

**Bulletin Article for Holy Cross, Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Evangelist,
St. Lawrence, St. Leo the Great, St. Mark**

for bulletins of December 17-18, 2022

Pastoral Planning Task Force Update

The Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Pastoral Planning Task Force met again on November 16. After opening prayer and faithsharing, the first portion of the meeting was devoted to an initial discussion about what we can do to prepare for the inevitable future where fewer priests are available to serve our parishes. Key questions were: How would Masses be distributed across our 7 parishes as the number of available priests declines? How would other sacramental ministry happen? What would we do in an emergency where a priest was unable to preside at a weekend's Masses? Since it is possible that more of our parishes will be joined under a single pastor, Fr. Coffas, Fr. Enyan-Boadu, Fr. Firpo, and lay members of the task force shared what they view as best practices based on their experience with clustered parishes. In response to some comments heard from parishioners, it was emphasized that this task force—formed by the pastoral leaders of the 7 parishes—was not charged with recommending parish closures but with reaching agreement on how best to prepare for a reduced number of priests while keeping all of the parishes vibrant.

Over the previous month, task force members had responded to two surveys. Twenty-one ideas for how to work collaboratively on the Church's mission of Word, Worship, Community and Service were reduced to 3: reaching out to inactive parishioners, a shared vocation approach, and creating a shared website to communicate what is happening in all our parishes. The last part of this meeting was spent working in small groups to focus on how to begin and who in each parish might carry each of the initiatives forward.