



### **Outline of the Process for Parish Renewal**

**Goal:** To ensure that all parishes in the Lower Blackstone Valley Region have the vision, leadership, resources, and operational foundation necessary to create an effective culture of evangelization that forms intentional disciples, builds communities, and inspires witness.

### **Some Parameters**

This process for parish renewal involves all five parishes in Blackstone, Linwood, Millville, and Uxbridge. None of the decisions that will be made as part of the process have been pre-determined. However, we expect that there will only be two priests available for service in these parishes in the near future. Therefore, any proposals for parish restructuring or configuration must take this into consideration. [Note: priests are ordinarily permitted to celebrate only three Masses in a day.]

### **Why do we need parish renewal?**

Our parishes face a number of challenges—the parishioner base of some parishes is small; we have fewer priests; and many parishes have had to defer maintenance for many years resulting in unaffordable capital needs. Because of this, we are led to ask the question: Does our current structure of parish life serve the Church’s mission, or is it holding us back?

### **Parish Representatives**

A committee will be formed with five representatives from each of the parishes. These representatives will be selected by their pastors and will be chosen based on their level of experience in supporting the mission of the parish, their capacity to bring forth an open mind and heart as to where the Holy Spirit is leading, and their ability to participate in the entire process which will span several months. The representatives will meet to discuss and prayerfully discern the ministerial and operational strengths, challenges, and opportunities of each parish. The representatives from each parish will ultimately be responsible for making a recommendation (called a rationale) to the bishop on a possible new configuration for the parishes.

### **Scenarios**

Parish representatives will consider several scenarios or possibilities regarding new parish configurations including clustering (each parish remains a separate entity but shares a pastor), merger (several parishes unite as one new parish entity with one or possibly multiple campuses and a full-time resident pastor), or any number of other possible configurations. These scenarios must also consider the need for adequate staffing to support the parish’s mission, facilities that are not only affordable, adequate, and accessible, but that also provide room for growth, and financial stability.

## **Rationale**

Each parish will submit a separate rationale to the bishop in order for him to make any decisions about new configurations.

## **Phases for Parish Renewal**

Phase 1: Discernment and Decisions (approximately 6 months)

- During this first phase of renewal, pastors, parishioners, and parish representatives prayerfully consider different possible configurations for parishes, such as clustering or merger, and identify opportunities for collaboration. This phase culminates in a pastoral rationale given by the representatives of each parish to the bishop in order for him to make any decisions on new configurations.

Phase 2: Transition

- The new parish configurations are implemented.

Phase 3: Building the New Reality

- The new parish(es) develop pastoral plans for mission and strong vitality.

## **The Parish Representatives**

### **Good Shepherd Church**

- Deb Ballou
- Don Callen
- Jason Cote
- Sue Desjourdy
- Roger Poulin

### **Saint Augustine Church**

- Colleen Curis
- Gerry Finn
- Ann Lesperance
- Herve Richer
- Joe Walden

### **Saint Mary Church**

- Randy Colonero
- Jim Fish
- Sue Fish
- Peter Fritz
- Diane Moriarty

### **Saint Paul Church**

- MaryAnn DeRestie
- Bert Galipeau
- David Guertin
- Mike Perron
- Tom Tenerowicz

### **Saint Theresa Church**

- Dan Curtis
- Toni Harvey
- John Marino
- Tom Signa
- Robert Vose

## **An Invitation to Pray**

We are seeking intercessors who are willing to pray for the success of the parish renewal process in the lower Blackstone Valley. If you are willing to be part of an intercessory prayer team, please contact Lynn Normandin at [lnormandin@worchester.edu](mailto:lnormandin@worchester.edu). We would love to have intercessors from each of the five parishes.

## **Where can I find more information about the Parish Renewal Process?**

A website has been launched that contains information regarding the Parish Renewal Process in the lower Blackstone Valley region. The website will be updated regularly as we progress through the process. Check it out at [www.renewmyparish.org](http://www.renewmyparish.org)