

Grouped Responses from Pastoral and Finance Councils October 2024

Note: The below attempts to cover the responses to each question and are not necessarily verbatim. Where duplicate thoughts were seen, only one statement is included.....no attempt was made to “rank” responses.

What was your initial reaction to this recommendation, i.e. how did you feel about it?

I am concerned that our priests will (eventually) be spread too thin to cover all the needs of our parishioners.

I like the idea of having additional administrators, but I would like to see people other than deacons for this. I think our deacons are already stretched too thin and would rather they focused more on outreach than administrative needs.

The transition will be difficult for "ALL" parties.

Overall, the Recommendation Report is well thought out and succinct in its presentations. It reflects solid thought and realistic plans. While some areas are stark in presenting current and future realities of the Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Catholic community, it is not overly dramatic or dismal in its outlook

Happy we're being proactive

I was surprised that this discussion/collaboration was going on, but glad to hear that it was. My impression was that it was well thought out with considerations of appropriate areas.

My first reaction was that it's very high level, and the potential clusters don't really seem to consider how each one will look from the point of view of the general parishioner in the pew on Sunday. My second reaction was that the 3 Shared Committees (Vocations, Evangelization and Shared Resources) were a very good idea and have already borne fruit for all seven Parishes involved.

What's missing? What hasn't the Task Force considered?

Evangelism: the recommendation seems incomplete. Effective evangelism is best performed by the individual parishioners to families, friends and neighbors; yet, this is not stressed in the recommendation and it is not emphasized by any encouragement

Vocations: The efforts to encourage vocations in the current paradigm is laudable. However is there any thought given to vocalizing the significant concern to extend vocations to the permanent diaconate to women and the priesthood to married men and women? I realize that this change cannot be acted on locally, but it can be voiced to those who can enact change.

Prayer: Once the Report is made public, we can encourage prayer to support these recommendations and the future of our Catholic community in individual personal prayer and prayers of intercessions at Sunday Masses.

Since the “opening” of the pastoral leadership is so very important (as you indicate on page 6 of 8), the task force should list all of the current Priests in these 7 Parishes somewhere in the beginning (pages 1-3)

I think there should be some statements to quantify the success of these areas: increases in Mass attendance, sacraments, faith formation & enrichment classes, number of people considering vocations.

How any changes/clustering will affect Parishioners in the pews on Sunday (not just around Mass but sacramentally as well), esp. ones who aren't very involved in Parish Life outside of Mass attendance and maybe their kids attend Religious Ed.

What additions or changes would you make to the draft recommendation?

I think that moving forward it is important that all parishes in our community be made aware of the impending possible changes and to be able to voice their opinions and offer suggestions to the Task Force. This is something that affects everyone, and each and every one of us should have the opportunity to be involved in the process.

In the case of eventual closure of parishes, keeping the churches that have a larger capacity should be one item always to be considered. Consideration should be given to which of the parishes are most saleable in today's real estate market to allow for sale in a reasonable time.

An addition may be to add in the “conclusion” section a bit of the presumed process for a proposed clustering. If that is, for example, the task force gets community input and forwards that to the Bishop, who then makes a decision, it should be so stated.

It would be potentially valuable and supportive of decision making to have a geographic layout of where the registered Catholics for each parish actually live.

It might be useful to include timelines and/or milestone dates for implementing some of the recommendations.

Address how changes would affect Parishioners (esp. 'Mass only' ones), esp. in the scenarios where there are 2 or less Pastoral Leaders available.

Talk more about the 'benefits' of clustering (better attended Masses, more robust ministries and programs, etc.)

Explain more how a Deacon as Pastoral Administrator would need a Priest on staff as Parochial Vicar to serve at Mass and provide for the Sacramental Life of the Parish.