

Parish Family Input

Round 1: What concerns were shared about the proposed family grouping? What challenges might this pose?

- Change of priests – different leaders for each parish will be a challenge.
- 9/30 the other parishes. It poses unclear expectations and interactions.
- Concerned that they are not grouping Lady of Lourdes with other cluster parishes due to location but due to lack of community involvement
- Mass Times Changes – Reduce Masses and Elderly People and people that work later hours
- Reduced resources (priests) among the parishes
- What is truth? How do we meet the needs of individuals, socialization – Christ orientated meetups vs Secular meetups? Evangelize people of Catholic Faith.
- Constantly moving communities and closing churches – creating a sense of disconnect, instability and isolation
- Culture & Language Barriers
- Distance Concerns
- Currently no representation of all parish families at this meeting
- Possibility of issues that the priest is not a diocesan priest, will that be an issue?
- Is this going to change things for the Spanish-speaking community (Mass times, etc.)
- Because it is different, it is likely that some unnecessary concerns may rise
- Changes to schedule and activities
- Unclear communication can lead to misunderstanding
- Geography may become a bigger factor as the parish family grows
- Uncertainty about St. Paul's position as other locations for Mass become more available
- How are do we include the young adult demographic that is often lost in the process?
- How do we evangelize to those who may want to change their religion?

- Will St. Paul lose parishioners to other parishes due to convenience of travel?
- For parishes like St. Ed or St. Paul, Our Lady of Lourdes is far. Older folk may have a hard time traveling to an evening Mass.
- Drastic change will push some parishioners away
- Possible loss of the history and culture of individual churches
- Splitting Mass times between locations is a big challenge for sense of community
- Adding an additional parish poses cultural challenges. Inclusion + maintenance of culture
- Being welcoming to a new community requires a lot of flexibility in mindset
- An orderly transition is necessary for adding a new parish
- The Church is chaotic in operation at the moment
- The St. Ed sound system needs to be updated
- Leaders need to be more inclusive for successful change
- The workload for our priests will only increase
- Making possible new parishes feel welcome amongst all the change for them personally
- Clarification on what 'family' means
- Familiar with St. Lourdes, could be more presence within the churches in where they go, could be the same as it is now, but may change as things go on. Transition from multiple churches into one. Only problem would be commute to a parish farther away, may change mindset about church – may switch to closer parishes. Changing mass hours
- If combined, what would the rotation of priests be. Time changes for masses.
- Not knowing exactly what the other parish would contribute/bring into the parish. Armando/Scott are stretched thin, overwhelming.
- Being mobile, Spirituality – how are we going to improve our spiritual education while separated.
- Losing identity and individuality, wasn't happy at the beginning, but getting used to it.
- Curiosity on amount of parishes in cluster, surprised about adding St. Lourdes from a different area, concerns about the other parish coming in.
- Currently a cluster – considering what changes would be made as time goes on. Concern of cultures and its effects. Tough to get the same point across at multiple places.

- Did the original 3 cluster feel like it was okay? Used to have priests to cover everything, now we are a bigger cluster with fewer priests.
- In a state of worry, what is the best thing to do? What is the problem and what is the best way to fix it?
- Where is the money going? Changing priorities, fixing the structure of the archdiocese and finances before changing everything. Letting women take a bigger role into the church – priesthood.
- Allowing married priests
- If we are talking changes about the church – talk about changes about the overall structure of the church, not just on the smaller individual side, but overall structure.
- Why are some parishes having a potential bigger impact than others?
- Concern about shortage of priests and finances – importing priests from other nations, allowing women, deacons, etc. Settle a financial problem before working on changing everything.
- Cluster depends on the leadership and effort of the people in the cluster, having events and things together to build relationships – from each cluster.
- Other priests may not be able to speak the main language of the other parishes, so adding a priest may not add more. Clustering similar speaking parishes into a cluster.
- Combining resources – one parish may be performing better than others and supplementing their resources.
- Always seeing the negative of things changing.
- No concerns, but how integrate as a community. Cluster parish picnic was a great opp to meet others.
- Time. Only two priests for four. They don't have time for all of us. A family has to spend time together. If we acquire another parish, should have 3-4 priests. They used to have time to mingle after Mass. Had a priest who wanted to know all names and know if missed.
- Schedule of Mass times. Hard to make appointments to meet with Priests. Limited time and schedule for parishes to hold them. Parishioners need to adjust to scheduled times.
- Not enough priests to focus on each parish. How can they get to know all parishioners. Need more Masses?
- Keep current priests. How many Masses. How many Deacons?
- Fear the reason this is happening is church is shrinking. So changing structure because don't have enough resources of money and time. Does that solve the problem? In Europe, churches empty. Yes, Holy Spirit is the driver, what else is missing? When does this process stop? Do we merge again and redo process later?

- How will we get to know each other.
- Has a young family. How is religious education going to work in a family cluster parish. If attend at one parish, go to another for school.
- Which such distinct cultures in parishes, how to connect them? Masses in 3 different languages. Another parish has a large enough population for one large Mass. Cultures are beautiful and extinct. St. Ed's does a multilingual Mass during holidays.
- Is Fr. Scott going to be moved? If he is moved after organizing this for us, will the new pastor be able to continue what he has begun?
- Our Lady of Lourdes is predominantly Vietnamese. Moving them to our cluster, what is it we need to do to help them feel welcome. Be sure to make them feel welcome when they join. Recognizing the diversity of our cluster is important. How many priests will we get?
- Awareness of what has already been tried that failed so we learn from our past efforts.
- Avoid Admin exercise to consolidate and find better ways to implement the great commission to show God's love in our community.
- How do cultural communities continue to strengthen ethnic cultures and traditions?
- How can we build bridges across all ethnic groups so we are all included?
- More focus on encouraging parents to push children and build a culture where youth involvement is expected and an integral part of the community.
- Continued dilution of reverence for Mass (i.e. dress, enthusiastic participation, challenging, scripture based standards of behavior).
- Some parishes still have livestream masses. This needs to stop so that parishioners can be in person for Masses.
- The family of the elderly has difficulty traveling to church, so it is necessary to form an association to facilitate transporting the elderly to church, such as the Legio association, which needs help for the leader of the gasoline vehicle group... and a number of other means to keep the association strong and lasting.
- Every parish is united, everyone needs to open their hearts to the same God, then we will overcome all difficulties
- In the spirit of always welcoming new brothers and sisters, for example, Our Lady of Lourdes parish merged with us. Their parish activities are very strong in all areas. The parish priest needs to know, the parish Newcomers are also very confused, so we always welcome them in a friendly way to help them accompany us well.
- The Our Lady of Lourdes church has a very large number of about 710, we really want their parishioners to come here. We should invite them to a meeting with us to discuss and understand each other better.

- Eucharistic Youth is a great development of the church. We need to support them from the activities they are currently having. Every week there is a separate mass for these Youth.

Round 1 Summing Up: What themes did we hear in Round 1?

- Difficulty posed on the elderly re distance, time of day.
- It is good to work together but it is important to consider the individual needs of each parish.
- Our Lady of Lourdes is not closing and merging w/ other cluster parishes.
- Distance concerns and spreading of resources.
- Sharing spaces and sharing finances
- Whether what we are evangelizing is truly Catholic
- Acceptance
- Inclusion
- Welcoming
- Culture
- Concern
- Inclusion
- Community
- Hopeful that we're getting started.
- Speaking on emotion.
- Concerns about schedule and services available to all
- Losing individual parishes to the bigger group, losing identity
- Concerns about change overall.

- Bigger isn't always better – hopeful.
- See what happens – nice to meet more people.
- Availability of priests.
- Number of priests.
- Our clusters and cultures.
- Cultures being one group, knowing each.
- Masses and priests.
- Love the culture. Awesome thing.
- Time together.
- Priests.
- Priests and Mass scheduling.
- Lessons learned taken into account (Best Practices)
- An administration exercise vs revitalization
- Isolation of ethnic and cultural groups. Each and Every culture and ethnicity is valued.
- Continued dilution of reverency for Mass: dress, music participation, belief in Eucharist/Confession

Round 2: What hopes were shared about the proposed family grouping? What opportunities or possibilities might this offer?

- This will allow for more choices for mass times and vigils.
- Opportunity to form more new communities such as Women's Groups.
- More opportunities for learning about other cultures and their struggles
- More sense of stability for community – culture/language
- Streamlining work & reallocating resources
- Good opportunity to learn about the cultures and become a closer family

- Sense of unity/community and spirit of evangelization
- Unity of strengths
- Cooperation & opportunities for workshops
- Opportunities to evangelize Catholics on the Faith
- Revamp and attract younger peoples and help heal old hurts (trauma from growing up in the old church)
- Women deacons
- More positive catholic messages
- Encouraging more young men to consider the priesthood
- Encouraging more women to go into the Sisterhood (Nuns)
- Hopes that leadership sees the need for a Lao-speaking priest
- Opportunity to put out a positive Catholic Message for the parish people and people we are trying to evangelize.
- Natural Integration
- Voluntary Integration
- Understanding each other
- Better leaders into the whole
- Knights of Columbus
- Vietnamese – mingle with the rest of the parish
- I hope this work out
- Each one of us to open each other and accepting.
- Other church will be a difficulty – People of St. George
- Welcoming with them (Vietnamese). We don't associate with them
- "I HOPE THAT THIS GROUPING WILL WORK"
- "LEADERSHIP"

- “OPENNESS”
- Gives us a chance to create more unity among different communities.
- Excited to possibly get more youth to help in faith formation
- Being one big family may create a youth community
- There is opportunity in combining parishes
- In combining parishes, there is opportunity for growth in acceptance and inclusion
- Adding another parish is a great opportunity to learn about faith and culture
- Joining forces can organize the thoughts and ideas of all the parishes
- This shift can invite an openness to the faith
- This shift can also help youth see other youth when before they wouldn't be able to
- Creates more community and hope in the youth
- The addition of another parish could help grow our other projects such as Women Roles in the Church – more opportunities for women to participate
- Hopefully the new parish has an open mind to change along with us
- We may gain more widespread financial stability from joining up with another parish
- Hope for more finances available as a bigger group. Focusing on how individual groups can help the overall group.
- Increase finances and attendance, increase priesthood. Hoping that people are more willing to give to the parishes and improving their lives.
- Resources being shared to increase ministers and parishioners within the cluster.
- Open to change because it is necessary, Hope that people are willing to participate and thrive within the parish. Welcoming more people into the parish but also the cluster, getting to know more people within the cluster.
- Hope that existing parishioners will continue to attend church. Bigger cluster could potentially bring more synergy between the churches.
- Hope that no parish will be left behind, regroupings would revitalize the church. Seeing that this is something we have to do to not lose the spiritual aspects of life.

- Hoping that more groups mean more people coming to church. Combining churches and having more events together, and experience others as a community and learn from another. Opportunities to build a bigger community.
- Hope that clusters work out and doesn't get diminished in a couple years. Hope that the church engages in other activities outside of parishes – refugees, camps.
- Community and the ability to have interaction w/ other communities in ethnicity and cultures. How we can each grow as a person from being surrounded by our different cultures. How can we help each other grow as people and faith.
- Younger people more involved in the church. All involvement from everybody.
- Opportunity to meet other people and other cultures. Meet others and learn their ways.
- Hopeful for meeting others to join similar groups.
- Opportunity for love because after the first step is taken. The priest must go between different locations. Next move is a win for the priests because no longer two, the people come together. Example, one meeting instead of two of the same meeting; like a Council. A win bringing in OLL because of its large Vietnamese Community. Current Vietnamese community can benefit, both ways. Transportation issues for elderly can be addressed.
- Adapt to the needs and changes.
- More fuller pews. At St. Eds, the Laotian community was welcomed and pews are more full. COVID separation remains but it is hopeful with more attending Mass and bring us closer together. Allow people to see the ways Christ can meet them in their circumstances. Finding others in same phases of lives. Hopeful that resources we are asked to steward, would have better support. Come together in a centralized manner and effective to maintain and overhaul.
- See we have already experienced as a cluster more fully the needs of people. Because we want people to have an encounter with Christ. More practical with priests and faith formation people to meet needs of parishioners in the different parishes. Hope for more efficient use of our facilities. Hope in discernment process how to fully utilize our facilities with the focus on Christ, a closer relationship with our Lord. Hopes Fr. Scott will remain as our Pastor.
- Hope is since there may be 5 parishes, there will be more people involved. Not always the same people involved in the ministries and gatherings. It is hard at times. In every ministry, overworked because same people working/volunteering. But not as many able or willing to do so. Nice to have more Deacons and Priests. Hoping for more leadership in women. But concerned there will be no female deacons, deaconesses. Needs to start with the youth. Two years ago we had 80 candidates.
- Greater valuing of all diverse ethnicity and cultural groups in our extended community
- Greater focus on music ministry to make experience for youth and all participants to rejoice in their faith
- Opportunity to save money and make a richer community (reduce costs of schools)

- Re-energize faith in community/more lively, scriptural
- Re-vitalize and open people up to show enthusiasm for love of God in our lives
- Appreciate gifts of Spirit and shout with our love for God.
- Parents challenged to be example for children with enthusiasm for Mass.
- Our hope is to learn from each other to build a strong parish
- I hope the two parishes will sit together to discuss youth activities, to create living conditions and also create more students for the Catholic school. Request the parish priest or Diocese to invite group leaders of Our Lady of Lourdes parish to sit together to discuss and help with difficulties and concerns.

Round 2 Summing Up: What themes did we hear in Round 2?

- More opportunities to learn from each to other
- Grow with each other, unity of strengths
- Opportunity to reassess needs and better reallocate resources
- Joining forces
- Collaboration
- Good for us
- Meeting new people + more opportunity to love each other
- Hope
- Acceptance
- Unity
- Optimism
- Collaboration
- Hope
- Revitalization of the church, help the fading, grow the current

- Bigger family with a stronger leadership to lead a more cohesive family. More transparency between parishes.
- Revitalizing the younger generation.
- Community, facilities and overcoming obstacles.
- Youth involvement, community building.
- Family involvement and closeness.
- Community involvement, priests, deacons.
- Growth and connection with our family parish.
- Involvement.
- More people together.
- More opportunities for helping hands.
- More volunteers. Building up the church and parish life. Not the same people.
- Pastoral team enthusiasm for change and leadership
- Revitalize faith community
- Music, challenge adults to be enthusiastic example, welcome children, be welcoming to all people with love, but still confront bad behavior.
- Leverage best practices of our most vibrant parishes.

What additional input did the group provide?

- In regards to the bulletin: special courses offered to elderly in church to learn how to access and print bulletin.
- Why Our Lady of Lords was selected to be part of the grouping “Vietnamese speaking priests”
- Bring back the parish events
- Out secular society get away with our activities
- Pastoral Associates is a great idea

- Leadership of Fr Scott, Fr. Armando & Fr. Joseph to announce the Oktoberfest events
- 6 CYO not having game on Sunday morning
- With technology growing, the generational-culture gap grows and it is harder to reach certain age groups
- Paying more attention to individuals can create a greater sense of community
- A lot of stuff happening at a parish that other parishes don't know about – being able to condense information.
- Seeing kids participate in church events but not going to church.
- Younger energy helping to make things happen, merging may bring energy to all clusters.
- Having Mt. Virgin Vietnamese mass increased energy at St. George
- Would like details on finances within the Archdiocese – more expansive report
- In terms of volunteering. Real challenge in burnout. As parent of young kids, to know what amount of time requirement, how much time is necessary to volunteer in a particular way. Understand what the tasks are and make it more manageable to commit.
- The need for our pastors and priest to be engaged fully in each community. There is a strong desire for a family like connection with the pastor but that will be challenging to achieve. Find ways to engage and support each other where pastors and deacons cannot. What are the true pastoral needs for priest and deacon. Don't need priest/deacon to set up a community dinner. How am I responsible for the growth/decline of a lay movement or of the parish. If folks not engaged in the growth of the parish, then it is our/folks fault of parish decline.
- Can start with St. Vincent de Paul to volunteer with limited time involvement. SVDP can alert on needs of a parishioner or community member.
- Younger generation has a drive for social justice and recognition of it.
- Volunteer/server is on an individual basis. Outside of a formal structure before & after Mass. Get to know individuals.
- Our church is all about relationship. If we do not, we become individualistic. A small coffee hour after Mass for people to get together. Be intentional in communicating and building fellowship. Helps to encourage involvement. Activity does not have to be big.
- Example, St. Ed's can invite St. Paul to a coffee hour after Mass. Attended the Vietnamese One Year Anniversary and was moving. Maronite community at St. Peter. Cluster picnic at Jefferson Park was a great opportunity to meet others in cluster.

- Starts from here. To build community, come and unity. Connect in small ways. Major events in respective parishes. Simbang Gabi. Pena Francia. Talent show. Oktoberfest. Movie nights. Marionites. Options for fellowship. By nature busy people but be intentional to make connections. Make decisions.
- Even when worked 12 hour shifts, still volunteered as a parent. Or can donate money when not able to participate but so much more involvement.
- Parents must volunteer because sign contract with school to do so. Raising kids as Catholics is doing our jobs. Attending any event/meeting is a big deal.
- Youth. Confirmation kids. Matter of perspective. Great place to grow with little ones. First Communion is beautiful; saw child behavior really change with the Sacrament.
- When last two years taught 10th graders. Stare at the table. Hard to get them to engage. It is an opportunity and a challenge. They attend because their parents make them go. Even if they run away, the seed has been planted. Some of them stick. As a community, we have to give them a job. Some will/not answer. Ask them to serve as ushers at Mass. How will we engage them.
- Women deacons. Don't stop asking. If there are less priests, who is going to have to step up. Look at US Military. How much percentage today. There will be no choice. Look at the bible at the time of St. Paul. Women were involved.
- Like to see other ways for folks to get involved. For example, exercise group, crafting group, cooking, writing and include prayer. This would be a great way to bond with fellow parishioners. For women, ministries like Walking with Purpose; Endowed; Women of Grace; Women Made New. Soul Core. For men, Long Ride Home w/ Bear Woznick; Behold the Man w/ Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers. Also for all, Battle Ready.
- Youth Leaders – solicit children input in process