

Phase 2: Local Area Plan Report Form

To be completed by the Local Planning Area Facilitators.

E-mail completed report to the Office of Pastoral Planning: eneu@richmonddiocese.org by **May 31, 2008**.

A copy of this form can be downloaded from the Diocesan website

www.richmonddiocese.org/PlanningGuidelines.pdf

1. Local Planning Area: 12
2. Name of person completing this report: Frank Squillace
Phone # and e-mail address: 434-973-4381, frank@incarnationparish.org
3. Describe staffing allocation changes to accommodate the reduction or increase of active priests for your local planning area in the next 5 years. Include the names of parishes that will be clustered and the model selected (reference a model included under "Cluster Models" page 29 or describe a model that your Local Planning Committee developed).

After four excellent, interactive meetings between our eight parishes, we have determined that our initial Diocesan goal of reducing LPA #12 priests from six to four is unrealistic. We have collectively agreed that, in addition to suggestions made below to assist the Diocese in this entire process, LPA #12 will be able to feasibly reduce from six to five priests as "the plan" is phased in over the next few years, as follows:

- Clustering of St. Mary Annunciation, Immaculate Conception, and St. Jude (1 priest)
- Clustering of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Ann (1 priest)
- Parishes maintaining a one pastor, one parish model would be Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs, St. Mary, and St. Michael (3 priests)

At this point, LPA #12 did not recommend particular cluster models. It is our belief that once the above clustering is approved, cluster member parishes, through the leadership of the Pastors, would then determine the best model for their particular cluster.

4. Describe other changes that are needed to support the staffing changes proposed.

It is strongly recommended that the allocation of the priests in LPA #12 be examined in light of neighboring LPA's #11 and #13. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of the "mega" churches in the area. LPA #12 felt strongly that the Diocesan Planning Commission must give careful consideration to the closing and/or consolidation of smaller parishes; look at the need for more centralized worship spaces with seating for 1000+ worshippers, and to intentionally assign international priests as parochial vicars, pairing them with pastor "mentors" to prepare them for their own pastorates.

5. Describe other recommendations that will help parishes in your Local Planning Area provide better services and ministries through inter-parish collaboration.

Several of the parishes in LPA #12 currently share resources, services and programs as part of inter-parish collaboration, and that will continue. LPA #12 recognizes the sensibility of holding on to the special cultural and spiritual community embodied in the Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs. The group appreciated the willingness of the pastor, Msgr. Pham, to assist as needed with the unique priestly needs of the other LPA parishes. We recommend that this be explored further.

6. If your Local Planning Committee did not reach consensus on these recommendations, please describe how closer your group is to consensus and explain the minority position and/or points of disagreement.

Several points of discussion were raised regarding LPA #12, of which the following (not all-inclusive) are presented here:

- It was impossible to cluster two parishes as large as St. Michael's and St. Mary's.
 - It was not a good idea to cluster the two parishes with schools as the youth need to see a pastor on a regular basis to maintain the Catholic identity of our children
 - The socio-economic make-up of certain parishes lent for a better fit with similar parishes
 - There was some thought that the Diocese of Richmond has the responsibility of shaping the church of the future – which appears to be mega churches. As such, long-range plans need to be put in place to move the diocese towards building these mega churches. Smaller parishes may need to be closed. A building committee needs to be reviewing current facilities and approving parish building/capital campaigns, which support the future mega church. If the closing of smaller parishes is not undertaken, then consideration should be given to expanding the roles and authority of deacons, parish administrators, and lay leaders. Critical to the life of the smaller parish is the ability to have liturgy and specifically the Sunday Liturgy or at minimum, ask the Diocese to review/support the use of Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest (SCAP) when needed.
7. Please include any other information that will assist the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Commission in evaluating your Local Plan (i.e. support by parish leadership, special challenges, etc.).

Our LPA #12 discussions included one topic of discussion with differing views. The population of this LPA is growing, particularly as it moves out the Route 64 corridor to Goochland and Louisa. Many of our members felt that it was important that the Diocese not shy away from opening parishes where needed. Others felt that it could take away from the debt reduction at affected parishes from which membership in a new parish might be carved. It should be noted that opening a new parish is seen as a "full time position". It would be unrealistic to expect a priest to form a new community while sharing leadership with a clustered parish.

Map Showing Inter-Parish Collaboration for LPA 12

