



To: Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Leaders, Pastoral Center Employees, Seminarians,
Religious Superiors, Business Managers, Parish Staff, Catholic School Personnel.
From: Bishop Daniel E. Thomas
Date: February 27, 2022
Re: Diocesan Intentional Planning

Over the past several years, clergy and laity of the Diocese of Toledo have voiced their desire for a more intentional planning of clergy assignments and parish configurations that take into account changes in demographics and church attendance over the past decade, the decreased number of priests available for active ministry, and increased collaboration between parishes.

Similar requests were repeatedly expressed during the early phases of our Diocesan Strategic Planning in 2018 and 2019, leading me to institute “Healthy Clergy and Healthy Parishes” as Pillar #1 in the Diocesan Strategic Plan. The clergy, consecrated religious, and laity of the Pillar #1 team recommended the hiring of a full-time staff member to coordinate Intentional Planning in our diocese. Andrew Reinhart was hired for this role in February 2021.

Over the past year, Mr. Reinhart has conducted extensive demographic research and consulted with other dioceses that have already undertaken pastoral planning efforts, some of which are far more sweeping in nature given the size of the dioceses. The process we have chosen instead is an organic consultative process to equip our parishes for effective evangelization far into the future.

Most importantly, Mr. Reinhart has met with clergy, deaneries, parishes, and consultative bodies of our diocese to listen to their insights and hear their needs. Through these meetings, and after consultation with the Presbyteral Council and the Priest Personnel Board, certain regions of our diocese were identified for immediate action. The Intentional Planning process in these areas has moved forward to the point that new and greater collaboration will be possible between parishes. Effective 1 July 2022, the following arrangements will be implemented:

Defiance: Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Defiance and Saint Mary Parish, Defiance will be served by one Pastor and one Parochial Vicar.

Mansfield: Resurrection Parish, Lexington, Saint Mary of the Snows Parish, Mansfield and Saint Peter Parish, Mansfield will be served by one Pastor and two Parochial Vicars.

Toledo, Saint Agnes Deanery: Regina Coeli Parish, Toledo and Saint John the Baptist Parish, Toledo will be served by one Pastor. Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Toledo will be served by a Parochial Administrator. Other parishes in Toledo will be engaged in the Intentional Planning process going forward.

I am especially grateful to the priests affected by these new configurations for their willingness to do the “heavy-lifting” of these transitions with the assistance of our Diocesan Intentional Planning Office. We look forward to the long-term fruit their labors will make possible! The end goals of our Intentional Planning efforts are more unified and collaborative Catholic communities that will be more vibrant centers of evangelization served by the current and foreseen number of priests available in our diocese. As we move forward with Intentional Planning in other regions of the Diocese of Toledo in upcoming years, we pray that our efforts will focus us all more fervently on Christ Jesus and promote a growth in holy disciples, holy families, and holy vocations throughout our diocese.