

PASTORAL REGION ONE: ANOTHER STEP

About five years ago, we began the CUP (Catholic Urban Presence) planning process. Out of this planning effort of our leaders, of our parishioners, and others, a consolidated Catholic School and two Pastoral Regions have now been formed, along with numerous other collaborations and sharings. Indeed, we continue to seek ways to help each other keep a viable Catholic presence in our neighborhoods. And now, our Pastoral Region (St. Benedict, Holy Family & St. Mary's) have begun to take another step in our overall plan into the future – preparing for when we will share one Pastor for all our three parishes. In this regard, we are pleased to announce that the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (aka 'The Spiritans' or 'Holy Ghost Fathers') has offered to provide the Pastor for our Region whenever this move comes to be made (likely in the next 2-4 years), and shortly thereafter, to also provide the Pastor for Pastoral Region Two (our partner in CUP). The Archbishop has graciously accepted their offer (see letter on back of this page). As part of our continuing future planning efforts and ongoing dialogue about such transitions, our three Parish Council's met last Tuesday to begin to create a time-line and plan for preparing for this time when we will be sharing one Pastor, and they brainstormed about how we might best take this step, and how we might learn to better walk together in the Lord.

Some initial ideas that came out of this first brainstorming session were:

- Continue to inform, and include, all parishioners in this process
- Move to one pastor over a period of possibly 2-4 years
- Have the committees of each parish work more together with their counterparts
- Build bridges, and plan towards the day when the committees will be shared across the entire Region
- Discover ways to connect more (e.g., small faith groups, common events, etc.)
- Get to know the Spiritan Congregation better by learning more of their history, focus and the charisms that they bring to their ministry in the Church
- Learn to honor the three histories/personalities/diversity of all three parishes
- Every four months or so, schedule a Regional weekend Mass for all to attend, so that within a year everyone will have had the chance to celebrate Eucharist together at each other's Church
- Share more ministerial roles (e.g., YM, Liturgical Ministries, etc.)

These initial ideas from our Council's stand as an incentive to continue to fine-tune, specify more clearly, and begin to implement this transition. We still have far to go. But, we trust that "the Lord who has done great things for us will bring it to completion". Know that there will be further information provided over the next months, and opportunities for all to share their ideas, give input, ask questions, etc. Along the way, feel free to speak with any of our Priests, Parish Staff, and Parish Council members.

Christ's Peace and Light Always,

The Pastors, Pastoral Staffs & Parish Councils of St. Benedict/Holy Family/St. Mary Churches