

Regional Pastoral Plan - Implementation Process Update  
January 2020

Presbyteral Council, in consultation with the planning subcommittee and the Priests Personnel Board, recommended the following process for implementation to Bishop Murry, who accepted it on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

1. Priests above retirement age in active ministry
  - a. The retirement age for priests in the Diocese of Youngstown is 70. Any priest who is 70 or above and wishes to retire will be permitted to do so.
  - b. Priests who are between 70 and 75 and wish to remain in active ministry will meet with the Bishop on an annual basis.
  - c. In accordance with the Universal Law of the Church, priests who remain in active ministry beyond 70 will be required to submit a letter of resignation no later than their 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.
    - i. For priests who wish to remain in active ministry after 75, there will be an individual review before the Bishop makes a decision.
    - ii. The review will consist of
      1. Medical review
      2. Individual meeting with the priest
      3. Meeting with representatives of the parish(es) which the priest serves.
    - iii. The review will be conducted yearly beginning at age 75.
2. Because of pastoral concern for priests above retirement age in active ministry, full implementation of the number of priests per region will be gradually completed. **Note:** this only applies to priests who are 70 years old and above.
  - a. **Each region will work together to develop, no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>, a proposed weekend Mass schedule with times and locations that best fits the needs of the parishes and the number of priests at full implementation.** The long term success of the parishes should be considered over the personalities of the present priests.
    - i. The diocese will respond no later than March 2<sup>nd</sup> to regions that have already submitted a proposal.
    - ii. The diocese will respond no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> to regions that submit their proposal by March 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. **All regions will implement the number of Masses assigned to the region no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.** This will allow priests:
    - i. the opportunity to participate in other ministries within the region
      1. universities, prisons, hospitals, nursing homes
    - ii. the availability to help each other in times of travel, sickness, and formation
    - iii. to work closely with their parishioners to strengthen the community of faith in preparation for when the number of priests in the region reaches the implementation goal.
  - c. The annual priest survey will ask for interest in further studies or specialized ministry.

3. Expectation of Regions before July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
  - a. Mass times and locations developed in collaboration, given the number of Masses in the region, no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Collaboration options
    - i. Joint Parish Pastoral Council meetings to discuss parish strengths, challenges, and opportunities for collaborative ministries, socials, and prayer.
    - ii. Regional meetings with pastors, parish leaders, and pastoral staff
    - iii. Shared staff in areas such as bookkeeping, musicians, and pastoral staff.
  - c. Evangelization/ministry initiatives
    - i. Regional Evangelization Team
    - ii. Regional Ministries that “go forth”
      1. Youth ministry, young adult ministry, sponsor couples and marriage preparation, RCIA, evangelization, bereavement teams, marriage support and enrichment.
4. Diocesan Evangelization Committee will assist in actively preparing the people and parishes for the changes with a focus on Evangelization
  - a. Evangelization assessment, consultation, and support at individual parishes
  - b. Training and support for regional evangelization teams
  - c. Parishioner retreats on Evangelization
  - d. Develop resources for Evangelization for use in parishes and regions.