



## Sunday, April 13, 2008 Newsletter

The clustering process continues to enjoy a good result and positive prospects, despite the forced cancellation of two Committee meetings due to weather in January and February.

Since our last report to you, the Committee formed 5 task groups to identify issues and alternatives in these areas: (1) financial condition of the member parishes, (2) physical condition of buildings and equipment, (3) parish population, and (4) demographic make-up of the cluster. In addition, a fifth task group was charged with “creative thinking” not connected to any one topic. This approach is intended to encourage creativity and nimble small-group thinking. We believed that these small-group ideas could be investigated, debated, and synthesized at a top level, and that this process would yield a realistic proposal, subject to the entire group’s consensus.

Tuesday evening, April 1, the Committee received the work of these task groups for discussion and discernment. Since the task group reports are part of the process of identifying ideas for evaluation, the reports will not be published.

Committee meetings this spring will use these task force reports to compile questions that must be answered before a proposal can be made to Bishop Lennon. When these answers are obtained, a preliminary proposal will be agreed upon by the Committee and research begun to determine its feasibility. If the proposal is deemed feasible, in-depth research will continue throughout the summer and the results will be published to the five parishes in September.

Our directions from Bishop Lennon are to submit a plan by November 2008 to organize the cluster into no more than four parishes and three schools and to increase evangelization activity. We have agreed that five principles will guide us in forming our recommendation: (1) liturgy, including sacramental preparation and celebration, (2) education of adults and children, (3) service to the poor, (4) ministry to the elderly, and (5) evangelization.

The next five months are critical to the life of Christ’s Church in our area. Please remember the cluster effort in your devotions. Pray to the Father that our work will be grounded in love and truth. Ask Our Lady and parish patrons to join their prayers to ours. God’s blessing is the indispensable asset in all that we will do in these months. Soli Deo gloria.

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