

The Diocesan Pastoral Plan: A Future Full of Hope AT A GLANCE

Who:

- The Diocese of Kalamazoo, founded in 1971, with more than 110,000 Catholics in Southwest Michigan is embarking on a historic Diocesan Pastoral Plan – the first of its kind in its almost 45-year-history.
- The 58* priests in the Diocese of Kalamazoo will begin (or continue) assignments to be effective July 1, 2016.
- Twenty-eight will be appointed Pastors and 30 will be assigned as Parochial Vicars and/or Chaplains and other special assignments as noted.

What:

- The 59 parishes of the Diocese are creating 28 Parish Collaboratives. These Collaboratives range from one to three Parishes.
- The Parishes retain individual identities, are lead by one Pastor and additional pastoral staff as assigned. The Parish Collaborative decides on a local level the best opportunities for combining resources and strengthening the faith communities.

When:

- The Parish Collaboratives were announced by Bishop Bradley in January 2016 and will be fully operational on **July 1st , 2016** when the priests assume (or continue) their assignments.

Where:

- The Diocese of Kalamazoo in Southwest Michigan consists of nine counties. The seat of the Diocese is Kalamazoo and St. Augustine Cathedral is the Mother Church of the Diocese.

Why:

- Bishop Bradley wanted a plan that provides the best pastoral care for the people and allowing for all Parishes to remain open.
- The number of priests retiring or about to retire was outpacing the number of priests being ordained.
- The plan is a proactive approach and vocations-hopeful as the Diocese positions itself for growth and the expectation it will need all 59 parishes to best serve the people.

How:

- Beginning in mid-2015 Bishop Bradley began a series of consultations with the priests and lay faithful of the Diocese to create a Diocesan Pastoral Plan to proactively address the priest to parishioner ratio and plan for the best pastoral care of the people.
- Priests were convened and consulted for input and feedback during a series of meetings for six months prior to the January 2016 announcement of the 28 Parish Collaboratives.
- Priests, parish staffs, diocesan personnel and lay volunteers have participated in a number of leadership workshops to best equip them for dealing with the transition and envisioning the new model within the age of the new evangelization.

Next Steps:

- Parish Transition Teams consisting of parishioners from the Parish Collaboratives will help the Pastor guide the transition. Additionally Parish Support Teams consisting of staff of the Diocesan Pastoral Center have been assigned to assist Parish Collaboratives as needed during the transition.

*57 priest's appointments announced on May 23, 2016. One priest, Rev. Vanathaiyan Savarimuthu, MSFS, from the St. Francis de Sales order will arrive in the Diocese in June for official appointment.