

November 20, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the Lord!

On November 20th we had a Town Hall Meeting to discuss the status of our parishes: Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Ambrose, St. Anthony, St. Joseph and Our Lady of Good Counsel. This meeting came as a result of Bishop Lucia's decision to have one Pastor and one Parochial Vicar serve these five parishes.

At the meeting, various factors were presented for us to consider: (1) the situation in the Church with the current "crisis of faith," (2) the situation in the diocese with the significant decrease in Catholic population and priests, (3) the situation at our parishes with the decline in pastoral activity, limited financial and other resources, many facilities requiring ongoing maintenance, limited staff, etc. Attached is that data upon which we reflected.

As we reflected on this data, we were challenged to consider whether we want to continue to focus on maintenance or begin moving to mission. In other words, do we want to continue directing our limited resources to maintaining current programs and facilities that may not be in the best interest of our community? Or do we want to begin collaborating and sharing resources so that we can explore new opportunities for mission?

We had an opportunity to participate in various polls that were offered to help us grasp the current situation. We also had an opportunity to express our concerns and hopes for the future.

We made no decisions. Rather, this was an opportunity for us to come together to better understand our situation and begin to consider how to best serve the communities in Western Broome County. We wanted to keep you informed as we continue to seek your input.

Our parishes are wonderful and very special communities! May we continue to come together to provide the most effective spiritual care for the faithful in Western Broome County.

Sincerely in Christ,

Father Richard P. Prior, Jr., Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Good Counsel
Father Kenneth Kirkman, Pastor of linked parishes of St. Ambrose, St. Joseph and St. Anthony