

September 20, 2004

Mr. James Aroune
111 Overland Trail
W. Henrietta, NY 14586

Dear Jim:

In anticipation of the Rush-Henrietta planning group beginning its configuration planning for "Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium: Phase Two," I reviewed your first pastoral plan. Your communications to the parishioners are superb. I especially commend your collaborative efforts in listening to the parishioners and empowering them to plan for the future of the church. Your planning group has been steadfast in creating many inner-parish opportunities to educate the parishioners in the Rush-Henrietta community. You have kept the face of Christ visible by calling the three parishes together for Confirmation, Penance, retreats and prayer. May God bless your continued efforts.

Currently you have four priests serving your three parishes and one college: one pastor, two sacramental ministers and one chaplain. We project that four priests will be available to your planning group from 2005-2010 and three from 2010-2015. Three priests assigned to parish ministry will be decreased to two. In accordance with our diocesan document "Sacramental Celebration and Campus Ministry" the priest assignment to campus ministry is solely for the service to Rochester Institute of Technology as chaplain. As you are well aware, these "projected priests" may not necessarily be priest pastors since all pastoral leadership positions in our diocese are open to pastoral administrators as well as priests.

Please continue to use your excellent communication skills to educate your parishioners about the declining number of priests within our Diocese. Help them to understand what might change in their own communities as four priests, then three, respond to the sacramental needs of the Rush Henrietta communities.

I ask you to focus clearly on your mission to "create, sustain and increase the vitality" of the three Rush-Henrietta parishes and faith communities. Your pastoral plan should address how your parishes will be structured over the next five years in a way that allows you to grow toward your preferred ten-year configuration. Although change is quite difficult, you will need to address facility-related alternatives as you consider the impact of fewer priests serving a growing population.

Unlike the other thirty-four planning groups, the Rush-Henrietta pastoral planning team will consider combining configuration and ministry planning into a single process. They will use the extensive information resources from Percept as well as the diocesan pastoral planning team to devise a process and information uniquely suited to this purpose. I appreciate the willingness of the pastoral leaders and the pastoral planning team to consider this pilot project. It will help us determine the usefulness of this process for other planning groups and will hopefully result in a more coherent and reality-based pastoral plan for Rush-Henrietta. Because of the newness of this approach, it will be especially important to focus on accurate, timely and consistent communication with the three parish communities. With this in mind please consider the following as you plan ministries in the future.

As a young and growing community with excellent youth ministry programs in each of the parishes, you may want to develop a shared vision for young adult ministry. Your communities are fortunate to be blessed with many young families and I encourage you to envision ministry from “womb to tomb.” Search for any gaps that may leave an age group searching for more.

You are a community rich with the presence of pastoral leaders of every vocation: priesthood (diocesan and order), diaconate, religious life and marriage. I ask you to take this richness and, with the assistance of Carol Dady from the Vocations Office, develop ways to enrich people’s understanding of the many ways God calls us into vocations.

I trust that your planning in this phase will continue to keep the face of Christ visible to the people you serve. I offer my prayers as you begin this second phase of pastoral planning. Deb Housel, your planning group liaison, will work with you to ensure that you receive any necessary support from the various offices of the Pastoral Center as you create different aspects of your pastoral plan.

With every good wish, I remain

Your brother in Christ,

†Matthew H. Clark
Bishop of Rochester

Copies: Mr. Jim Aroune
Deacon Dean Condon
Sr. Alice Cooney
Mrs. Carol Dady
Fr. Doug DellaPietra
Fr. Tim Horan
Mrs. Deborah Housel
Fr. Richard Hunt
Ms. Shannon Loughlin

Karen's changes
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September 20, 2004

Mr. James Aroune
111 Overland Trail
W. Henrietta, NY 14586

Dear Jim:

In anticipation of the Rush-Henrietta planning group beginning "Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium: Phase Two," I reviewed your first pastoral plan. I especially commend your collaborative efforts in listening to the parishioners and empowering them to plan for the future of the church. Your communications to parishioners have been superb. Confirmation, the "Appreciative Inquiry Process", and gathering your pastoral councils together are just some of the ways you have begun to work together to address the ministerial needs of the Rush-Henrietta area. May God bless your continued efforts.

Currently you have four priests serving within your communities: one pastor, two sacramental ministers and one campus minister. We project that four priests will be available to your planning group from 2005-2010 and three from 2010-2015. One of the priests will continue to be a priest chaplain serving Rochester Institute of Technology. As you are well aware, the other "projected priests," first two and then one, may not necessarily be priest pastors. Since all pastoral leadership positions in our diocese are open to pastoral administrators, they could be sacramental ministers serving with a pastoral administrator on either a full-time or part-time basis.

Please continue to educate your parishioners about the declining number of priests within our Diocese. Help them to understand what might change in their own communities as fewer priests are available to respond to sacramental needs.

I ask you to focus clearly on your mission to "create, sustain and increase the vitality" of the Rush-Henrietta parishes and faith communities. Your pastoral plan should address how your parishes will be structured over the next five years in a way that allows you to grow toward your preferred ten-year configuration. Although change is quite difficult, you will need to address facility-related alternatives as you consider the impact of fewer priests serving a growing population.

There are additional issues that I invite your communities to address, although some of these may need to wait until after you make configuration decisions for the future.

Yours is a young and growing community with excellent youth ministry programs in each of the parishes. You may want to build on those efforts and develop a shared vision for young adult ministry with those in their twenties and thirties.

[Your communities are fortunate to be blessed with many young families and I encourage you to envision ministry from “womb to tomb.” Search for any gaps of what ought to be, that may leave an age group searching for more. –not sure why this is in this particular group’s letter—we haven’t raised life-long faith formation or life-long ministry in any other group.]

[You are a community rich with the presence of pastoral leaders of every vocation: priesthood (diocesan and order), diaconate, religious life and marriage. I ask you to take this richness and with the assistance of Carol Dady from the Vocations Office, develop ways to enrich the people’s understanding of the many ways God calls us into vocations. Don’t know why vocations are being raised with this group—they haven’t been with any other.]

I offer my prayers as you begin this second phase of pastoral planning. Deb Housel, your planning group liaison, will work with you to ensure that you receive any necessary support from the various offices of the Pastoral Center as you create different aspects of your pastoral plan.

With every good wish, I remain,

Your brother in Christ,

+Matthew H. Clark
Bishop of Rochester

Copies: Mr. James Aroune
Deacon Dean Condon
Alice Cooney, SSJ
Mrs. Carol Dady?
Rev. Douglas DellaPietra
Mrs. Deborah Housel
Rev. Richard Hunt, SJ
Ms. Shannon Loughlin

QUESTIONS

SHOULD ANYTHING BE CHECKED ON OR SAID ABOUT THIS

the endowment idea from St. Joseph Rush in order to build up the community's ministries? St. Joseph's wants to setup an endowment to keep ministry in Rush fearing – being the smallest parish – getting closed or swallowed up I wouldn't include it

HAVE IN OR OUT – WITH DOUG ADDING THE 4TH MASS ON SUNDAY – YOUTH MASS – I think this is a pilot and quietly allowed – but I don't know if we just ignore it or say something.

Church law limits priests to presiding at no more than three Sunday observance Masses and you will need to plan accordingly. Your challenge is to find a way to be a flourishing and vital church within these constraints. I wouldn't mention it—we haven't discussed this new trend in any substantial way here at the pastoral center—right now, as you say, it's a pilot approach.

SHOULD ANYTHING BE SAID ABOUT re-vision – I did use some of the re-vision wording in the paragraph about the deaf community – “gaps” I wouldn't—this letter should just include issues from the Bishop, not ideas from the group or possible processes for pastoral planning.

Other—we have generally asked parishes in suburban areas to do the following:

I am mindful that your communities already support the poor and vulnerable in many ways. However, as you develop your pastoral plan, please discuss whether there are additional ways in which you could collectively aid vulnerable urban or rural parishes or other ministries directed toward the marginalized.

I realize that St. Joseph's is still fairly rural but it might be good to include this paragraph since the parishes are interested in working together to assess and address the needs within the Rush-Henrietta area.

With every good wish, I remain

Your brother in Christ,

†Matthew H. Clark
Bishop of Rochester