

**September 16, 2008**

**Cluster Planning Team Members**

**Attached is the latest version including the updates that were given at last week's meeting.**

**As you distribute it to your councils and parishioners, you might share with them the following:**

- **This Cluster proposal responds to the Bishop's directive last year that this Cluster must go from 6 parishes to no more than 4 parishes by 2010.**
- **The Plan follows a specific, detailed outline provided by the Pastoral Planning office.**
- **The Bishop's preference is to have a shorter plan rather than a longer one.**
- **Additional work/reports/backup information will be included in another binder.**
- **This is a proposal to the Bishop and his team. He will make the final decision.**
- **That decision will not come until next spring, around the March timeframe.**
- **This proposal is the first piece in the Cluster's future work of collaboration to grow and best meet the needs of the people.**

**Again, I thank each of you for your many hours of service during this process. While it has been difficult in many ways, I am confident your work will be the critical foundation for this Cluster to go forward in a vibrant way.**

**Peace in Christ,**

**Tricia Schaum  
Summit South- 5 Cluster  
Facilitator**

# **CLUSTER PLAN**

## **SUMMIT SOUTH-5**

**DECEMBER, 2008**

**Prince of Peace, Norton  
Sacred Heart, Wadsworth  
St. Andrew, Norton  
St. George, Clinton  
Sts. Peter & Paul, Doylestown  
Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Barberton**

**1. Parish strengths , ministries, community services and qualities that need to be continued and strengthened, and existing collaboration to build upon, in providing pastoral care in the cluster area.**

Based upon the Composite Summaries of parish strengths, ministries and community services, the following have been identified as areas of existing collaboration that need to be continued and strengthened:

- Adult education programs
- Advent & Lent communal penance
- Area Catholic senior citizens group
- Baptismal classes
- Barberton Soup Kitchen
- CYO athletics
- Interfaith Hospitality Network for the Homeless
- Pregnancy Care
- PSR
- RCIA
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Schools
- Shared coverage of hospitals and nursing homes
- Youth Ministry

***(Put Composite Summaries in the Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **A. Demographics Summary**

Demographics have played a key role in the Cluster Team's recommendation. The Ohio Dept. of Development projects the following increases through 2030: Summit +4%, Medina +27%, and Wayne +18%. This clearly indicates the migration to the outlying communities.

In general, this area shows an area increase of 5.6%. To better compare the areas represented by the Cluster parishes, the following national website (city-data.com) compares the cities as follows:

**Wadsworth (Sacred Heart)** is one of the areas that have experienced real population growth with an increase of 9.3% of households last year with the building of several new housing developments.

**Doylestown (Sts. Peter and Paul)** experienced a +2.7% in population growth also due to a couple of new housing developments.

**Norton (St. Andrew the Apostle & Prince of Peace)** showed an increase with +.2% growth in households last year. This area is adjacent to Doylestown and Wadsworth. However, future growth is very questionable as it is dependent on obtaining water and sewer service which may be prevented due to political issues. St. Andrew is located between Prince of Peace, Sts. Peter and Paul and Sacred Heart.

**Barberton (Sts. Cyril and Methodius)** experienced a 3% decline in population last year and has been declining over the past few years.

Overall migration from Akron and Barberton has kept the Cluster area stable with Wadsworth experiencing the most growth. However, household size is declining. In 2003, an average household had 2.86 people and in 2008, it was 2.65.

- Fewer children will impact our Catholic schools and PSR. Need to encourage parental choice of Catholic schooling, re-evangelize our inactive families and emphasize evangelization.
- The aging population will require increased hospital, institutional, and home ministry by clergy and laity

***(Put Demographics Summary in the Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **B. Sacramental Statistics**

This Cluster has seen about a 5% increase in registered households from 2003 through 2008. All parishes have had an increase in households since 2003 except for Sts. C& M who has experienced almost a 50% decrease.

Overall, the Cluster has seen a 6% decrease in registered Catholics since 2003. There were 11,553 persons in 2003 and 11,175 in 2008 for a decline of 378 or 3.2%. The largest decrease has been at Sts. C& M with over 40% decrease and 15% at St. George. There has been some growth at Prince of Peace (20% increase) and Sacred Heart (10%).

Overall Mass attendance has decreased 8% from 2006 to 2007 with largest decreases at Sts. C& M (30%), Sacred Heart (15%) and St. George (nearly 8%).

While the Cluster's Mass attendance has been decreasing, it has not been as dramatic as the national numbers. Nevertheless, the Cluster's decline must be addressed through re-evangelization, making our parishes welcoming communities, and ensuring prayerful and well planned liturgies. Adult faith formation programs will also contribute to more fully engaging the faithful.

The number of marriages has been somewhat steady, around 30 marriages a year. Deaths have increased by 20% since 2003 and Baptisms have decreased by 20%. These statistics reflect the changing demographics of this Cluster. To state the obvious, there has been an increase in deaths and a decrease in baptisms because of the aging population and people having fewer children.

The aging population will require increased hospital, institutional, and home ministry by clergy and laity. Fewer children impact our Catholic schools and PSR. This Cluster plans to address these challenges with specific programs and initiatives that will:

- Encourage parental choice of Catholic schools and PSR
- Reevangelize our inactive families
- Focus on Evangelization in the Cluster's communities

***(Put Cluster totals and all other related charts in Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### C. Staffing

Due to their size, Sacred Heart, Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Andrew, and Prince of Peace have several paid lay persons on staff. St. George has no paid staff. The only paid person at St. George was the pastor. Upon his death, the Parish Life Coordinator was the only paid staff until the parish closed.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius has one paid staff person, the church secretary/bookkeeper/organist who has been with the parish for over 30 years. Prince of Peace has expressed interest in offering a part-time position to the staff person at Sts. Cyril and Methodius.

Some of the potential opportunities for collaboration are:

- Share part time teachers/staff.
- Explore support/mentoring opportunities between all four parishes (e.g. Prince of Peace office manager provides support/mentoring to Sts. Peter & Paul secretary).
- Use full-time staff members at Sacred Heart to participate/assist in such areas as Youth Ministry & PSR.
- Generations of Faith

Staffing requirements will be reevaluated once it is determined where members of St. George and Sts. Cyril and Methodius choose to attend. Additionally, collaborative efforts could require future staffing adjustments.

***(Put Attachments in Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **D. Facilities**

The Cluster team had two opportunities to become familiar with the parish facilities:

1. Facility report submitted by each parish.
2. Cluster team members were able to visually inspect each parish and its facilities (three times) when team meetings were held there.

General observations of the facilities include:

- The facilities at St. George are not conducive to growth because of their size, lack of handicapped access, and the age of their buildings.
- Some of the facilities at Sts. Cyril and Methodius are in a flood plain and require extensive repairs after water damage. This parish also has older buildings that require more maintenance and that are not handicapped accessible.

The facilities of the four remaining parishes:

- Are in reasonably good condition
- Provide adequate space for existing ministries and collaborative programs
- Can address the goals in this proposal
- Are handicapped accessible

Only Sacred Heart has plans for construction. They plan to build new parish office and rectory to replace present deficient facilities.

Once it is determined where the parishioners of the closed parishes decide to attend, the remaining parishes will need to evaluate the need or opportunity for further sharing of facilities.

During the week of August 18, the facilities inspection team conducted their investigation. Their report will be included in this proposal when it is received.

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **E. Finances**

The 2002-2007 Financial Trends Report show that:

- Prince of Peace had a surplus each fiscal year with over \$400 thousand in reserves.
- Sacred Heart had a surplus each year except 2006, and over \$200 thousand in reserves plus capital and school endowment funds.
- St. Andrew had a surplus each fiscal year, and over \$500 thousand in reserves.
- Sts. Peter and Paul experienced deficits that required drawing on savings from 2004-2007. However increased collections and new initiatives by the Finance Council resulted in over a \$78,000 surplus and an \$116,000 increase in parish reserves for fiscal year 2008.
- St. George had a surplus each year with over \$600,000 in reserves.
- Sts. C & M experienced deficits in 2002 and 2004 that required drawing on savings and have over \$500,000 in reserves.

Regarding the two parishes recommended for closing, St George has already done so and its funds are being held in trust by the Diocese.

The four parishes recommended to remain are financially viable. Maintaining the schools is a financial challenge that needs to be addressed with the parishes and by the Cluster as a whole.

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **F. Pastoral needs which can be better served**

The Cluster team reviewed the Composite Summaries/Ministry Assessment Summaries as well as the key realities and trends presented in 2A-2E. After this review, the Cluster team decided to maintain and strengthen the existing vibrant ministries by collaboratively developing new approaches to the challenges confronting our communities.

The teams investigated the needs, developed initial plans and made additional recommendations for further actions. The Cluster team decided that the needs of the people could be better met by collaboratively focusing on the following areas:

- Evangelization (2F1)
- Social Services (2F2)
- Youth Ministry, Faith Formation, PSR (2F3)
- Schools (2F4)
- Liturgy/Institutional Ministries (2F5)

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation)

### **F1. Evangelization and Re-Evangelization**

Evangelization and Re-Evangelization is a growing need in our cluster as evidenced by the fact that only approximately 40% of registered Catholics attend mass. The demographics clearly demonstrate not only do we have a decline in the number of Catholics in this Cluster, we have a decreasing number of Catholics who attend Mass.

The obvious response is that we must take a more active role in reaching out to Catholics as well as non Catholics. Because many Catholics are not familiar or comfortable with this, we will first spend time explaining and making people feel comfortable about evangelization and “reaching out”. Even though it is a new way of thinking for many Catholics, it can be moved forward, if we just focus on it.

Once the plan is approved, this team plans to implement the following:

1. Formalize a Cluster Evangelization team (many are already involved as of this process) in the first quarter of 2009.
2. Engage Sister Margaret Mach, SC to train members by the third quarter of 2009
3. Conduct “Evangelizing 101” seminar by end of 2009.
4. Form a communication network to reach out to parishioners, especially those who have not been attending Mass.

In the meantime, the Cluster’s evangelization team will continue its work in each parish.

***(Put Attachments in Appendix binder.)***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **F 2. Social Services**

Our Cluster, which serves three counties (Medina, Summit, and Wayne) has very strong Social Concerns ministries.

The first action is to create a Social Concerns team for the Cluster (in Spring 2009 after plan approval) with representatives from all parishes. Since there has been so much work already done in this Cluster plan process, the team will have a great starting point for their efforts to develop stronger programs and services in collaboration with all parishes.

The team will:

1. Encourage more communication between parish organizations by meeting 3-4 times/year.
2. Identify gaps and overlaps that may exist by compiling a list of and evaluating all present ministries and programs. Recommend areas for greater collaboration and identify the need for additional or expanded ministries.
3. Update regularly the parishes on the work of the committee and what is needed from each parish (e.g. reports to pastors, pastoral councils, bulletin announcements and social concerns section on parish web sites.)
3. Include the ministries of the churches that are closing in our future planning:
  - Parish St. Vincent de Paul Societies will cover the territory of St. George once the bishop assigns that territory to neighboring parishes.
  - Prince of Peace will cover the hospital & institutional ministries of Sts. C & M.
  - Obtain a list of shut-ins from the parishes designated to close.
4. Revise current practices, if needed, to better serve the people in the Cluster.

***(Put Attachments in Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### F 3. PSR and Youth Ministry

Cluster PSR enrollment has remained relatively stable (774 in 2003 and 809 in 2008). This reflects the demographics & sacramental findings, & the decrease in Catholic school enrollment. It should also be noted that Sacred Heart transitioned to Generations of Faith in 2005. However, with Mass attendance at 40% of registered persons & many inactive Catholics not even registered, there is a body of students & families that need to be reached by re-evangelization. This necessitates that parishes work collaboratively for a dynamic program.

Youth Ministry (all ages) is a way of strengthening young people's faith and drawing non-practicing families into church life. Prince of Peace and Sts. Peter & Paul have collaborated on high school youth ministry for the past five years. Their program is currently being restructured to better focus on the spiritual formation of our young people. Cluster collaboration as well as parish based activities are needed to address the interests and needs of high school youth who are too often becoming involved in programs offered by local evangelical churches.

The following are some of the recommendations made by the Cluster team:

#### PSR

1. Four remaining parishes should continue their PSR for elementary & middle school children.
2. The directors and coordinators of the parish's religious education programs will meet at the conclusion of the academic year to discuss successes and problems, how to strengthen parish programs and explore ways for greater collaboration.
3. Sts. Peter and Paul has the only high school PSR program and will welcome students from the other parishes. The committee of directors/coordinators will develop a collaborative plan for high school faith formation for the Cluster parishes.

#### Youth Ministry

1. The focus of Cluster youth ministry will be threefold:
  - Spiritual and catechetical formation
  - Social activities
  - Service projects
2. Youth ministry needs local, cluster and regional components. To achieve this, the Akron CYO Youth Ministry office will be asked to meet with the leaders of the parish programs to enhance local programs, collaborate on cluster wide activities and become involved in CYO spiritual and service programs.
3. Collaborate through use of facilities and shared programs, especially for social & service projects.
4. Sacred Heart has a full time Youth Minister & a full time DRE who can be drawn upon for expertise & possibly chairing the committees. All other parishes have volunteers serving in that capacity.

***(Put Attachments in Appendix binder).***

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **F 4. Catholic Schools**

Demographics show an overall decrease in enrollment in both parish schools. Sts. Peter and Paul School has over 30% less students in 2008 as they did in 1998. However, they have done some restructuring, have a new pastor and a new direction. Two new programs are being implemented this school year: Spanish and Art. They have 146 students enrolled this year, up from 126 students last year.

Sacred Heart School experienced less than 10% decrease in the past 10 years with 330 students last year. The projected enrollment for 2008-2009 is 313 students, which is more than a 5% decrease in students.

Both parishes significantly subsidize their parish schools. Sts. Peter and Paul subsidizes approximately 45% of the school budget and Sacred Heart subsidizes approximately 30% of its school budget.

The Cluster committee who looked at the schools developed three recommendations for future collaboration:

1. Provide informational brochure about the schools to all Cluster parish families with children to encourage them to consider catholic education for their children.
2. Charge all Cluster families the parishioner rate. Parishes without a school would contribute a specified amount per child to the school their parishioner attends.
3. Seek to share programs and part time teachers/staff in an effort to help the schools become more financial secure through consolidation of programs and resources.
4. Add a link to each cluster parish's website to the two Catholic schools in our Cluster.

## 2. Key realities, trends and their implications that support the need for consolidation

### **F 5. Liturgy and institutional ministry.**

The aging population of this Cluster will definitely require increased hospital, institutional, and home ministry by clergy and laity.

This Cluster has been collaborating for some time on liturgy, penance services, RCIA, baptismal preparation, adult education and coverage of those confined to hospitals, assisted living and nursing homes. The plan is to continue and expand the collaborative opportunities in the future, including the following:

1. Continue collegial coverage of regional Sunday evening Mass at St. Augustine. Father Labak and Father Stein will serve as backup for those priests already in the rotation.
2. In addition to the existing collaborative priest coverage (by St. Augustine, Prince of Peace, St. Andrew & Sts. C & M) at Barberton Hospital, develop a lay hospital ministry to better serve patients in Barberton Hospital. Summa Health Care has been contacted and will schedule the required training for all volunteers.
3. Frs. Jackson, Maloney, and Stein will serve as the backup for Fr. Labak at Wadsworth Hospital.
4. The clergy will meet to review and adjust coverage in a collegial and equitable manner once the Bishop has approved which parishes are to close and when.
5. Clergy will meet at least once a year to review the pastoral needs of the Cluster.
6. In an effort to encourage our youth to attend Mass, we will explore the possibility of a teen mass within the Cluster.

***Put Attachments in Appendix binder.)***

### **3 A. Proposed parishes to merge, close or continue with a supporting rationale**

Summit South Cluster 5 submits the following proposal for your consideration. After much prayer and consideration, we recommend that these parishes be closed:

- Sts. Cyril and Methodius (Barberton)
- St. George (Clinton)

(Note: Since the Cluster process, the Bishop has closed St. George.)

with these four parishes remaining:

- Sacred Heart (Wadsworth)
- Prince of Peace (Norton)
- St. Andrew (Norton)
- Sts. Peter and Paul (Doylestown)

The rationale for this recommendation is as follows:

1. Sts. Cyril & Methodius & St. George are the smallest parishes with each having significantly less than 500 households.
2. Sts. C & M has experienced significant decreases in households, attendance, etc. and St. George is in a rural area with unlikely growth.
3. St. George is now without a priest.
4. Both parishes have access to multiple parishes in close proximity (e.g. Prince of Peace is 14 blocks from Sts. C& M).
5. St. George is not handicapped accessible. Both parishes have smaller/older facilities compared to the others, limiting potential for growth without serious capital expenditures.
6. Sts. C & M is located in a flood plain and reported \$100,000 in flood damage since 1977.
7. Closing the smallest parishes minimizes the impact on all parishioners and yet maintains a strong Catholic presence and ministries in the Cluster.

The rationale for maintaining four parishes in this Cluster is as follows:

1. The remaining parishes provide a range of options for parishioners in terms of location, proximity to their previous parish, size ("large/small church"), ministries and programs.
2. The Cluster will be able to maintain/strengthen ministries, social services & institutional coverage.
3. Remaining parishes have the capacity to absorb the parishioners from the two closed parishes.
4. While closing three parishes rather than two was considered, the collective judgment of this Cluster team was that the chaos and disruption would be overwhelming not only for the parishioners and staff but the community as well.

### **3 B. Brief overview of other scenario/options and why they were not selected**

At the beginning of the process, the other Options/Scenarios that were presented and discussed followed two different directions:

**Direction 1: Focused on mergers resulting in three (3) parishes remaining:**

#### **Option/Scenario A: 3 mergers**

- Merge Sts. C & M with Prince of Peace
- Merge St. George with Sts. Peter & Paul
- Merge St. Andrew with Sacred Heart

#### **Option/Scenario B: 1 merger with two configurations**

- Merge St. Andrew, Prince of Peace, and Sts. Cyril and Methodius into one parish (later merge St. George when pastor is no longer able to serve)
- Merge St. Andrew, St. George and Sts. C & M into one parish

#### **Option/Scenario C: Close 3 parishes**

- Close St. George, St. Andrew, and Sts. C & M

After reflecting on these Options, many team members expressed concern about the impact that multiple mergers would have on the Cluster. After much discussion, the majority of the Team felt that these Options were not in the best interest of the Cluster for the following reasons:

- The Team believed it was too disruptive for the parishioners and staff in the Cluster.
- The reduction from six to three priests to serve the Cluster was believed to be too difficult on the priests and too unrealistic.
- Prince of Peace merged just a few years ago & parishioners did not want to do again.
- Since Sts. Peter and Paul is the oldest church in the diocese, parishioners did not want to lose its name and history.

cont.

### **3 B. Brief overview of other scenario/options and why they were not selected**

#### **Option/Scenario D: 1 merger of four parishes** (presented by Sts. C & M team)

- Merge Sts. C & M, St. George, St. Andrew, and Prince of Peace into one new parish on St. Andrews site. This would create a “Summit South” parish leaving Wayne County and Medina County as separate parish entities.

However, after reflection and discussion this Option/Scenario was not selected by the majority of team members for the following reasons:

- It was too drastic and would have required the sale of four churches in a depressed market. There are already a number of churches on the market in the area. It was not high probability that the properties would sell quickly in order to have the necessary funds to build.
- They did not agree the appraised values reflected the actual present market values.
- There was no real certainty as to where the parishioners would go once their church closed. It was unlikely they would be receptive to a capital campaign for a new church after closing their own church.
- Finally, the cost of building a new facility/”mega facility” would be prohibitive even if funds became available from the property sales.
- Building at St. Andrew’s site would be impractical as it lacks municipal water and sewage; extensive septic system would be needed for a large facility.

*See Appendix for further details regarding Sts. C & M, per their request.*

#### **Direction 2: focused on the closing of two parishes:**

#### **Option/Scenario E: Close 2 parishes (different configurations)**

- Close St. George and Sts. C & M
- Close Sts. C & M and St. Andrew
- Close two churches

### **3 C. Preliminary ideas about parish sites to be used in the future for needed ministries**

Women's Renewal, Catholic Seniors and Prince of Peace/St, Andrew CYO all use Prince of Peace facilities. Sacred Heart facilities are used for area penance services, Pre-Cana and Generations of Faith.

The facilities of the four remaining parishes are in good condition and provide adequate space for existing ministries and collaborative programs and to address the goals in this proposal. Once it is seen where the members of the closed parishes decide to attend & as the goals are implemented, the parishes will need to evaluate the need for further sharing of or addition of facilities and staff.

### **3 D. Highlights of facilities assessment per Catholic Charities Corporation.**

Will add key points, highlights, summary of the report once we receive it.

**3 E. Other key resources, structures and staffing plans to support this proposal (include ministries to be supported by ongoing collaboration among the continuing parishes).**

There are many opportunities for collaboration in this Cluster. Some are already in existence and others are planned for the future.

**Current**

- Clergy/pastoral ministers collegially & equitably share coverage of hospitals/nursing homes.
- The Women's renewal retreat for the Cluster will continue to be held at Prince of Peace.
- The area Catholic seniors group "Young at Heart" will continue to meet at Prince of Peace which has a gym & kitchen and is handicapped accessible. Since there is no parish day school, there are no scheduling conflicts and child security issues.
- St. Andrew will continue to offer the ecclesial movement, the Neocatechetical Way.
- Sacred Heart makes inner-generational catechesis available through Generations of Faith.
- Sacred Heart conducts an annual Pre-Cana day.
- Parishes will continue to share the cost and utilize facilities of each parish in presenting diocesan speakers and other adult educational programs
- Sts. Peter and Paul's high school PSR program is available to all Cluster parishes.

**Future**

- Evangelization training sessions will be cluster wide, rotate location of meetings at different parishes and share cost of sessions.
- Directors/coordinators of religious education will form a team to collaborate, with the only full time DRE (Sacred Heart) as a possible chairperson.
- A high school faith formation program will be created at a selected meeting site(s) and costs shared proportionally.
- Youth ministry leaders will utilize the resources of Akron CYO and the expertise of Sacred Heart's full time youth minister in coordinating cluster programs. They will also share the facilities of the parishes for special youth ministry events.
- Cluster Social Concerns Committee will collaborate to better serve the needy, and parish St. Vincent de Paul Societies will work in partnership.
- Office managers and secretaries will network to assist in learning new skills or processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their individual parish.

cont.

**3 E. Other key resources, structures and staffing plans to support this proposal (include ministries to be supported by ongoing collaboration among the continuing parishes).**

- Parishes without schools will pay a set amount to the cluster school their parishioners chose to attend.
- Sacred Heart has the church size to host Advent and Lent cluster communal penance services. Cluster priests will not receive a stipend as this is a cluster ministry.
- St. Andrew and Prince of Peace will make their pavilions, grounds and facilities available for parish picnic and youth activities, and the two parishes will continue to utilize the Prince of Peace gym for their joint CYO athletic program.
- Parishes will advertise their adult education programs in all cluster parishes bulletins.

### **3 F. Financial Solvency and Budget with major costs and revenue**

Will be in a separate document for review by the Bishop's team only.

### **3 G. Proposed dates of major steps for implementation of consolidation.**

- Sts. C & M has recommended a closing date of July 1, 2010.
- St. George petitioned the Bishop to close October 25, 2008. He has accepted the petition and will have a closing mass on October 25, 2008.

### **3 H. Other considerations that need to be addressed: ecumenical/interfaith, political, and socio-economic issues impacting the wider community**

On the issue of language needs, Sts. C & M reports there are no special language needs as all the parishioners speak English and all of their liturgies are in English. There is a small group who do private Slovak devotions, but this can be continued in any church.

While there is not yet a significant Hispanic population in this area, Fr. Stein has begun a course of study to learn Spanish. Sacred Heart School has also been teaching Spanish as part of its curriculum in grades K-8 for the past nine years.

One political issue affects ministry in the cluster. The parishes are located in three counties which can affect social, community and ecumenical undertakings since many social services are county based and ecumenical work tends to be on a local community level. This is not a serious problem but must be taken into account. The people of this tri-county area have long worked together and share many historical and family ties.

Each parish will continue to support their community food bank, other community service programs, and continue their volunteer and material support for the local Pregnancy Care facility. Prince of Peace has taken over the slot left by the closing of Holy Trinity in staffing the ecumenical soup kitchen and Interfaith Hospitality Network for the homeless.

**4. Brief summary of the consultative meetings/steps completed in each parish or done jointly, number of people who participated & highlights of comments reflecting the questions and concerns that arose.**

**Prince of Peace Parish Consultation**

Oct. 13-14, 2007

Bulletin insert with an update of Cluster team's work was reviewed at all Masses. Parishioners were asked to contact their parish representatives with any questions. The questions asked were: When will decisions be made? What will happen to the closing churches and memorials located there?

Jan. 30, 2008 Pastoral Council & Jan. 31, 2008 Finance Council

Parish Cluster reps presented the Scenarios under discussion. Both Councils were unanimous in supporting the scenario to close two parishes with four remaining with this rationale:

- The two closed parishes have considerably less than five hundred households.
- Closing 2 parishes is less disruptive/insures continued strong presence/ministry in area.
- Scenario to merge 4 parishes into one used greatly overstated property values.
- Given the area's economic situation, the consensus was that the sale would not generate the predicted income.
- It was also thought that it would not be a "quick sale" as the St. Mary property took four years to sell at less than half its original appraisal.
- The parishioners also stated that people would not support a major capital campaign.

Feb. 16-17, 2008 –Town Hall/Pastoral Council meeting

Bulletin insert presented the Scenario selected by the Cluster team (four parishes to remain open) if the proposal was approved. Scenario reviewed at all Masses & people were invited to attend Town Hall/Pastoral Council meeting or contact their Cluster team with questions/comments.

About 25 people with questions stayed after Masses. People were concerned for the people of Sts. C & M & St. George. Questions included: Would Prince of Peace inherit the liabilities of Sts. C & M properties? Will the memorials of the closing churches stay in the area?

Feb. 27, 2008 - Town Hall/Pastoral Council meeting

Eighteen of twenty council members & six additional people attended. Discussion centered on the concern for the parishioners of the closing parishes & the difference between closing & merger. Pastoral Council unanimously supported the Cluster team's selected Scenario. Finance Council also supported the Scenario unanimously.

There was concern raised about Sts. C & M property. These concerns were recorded in a list of questions for the Cluster team. Questions included: cost of asbestos removal from the school, amount of mold in the building, costs incurred due to past flooding (no insurance due to flood plain), cost to vacate or if necessary demolish buildings and the monthly cost to maintain remaining buildings until they could be sold.

## Sacred Heart Church, Wadsworth Consultation

### Sept. 2007 Parish Council meeting

Discussion of the Cluster process did not really generate any questions or concerns. It was agreed that all parishes could benefit from sharing our resources with other parishes.

### Nov. 2007 Finance Council meeting

There were no concerns expressed at this meeting regarding the Cluster process.

### Feb. 2008 Parish Council Meeting

The proposed closing of Sts. Cyril & Methodius & St. George was discussed. Comments mainly dealt with the reality that Sacred Heart is not close in proximity to any of the other churches, especially the two parishes that are being recommended to close. Another comment was that Sacred Heart is part of the WAM (Wayne, Ashland & Medina) group of parishes, not Summit parishes. Therefore, Sacred Heart works & collaborates with parishes in those counties.

The main concern was where the people of these parishes would go. It was generally understood that the people would decide for themselves which parish they would join. Sacred Heart would make every effort to welcome anyone who would choose to join this parish.

Reports and updates were given to the parish council at each meeting throughout this process. These reports did not generate any questions or concerns from the members of parish council or finance council. There were items in the parish bulletin concerning the process and people were invited to make comments or ask questions.

## St. Andrew Consultation

### Sept. 25, 2007 - Parish Council meeting

Council discussed the "What & Why" of clustering. Discussion was about future lack of priests to support the number of existing parishes in the diocese & migration of the population from the city to the suburbs. Older facilities are plagued with high maintenance & often have insufficient funds. They cannot do business as usual. They must realign to embrace the mission of Christ. Also talked about topics from Fall 2007 Diocese Gathering with Bishop Lennon.

### Feb. 19, 2008- Parish meeting

A parish meeting was held to discuss the reduction of the number of parishes in the cluster from six to four. The proposal of consolidation printed in the bulletin of the cluster parishes was explained with the rationale for selecting that option. Additionally, the other proposals were discussed with their pros and cons. Potential implications resulting from the selected proposal on the future of St. Andrew were also discussed.

### June 16, 2008 - Parish Council & Finance Committee meeting

Discussion took place about the proposed merger with Sts. C & M. Members of the committee shared common concern for the members of Sts. C & M specifically as it related to the potential loss of their parish artifacts. Concerns were also raised about the suppression of St. Andrew as a result of the proposed merger.

### July 14, 2008 - Parish Council & Finance Committee meeting

Discussion continued about the proposed merger presented by Sts. C & M to create a merged parish. While there was still concern for the parishioners of Sts. C & M, there was growing concern for the financial responsibility & maintenance of Sts. C & M's facilities. However, when information was clarified about the disposition of parish assets/liabilities & religious artifacts, the concern for Sts. C & M's assets and artifacts was alleviated. The Committees hence voted to decline the proposed merger of Sts. Cyril & Methodius and St. Andrew parishes.

#### 4 St. George Consultation

##### Feb. 18, 2008 – Town meeting

The meeting was attended by 52 people. Attendees were informed that St. George was selected as one of the parishes to be recommended for closing in the Cluster process. We explained the problem of lack of priests, the need for suppressing, & how the decision came about.

##### Mar. 31, 2008 - Town meeting

A meeting was held to discuss alternatives for meeting the spiritual needs of the parishioners. The parishioners wanted information from other parishes to decide whether to consider merging or closing. Letters/letters/surveys were sent to seven local parishes to request information about their church, ministries, volunteers needed, etc. The meeting was attended by 60 people.

##### May, 2008 –

Copies of letters/surveys that were returned were distributed during the month of May for parishioners to review. They were available at the back of the church.

##### May 21, 2008 - Town meeting

We held an “Information Night” with representatives from four local parishes who expressed a desire to meet and present information about their parish. Those making presentations about their social and spiritual programs were: Queen of Heaven, Prince of Peace, St. Andrews and Sts. Peter and Paul. There were 47 in attendance.

##### June 30, 2008 – Town Hall meeting with Diocese representatives

Father Donald Oleksiak, Lynette Tait (Tribunal Office) and Presbyteral Moderator Father Michael Williamson met with the parishioners. They expressed concerns of Bishop Lennon for the people of St. George & explained process of mergers & closings. The final outcome position was that since there was no parish that had a common boundary with St. George (St. Francis de Sales, St. Augustine, Sts. Peter and Paul) that was willing to merge, the only remaining option was to close St. George.

##### July 29, 2008 - Parish Council/Finance Council/Town Hall meeting

The meeting opened with the parishioners discussing their histories with the parish. The people again were looking for any way to keep the parish open. After Father Williamson discussed the lack of priests in the diocese and cluster and what that meant for St. George, the Parish & Finance Councils recommended that the Bishop close the parish in the fall of 2008 with the last Mass celebrated in the Fall of 2008.

#### 4 Sts. Cyril and Methodius Consultation

##### February 16-17, 2008- Announcement at Masses

Scenario recommended by Cluster Team announced to the parishioners at Mass and in the Bulletin.

##### March 16, 2008- Parish meeting

Parishioners were updated about the reasons for the recommendation to close & the other scenarios of consolidation or merger. Although all the parishioners wanted the parish to remain open, the majority favored merger. 85 parishioners attended. They were concerned about the sacred objects and art in the church.

##### May 1, 2008 - Pastoral & Finance Councils

Approved demolition of school to remove any objection to a possible merger with St. Andrew. Councils also approved beginning negotiations about merging with St. Andrew.

##### June 12, 2008 - Joint meeting of Sts. C& M & St. Andrew Councils

Meeting was held at Sts. C& M to present a proposal to move forward to a more exciting and vibrant future in a merger. St. Andrew's voiced some objections, but also agreed with the possibility of a better result from combining parishes

##### July 18, 2008 - St. Andrew's Councils

Rejected the merger.

##### July 23, 2008 - Sts. Cyril & Methodius Pastoral & Finance Councils

Councils met to discuss disposition of old school & the planning for an orderly & dignified closing of the parish. Other topics included:

1. Scheduling meetings to allow people to share their feelings & memories.
2. Setting up process to acquaint people with other parishes to join.
3. Planning final parish events.

##### June 30, 2010

Plan to close Sts. Cyril & Methodius

### Sts. Peter and Paul Consultation

The Parish Council was updated monthly about the Cluster team work. All bulletin inserts were published.

#### February 17 & 24, 2008

Deacon Dale made announcement from the pulpit about the decision to close Sts. Cyril & Methodius & St. George. Cluster update was also in the bulletin.

#### February 27, 2008

Sts. Peter and Paul had an open meeting to update the parish on the Cluster's work—but it was “snowed out”. Since no one was able to attend the meeting, a report from the pulpit was made to update parishioners about the work of the Cluster team and to elaborate on the bulletin announcement.

#### May 21, 2008

In an effort to demonstrate their support for St. George and its parishioners, Sts. Peter and Paul attended St. George's open house that discussed their future and possible options. Father Stein also assisted with the mass for St. George's feast day.

While Sts. Peter and Paul parishioners felt empathy for the people of the two closing parishes, they did not have any other reaction because it did not affect them.