

January 23, 2012

Dear Parishioners:

A committee of lay people and some priests has been appointed by Cardinal O'Malley to make recommendations on how best to utilize the priests, staff, and financial resources of the parishes of the Archdiocese of Boston in the upcoming years. This committee has been entrusted to begin concrete discussion for the implementation of a plan to cluster most parishes into small groups in their hope to better address the shortage of priests, and to better coordinate joint financial concerns. Yesterday afternoon a proposal offered by the archdiocese was given to the priests of our region of the archdiocese regarding proposed clustering of parishes. The model for the number of parishes clustered together was mainly based upon parish Mass attendance and Sunday Offertory collection.

It is proposed that Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted Parish and Saint Mary Parish remain open and linked together under one pastor and supportive staff. This overall plan for the parishes of the Archdiocese is proposed to be completed within the next 3 to 5 years.

Like any proposal there are merits as well as needs for adjustment in order to ensure what is best for each local parish community.

The Archdiocese of Boston has provided a website: www.planning2012.com. Please keep in mind that some issues listed on this website are being reviewed and possibly revised based upon consultation they are receiving from the various priests and parishioners.

I will address this issue at all the upcoming weekend Masses regarding what limited information that has been made available to me. I have been in conversation with our parish pastoral council as to the general overview of the planning committee. I will work with the various parish consultative committees as this proposal is furthered outlined in the upcoming months.

Please know of my prayers for you and your family as we journey together in faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. James M. DiPerri

Fr. James M. DiPerri,

Pastor