

Dear Parishioners of St. Benedict,

This letter is to inform you about our response to the recommendations of the Diocese. A vital part of our response is what you can do to strengthen our parish. As you probably know by now the Diocese is recommending that 3 of our parishes merge based on the spiritual and financial reports from the past 3 to 4 years. The Leadership Team, priest, deacons, and trustees of the six parishes are working on a counterproposal that must be submitted by July 15th. The Diocese will review our proposal and make a final decision by September 1st.

Our Leadership Team is evaluating the spiritual and financial data of each parish to see if it is accurate. Also working on our proposal is a team of staff, Parish Council members and school parents from St. Benedict. Together we are developing a plan to help our parishes grow. Our proposal will not include the closing of three parishes. We will share information about our counter-proposal as it is being developed.

Many parishioners are wondering how they can help. Here are some suggestions:

- Attend Mass and other parish event and encourage a friend to come with you
- Invite someone to become an active member of our parish
- Volunteer to help with upcoming events like the outdoor Mass or Vacation Bible School
- Join an organization or ministry
- Donate to the parish so that bills and payroll expenses can be paid. Money raised will be used for parish needs. When you clearly mention that your donation is for a capital expenditure, that money is restricted and cannot be used for anything else.
- *Most importantly*, we need your prayers. Pray to God for His wisdom and courage to be with us and the Diocese. Pray, also to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph our spiritual parents, and St. Benedict.

*Please, plan on attending a parish wide meeting on June 23rd at 11:30 in the Church.

A quote from Lamentations 3:21-23. "But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope: The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness." I use this quote frequently when my future becomes uncertain.

May Almighty God hold us close to His heart and guide our steps.

In Christ,
Fr. David
Fr. David Bellittiere
Pastor

