Parish	PVI Score	Parish	PVI Score	Parish	PVI Score
Nassau	3.3	Forest City	14.4	West Newton Twp.	20.3	Benson	49.1
Walnut Grove	4.3	Murdock	14.6	Tyler	21.3	Canby	51.2
Green Isle	6.2	Henderson	14.7	Renville	21.4	Bird Island	51.6
DeGraff	6.5	Appleton	14.8	Searles	21.7	Watkins	54.0
Lake Lillian	7.7	Morton	15.5	Fairfax	22.3	Silver Lake	54.7
Clontarf	8.2	Lamberton	15.6	Clara City	23.7	Springfield	57.4
Beardsley	8.2	Ivanhoe	15.7	Wilno	24.7	Glencoe	61.3
St. Leo	9.8	Hector	16.0	Graceville	25.1	Spicer	62.6
Franklin	10.8	Dawson	16.1	Ortonville	27.9	Redwood Falls	66.9
Lake Benton	11.1	Gaylord	16.4	Arlington	30.2	Litchfield	67.7
Stewart	11.9	Faxon Township	16.4	Granite Falls	30.4	Winsted	88.5
Winthrop	12.0	Leavenworth	16.6	Manannah	31.0	North Mankato	88.9
Seaforth	12.3	Kandyohi	17.4	Tracy	31.6	Hutchinson	91.1
Lafayette	12.4	Madison	17.4	Morgan	32.9	St. Peter	91.6
Rosen	12.6	Millroy	18.0	Olivia	32.9	New Ulm St. Mary's	92.0
Green Valley	12.7	Comfrey	18.3	Montevideo	36.3	Sleepy Eye	92.5
Gibbon	13.9	Nicollet	18.5	Wabasso	36.7	New Ulm Cathedral	94.9
Lucan	14.2	Ghent	19.7	Darwin	38.5	Willmar	97.4
Wanda	14.2	Cottonwood	20.2	Minneota	46.0	Marshall	100.0

HEART OF JESUS AFC
Self Study Stats 2016-2017

PARISH NAME	AGE 0-5		AGE 6-12		AGE 13-17		AGE 18-29		AGE 30-69		AGE 70+ ADULTS		TOTAL ADULTS		PARISH POPUL		# HOUSE-HOLDS		# ADULT ENVELOPE		# \$50+ DONORS		% \$50+ DONORS TO ADULT ENV	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
BIRD ISLAND	65	171	97	486	163	746	17	982	431	430	275	64%												
HECTOR	11	22	48	118	52	218	56	251	138	112	67	60%												
OLIVIA	29	83	48	343	170	561	29	673	358	350	183	52%												
RENVILLE	9	73	27	114	39	180	91	262	139	133	73	55%												
TOTAL	114	349	220	1061	424	1705	193	2168	1066	1025	598													

PARISH NAME	MINOR BAPT (0-7)		ADULT BAPT (18+)		RCIA FULL COM		CON FIRMA TION		# INTER-FAITH MARR		TOTAL MARR		TOTAL FUNRL		LFT MIN VLNTR	
	11	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
BIRD ISLAND	11	0	0	18	5	2	8	14								
HECTOR	5	1	0	1	0	1	2	3								
OLIVIA	6	0	0	8	6	0	2	19								
RENVILLE	5	0	0	6	0	0	0	5								
TOTAL	27	1	0	33	11	3	9	41								

PARISH NAME	RELEED FROM HOME		RELEED FROM K-12		RELEED FROM PRSH		TOTAL OWN PRSH TO DIFF		CATH SCH FROM DIFF		TOTAL STUDENTS IN PRGMS		NOT INVOLVED SCHOOL/REL ED		TOTAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATTENDED	
	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
BIRD ISLAND	5	41	19	84	0	43	127	192	22	171	171	22	171	22	171	Bird Island, Olivia
HECTOR	0	18	1	26	0	1	0	26	2	22	22	2	22	2	22	Buffalo Lake, Hector, Cosmos, Stewart, Bird Island
OLIVIA	0	25	24	44	0	21	0	44	0	44	44	13	83	13	83	Olivia, Bird Island, Danube, Renville, Sacred Heart
RENVILLE	0	73	0	73	0	0	0	73	0	73	73	0	73	0	73	Belview, Danube, Renville, Sacred Heart
TOTAL	5	157	44	227	84	22	43	335	37	349	349	37	349	37	349	

PARISH NAME	SEAT CHUR		AVE # ALL MASS		AVE # WKD MASS		AVE # XMAS ESTER		% OF POP		# PAST LDRS		FT EQUIV PAST LDRS		FT EQV PRF STIF PAR		FT EQV SCH STIF		# PAR & SCH STIFF		# RE TCHR PRE-12	
	550	280	281	29%	94	37%	75	627	64%	3 <th>0.71 <th>3 <th>7 <th>2.08 <th>23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th></th></th></th></th></th>	0.71 <th>3 <th>7 <th>2.08 <th>23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th></th></th></th></th>	3 <th>7 <th>2.08 <th>23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th></th></th></th>	7 <th>2.08 <th>23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th></th></th>	2.08 <th>23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th></th>	23 <th>18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th></th>	18.11 <th>33 <th>6 </th></th>	33 <th>6 </th>	6				
BIRD ISLAND	550	280	281	29%	94	37%	75	627	64%	3	0.71	3	7	2.08	23	18.11	33	6				
HECTOR	280	1	94	37%	75	30%	3	0.54	3	6	0.89	6	0	0.89	0	0	9	4				
OLIVIA	375	241	470	36%	145	70%	3	0.68	3	6	3.23	6	0	3.23	0	0	9	6				
RENVILLE	260	1	107	41%	723	55%	3	0.64	3	5	0.63	5	0	0.63	0	0	8	10				
TOTAL	1465	2	723	39%	1317	89%	24	6.63	24	24	6.63	24	24	6.63	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	

PARISH NAME	# PAR CEM		CEM SIZE PERPET PLOT ACRES		CEM OPERATI NG FUND		TOTAL CEM FUNDS		ACTUAL INCOME		ACTUAL EXPENSE		ACTUAL NET	
	1	1	11	4	12,390 <th>19,327 <th>56,462 <th>1,096,676 <th>1,159,218 <th><63,042> </th></th></th></th></th>	19,327 <th>56,462 <th>1,096,676 <th>1,159,218 <th><63,042> </th></th></th></th>	56,462 <th>1,096,676 <th>1,159,218 <th><63,042> </th></th></th>	1,096,676 <th>1,159,218 <th><63,042> </th></th>	1,159,218 <th><63,042> </th>	<63,042>				
BIRD ISLAND	1	11	11	44,072	12,390	19,327	56,462	1,096,676	1,159,218	<63,042>				
HECTOR	1	4	4	22,314	19,327	41,641	107,332	109,183	<1,851>					
OLIVIA	1	8	3	53,450	34,412	87,862	302,775	320,183	<17,408>					
RENVILLE	1	12	4	4,647	10,201	14,848	110,123	91,266	18,857					

Hutchinson-Stewart-Hector Self Study Stats 2016-2017

PARISH NAME	AGE 0-5	AGE 6-17	AGE 18-29	AGE HSG-ADULTS 30-69	ADULTS 70+	TOTAL ADULTS	HSPTS	PARISH POPUL	# HOUSE-HOLDS	# ADULT ENVELOPE	# \$50+ DONORS	% \$50+ DONORS TO ADULT ENV
HUTCHINSON	81	392	295	1146	358	1799	298	2272	994	965	514	53%
STEWART	12	35	33	139	32	204	7	251	122	89	53	60%
TOTAL	93	427	328	1285	390	2003	305	2523	1116	1054	567	

PARISH NAME	MINOR BAPT (0-7)	MINOR BAPT (7-17)	ADULT BAPT (18+)	RCIA FULL COM	CON FIRMA TION	# INTER-FAITH MARR	TOTAL MARR	TOTAL FUNRL	LIT MIN VLNTR
HUTCHINSON	17	1	0.00	2	45	2	3	5	20
STEWART	3	0	0.00	1	4	0	2	2	3
TOTAL	20	1	0	3	49	2	5	7	23

PARISH NAME	REL ED HOME K-12	REL ED PRSH K-12	REL ED TO DIFF PRSH	REL ED FROM DIFF PRSH	TOTAL REL ED	CATH SCH OWN PRSH K-12	SCH TO DIFF PRSH K-12	CATH FROM DIFF PRSH K-12	TOTAL CATH SCHOOL	TOTAL STUDENTS IN PRGMS	INVOLVED-SCHOOLR EL ED	PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATTENDED
HUTCHINSON	3	136	0	0	139	59	0	22	81	220	194	392
STEWART	2	28	5	0	30	0	0	0	0	30	0	35
TOTAL	5	164	5	0	169	59	0	22	81	250	194	427

PARISH NAME	SEAT CHUR	# WKD MASS	AVE # ALL MASS	AVE # XMAS ESTER	% OF POP	# PAST LDRS	FT EQUIV PAST LDRS	# PAR STIFF	FT EQUIV PRF STIFF	# CATH SCHL STIFF	FT EQUIV PROF STIFF	# PAR & SCHL STIFF	# RE TCHR PRE-12
HUTCHINSON	700	2	641	1203	53%	1	0.8	9	5.55	14	11.91	10	23
STEWART	300	1	110	172	69%	1	0.2	4	0.78	0	0	5	6
TOTAL	1000	3	751	1375	1	2	1	13	6	14	12	15	29

PARISH NAME	# PAR CEM	CEM SIZE ACRES	CEM SIZE PLOT ACRES	PERPET CARE FUND	CEM OPERATIN G FUND	TOTAL CEM FUNDS	ACTUAL 2016-2017 INCOME	ACTUAL 2016-2017 EXPENSE	ACTUAL 2016-2017 NET
HUTCHINSON	1	4.00	3.50	\$110,903	\$53,724	\$164,627	\$1,636,007	\$1,615,508	\$20,499
STEWART	1	4.00	2.00	\$57,922	\$9,115	\$67,037	\$77,193	\$114,946	<\$37,753>

INCLUDES "RESTRICTED" REVENUE & EXPENSES

Hutchinson, Stewart, Brownston-Buffalo Lako-Hector, Hutchinson

Figure 5.19
 Diocese of New Ulm
 Region 5
 Church Sizes and
 Mass Attendance, 2017
 Source: Annual Parish Self Study
 2016-2017

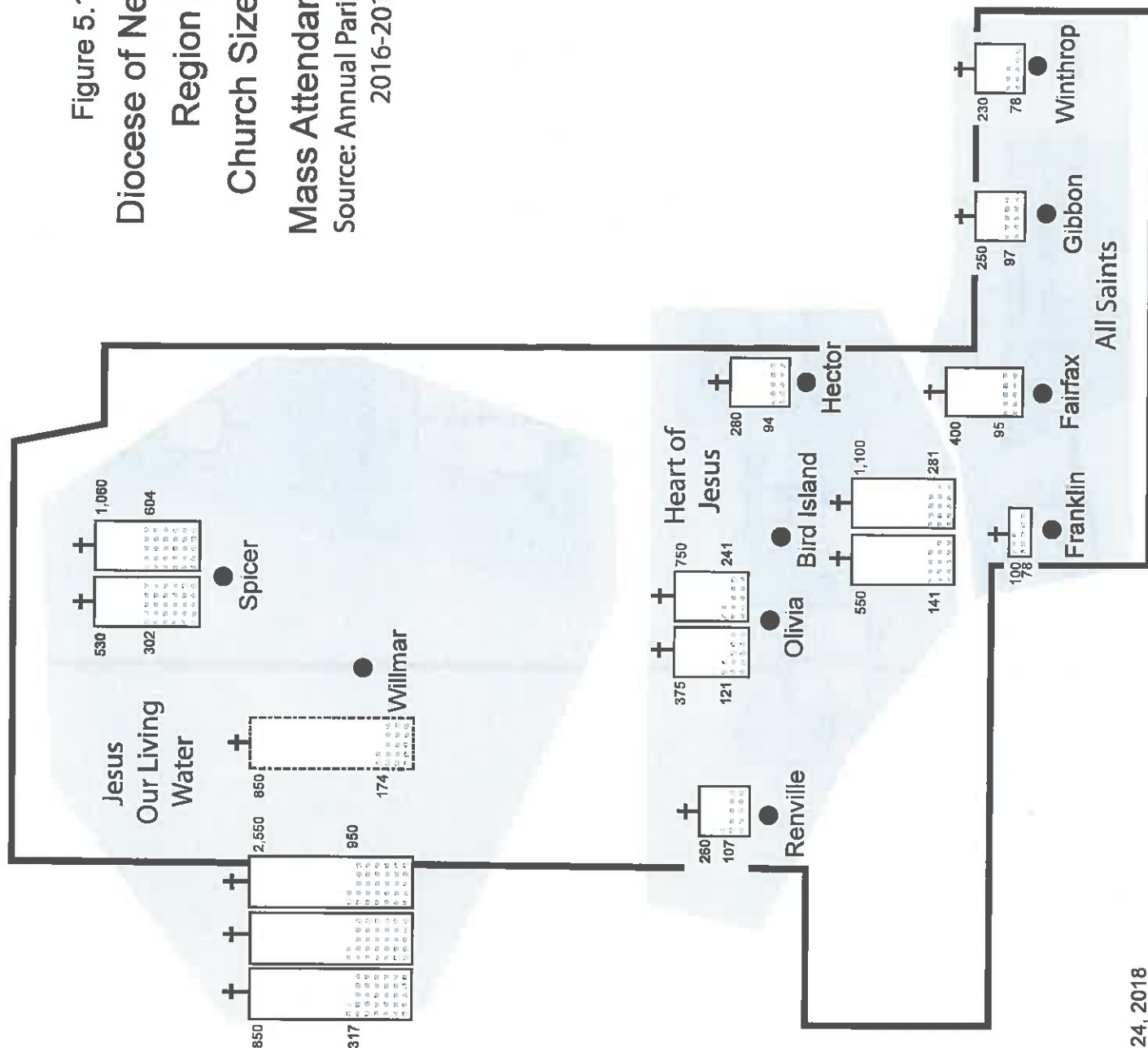


Figure 5.20
 Diocese of New Ulm
 Region 6
 Church Sizes and
 Mass Attendance, 2017
 Source: Annual Parish Self Study
 2016-2017

