

Assumption Seattle Council input on Deanery Plan 2

1. First of all, we have no target date for any of the changes that are suggested in plan so this gives us time. **The most non- invasive plan for all parishes would be to seek international priests to take place of priests that will be retiring or leaving.** From the discussion at our meeting, there seem to be an abundance of foreign priests that might be willing to relocate.
2. As for the plan for Assumption and St. Bridget's, I see few positives. The only thing that they could easily share would be the Youth Minister. Both parishes would still need parish staff, parish choirs, etc.

--I think combining the parishes with one priest would put a lot of pressure on the Pastor to serve both parishes. Older priests may not have the energy, younger priests may be overwhelmed and burn out. We also have Children's and the Villa thrown in to the mix. This is not a win-win.

--Parishes are communities of people who bond and enjoy relationships developed inside the parish. By rescheduling the masses, families might have to pick a mass not at their parish or if the time is not convenient not go at all. This might lead to families leaving the parish and seeking to go elsewhere, thus losing numbers.

-- I also see a hardship for the senior community that is so supportive and have transportation issues to deal with.

--Not sure how this might impact the school but that is also a consideration.

I would love to see the models of transition and pastoral method that the report says are available but, as you indicated at the meeting, this did not really work out well in the South Deanery.

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- My only addition would be to emphasize that when they suggest that Assumption and St. Bridget sharing a priest, I don't think they are considering the fact that not only are they two separate parishes, but it also involves a school, so it would really be supporting 3 separate communities, not just two. (Plus occasional duties for Children's and Villa due to proximity.) Further, we know that parishioners, especially at St. Bridget, have fallen away recently for various reasons, but that the POTENTIAL for the number of parishioners there to increase again is very real and very possible. If that were to occur, and I would imagine that as things settle down at St. B's they will, so will the workload of the priest for that parish. I think it would create a huge burden if all of that fell on the shoulders of just one priest. In fact, I think having a priest at each parish, plus a junior or associate priest would be an excellent idea considering the potential for outreach within our community that, if given another set of hands, could really do wonders in our area.

- My perspective comes from growing up in upstate NY where we had many parish consolidations. I went to St Ann's school, but was a member of St Mike's parish which joined with St Peter's and in more recent years St Ann's school closed and they have now joined St Charles parish, so I grew up feeling good in different churches and these discussions and proposals are not as scary for me. I actually think consolidation of communities can be a great thing in increasing tolerance and understanding for other and working to break down some unsaid barriers and egos that are held in different neighborhoods.

I think in order to plan there needs to be real assessment of the facts – you implied that they are counting you out sooner than you may retire, is this true for others as well? They start out saying there may be 1-3 less priests in the next 2-10 years, this seems like a broad guesstimate. Most of the proposals to combined things seem to have one priest working more/ covering more masses, which may not be a reasonable expectation. I agree that looking at alternatives to bring other priests in seems more helpful if indeed there is a true shortage. Are there not any deacons in Seattle? That is another way to help decrease the burden on the priests. I think if parishes are dwindling in attendance it makes sense to combine, but I don't think one priest doing so much more work should be the outcome of any needed consolidation.

From historical information sounds like status quo seems to hold at the end of the day.

- My thoughts on the pastor-sharing proposal are more or less the same as what appeared to be the consensus in the room during our meeting this past Monday: The proposal puts a lot of strain on a single pastor, spreading his commitments thin and potentially limiting his engagement with both communities and, as a result, attenuating parishioners' commitments to their parishes. The proposed mass schedule wouldn't create a hardship for me or my family, but I do know people who probably would have to start attending St. Bridget or Our Lady of the Lake, at least occasionally, if we spread the masses out that way.

I also agree with the apparent consensus that it would be preferable to bring in priests from countries that have surpluses, although I say this naively, having no strong understanding of the difficulties involved for either the Archdiocese or the priests themselves. My brother and father have both been involved with the work of importing priests and nuns from other countries, and my outsider's impression is that these are generally positive experiences, but I'm not familiar with the Archbishop's thinking on this and don't have a strong understanding of what the objections to the idea might be.

I also like your idea of assigning younger priests as assistants to a single pastor in charge of both parishes. That would reduce the load for the pastor and also provide some good experience for younger priests preparing to become pastors themselves. Of course, for this to work we have to have more young priests in the pool overall, so we're back to the supply problem, which in the near term can apparently be solved only by importing priests.

In the past, this parish has also had leadership from deacons and a nun. I wasn't involved with the parish during those times, but I get the sense that returning to those arrangements wouldn't be especially popular. I do wonder, though, whether other religious people could be involved in helper roles under a single pastor to lighten the load a bit. The pastor would still have the same liturgical obligations, and it would only partially address our concerns, but I wanted to raise it as a possibility because it's not something that we discussed last Monday. You'd know better than I how workable that would be, or if we even have enough people in those categories to make it worth talking about.

I can say that my family and I are happy at Assumption and under present circumstances would have no trouble with the proposed changes. The first thought that occurred to me, though, when I read the proposal was that it sounded like an unsustainable load for the pastor, especially in light of the fact that pastors, like everyone else, deserve vacations, and the proposed arrangement would make it difficult to find replacement priests while the pastor is gone. Potential logistical problems like that just seem to mount as time passes, and on occasion they'd probably strain the pastors and the parishes to their limits. If options exist that help us avoid that outcome, it seems to me that we should pursue them

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- My response to the proposal to blend Assumption and St Bridget parishes to share one priest and one school is this: I believe it would be too heavy a load for one priest. Both parish communities are well established and growing. When the needs of Villa Academy are factored in, the importance of a second priest is even greater. If the intent is to create a broader, blended community; both churches should remain open and active. They should be supported with, at the least, a pastor and a second priest to assist. Given the small number of new, local priests, please consider international priests for our parishes.
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- The flock needs their shepherd. It seems risky in these tenuous times to leave the sheep unattended for any length of time by sharing Priests between Parishes or alienating a population by consolidating services with no apparent cost saving aside from that of a Priest. I understand the Archdiocese is hesitant to import additional Priests to handle our community's needs over the long term. Of course the preference would be to grow our Priest locally to serve its community. But that being said, even with a ramped up seminarian program the recruitment vs. retention are out of sync and we are left in need of shepherds. We were instructed to feed the sheep. I don't recall a mention of national boundaries restricting that call to action.

ST. JOHN the EVANGELIST PARISH

Input for the North Seattle Deanery Pastoral Planning

The online survey conducted among parishioners at St. John Parish, Seattle, drew 160 respondents. This number is approximately one third of the average weekly Mass attendance at the parish. However, the composition of the households of those responding to the survey increases the probability that the responses reflect a larger number of parishioners: specifically, a majority of those responding reported that they are married (over 80% of those responding) and the respondents reported the presence of over 200 others (children and elders) in the home, suggesting that the respondents could represent somewhere around 500 individuals. Mass attendance on an average weekend in the parish hovers around 500-550, so it is likely that the responses reflect the opinions of a majority of those who regularly attend Mass at St. John.

Household composition	Number	Percent	Average age
Single, no children	27	17%	73.2
Married, no children	34	21%	60.3
Households with children	99	62%	49.0
Total	160	100%	55.5
Others living in respondent households	Number	Percent	
Children under 5	21	9%	
Elementary age children	100	44%	
HS age children	46	20%	
Grandchildren	4	2%	
College aged and older	46	20%	
Elderly parents	12	5%	
Total	229	100%	

St. John Church is located in the 98103 Zip Code, but the parish boundaries include parts of three different Zip Codes, as seen below, and 80% of the responding families live within these Zip Codes. Four contiguous Zip Codes are home to another 17% of those responding. The Zip Codes and neighborhoods are shown in the table below.

Zip Codes		Neighborhood	Number	Percent of total
Within boundaries	98117	Crown Hill	71	44.4%
	98103	Greenwood/Wallingford	45	28.1%
	98107	Ballard	12	7.5%
	Subtotal		128	80.0%
Contiguous	98177	Shoreline/Bitter Lake/The Highlands	17	10.6%
	98133	Shoreline/Bitter Lake	7	4.4%
	98125	Lake City/Northgate	2	1.3%
	98115	Wedgwood	1	0.6%
	Subtotal		27	16.9%
Further away	98020	Edmonds	1	0.6%
	98026	Edmonds	1	0.6%
	98043	Mountlake Terrace	1	0.6%
	98109	Queen Anne	1	0.6%
	98208	Everett	1	0.6%
	Subtotal		5	3.1%
Total			160	100.0%

The survey began with a letter from Fr. Crispin, explaining that:

“The number of Catholics in our Archdiocese has grown to 600,000 served by 174 Parishes and Missions. Our Archdiocese is facing shortages of Priests. It is critical that we develop approaches that insure that our Parishioners have adequate Clergy, parishes and facilities to serve them. Our North Deanery, which consists of 18 parishes and the Newman Center will face a reduction of up to 4 priests over the next 3 to 10 years.

In January of this year Archbishop Sartain called for the Parishioners of our Archdiocese to engage in a process to plan to address these challenges. I am asking for your input on this very important issue, so I can best represent our parish's desires.”

To provide this input, the survey asked six questions about possible changes, including Mass times and shared programs, staff and facilities. Each question is presented below, along with the responses shown

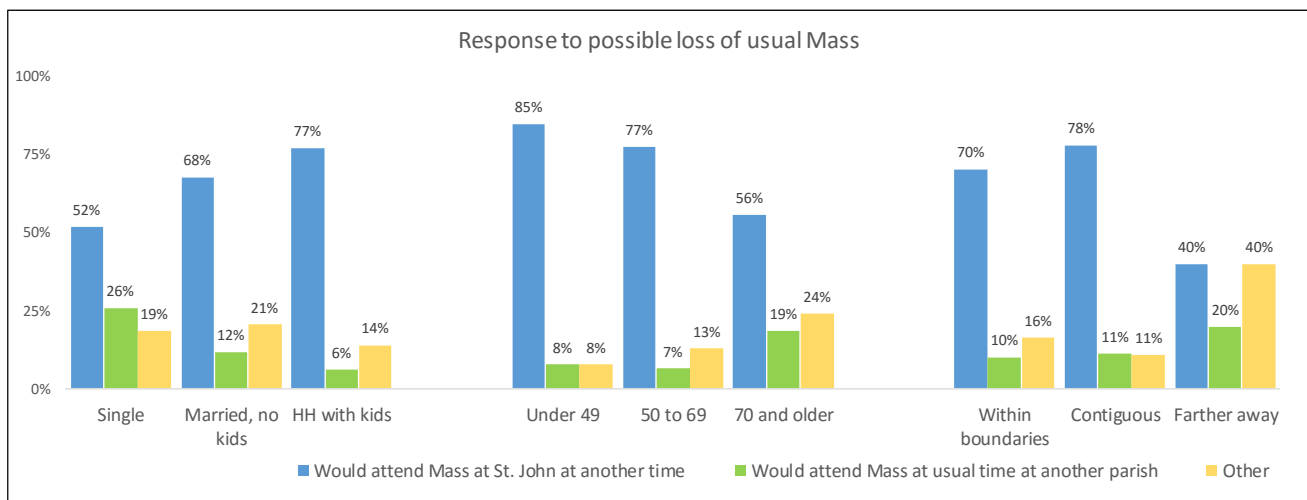
by household composition and by distance from the parish. Many parishioners offered comments/suggestions, and others expressed support for a possible change with stated reservations. A summary of these comments/reservations is provided for each question. Full comments are provided in the Appendix.

If your usual Mass time is no longer available at St John's, what will you do?

There was no question on the survey about the usual Mass time attended by the individual respondents, but 71% of all respondents said that, in the event of the loss of Mass at their usual time, they would continue attending Mass at St. John Parish at one of the other Mass times. Respondents in households with children were most likely to say they would continue to attend Mass at St. John's (77%) and those living either within parish boundaries or in neighborhoods contiguous to the parish are also more likely than those living more distant to continue attending Mass at the parish (70% or more for within/contiguous respondents versus 40% for those further away).

Over one-fourth of single parishioners without children (a group of parishioners whose average age is considerably older than other respondents) say they would be likely to go to another parish with a Mass at the time they now usually attend, although over half say they would remain at St. John and attend Mass at a different time.

If your usual Mass was dropped:	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Would attend Mass at St. John at another time	113	71%	52%	68%	77%	85%	77%	56%	70%	78%	40%
Would attend Mass at usual time at another parish	17	11%	26%	12%	6%	8%	7%	19%	10%	11%	20%
Other	26	16%	19%	21%	14%	8%	13%	24%	16%	11%	40%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5



Of those respondents who gave some “other” response, a majority (just over half) said their decision would depend on such things as the times of the Masses, their own schedule, or even the music that is used at the different Masses. The second largest number (about a third) said they would be likely to do both: sometimes attend St. John’s, sometimes another parish with the preferred Mass time. Less than 8% of these respondents said they would not attend Mass at all.

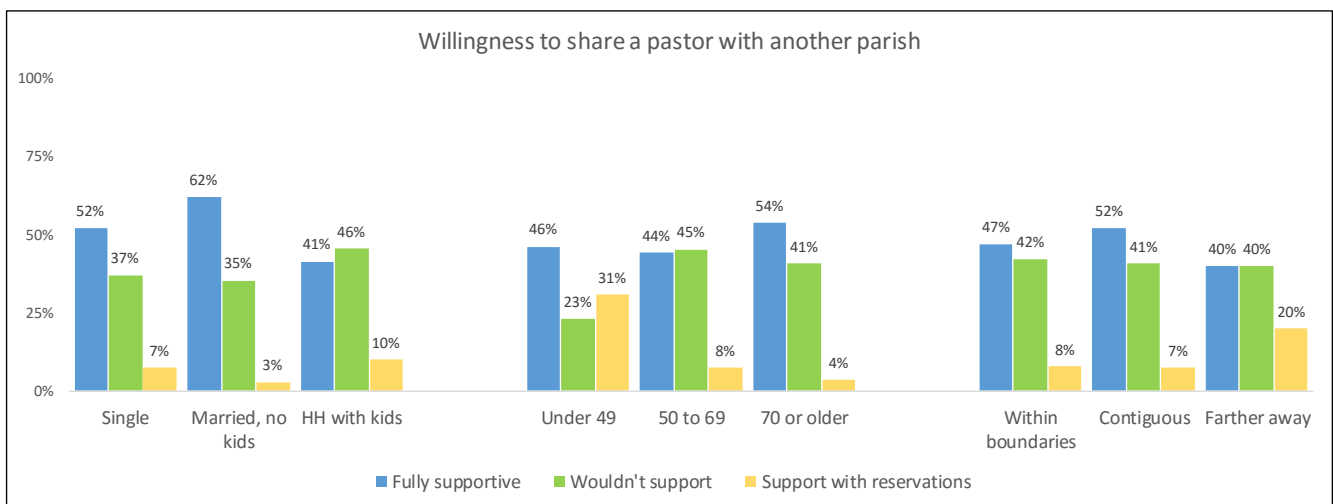
The overall tenor of the responses to this question was very positive; respondents expressed support for the parish community and a wish to continue as a part of it. With a very few exceptions, there is an evident willingness to adjust to the needs of the future.

How supportive are you of sharing a pastor with another parish?

Just under half of the parishioners responding to the survey said they were very supportive of sharing a pastor with another parish, with another 40% saying they were supportive with some reservations. A minority of those responding said they were not supportive of that option for addressing the shortage of priests to serve in the parishes of the deanery.

Those respondents from household with children were somewhat less likely to support (with or without reservations) sharing a pastor, and this was true also for those who attend the parish although they live at some distance. The strongest support (again with or without reservations) for this option came from those parishioner who are married but have no children currently living at home.

Sharing a pastor?	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Very supportive	76	48%	52%	62%	41%	46%	44%	54%	47%	52%	40%
Supportive with reservations	67	42%	37%	35%	46%	23%	45%	41%	42%	41%	40%
Not supportive	13	8%	7%	3%	10%	31%	8%	4%	8%	7%	20%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5

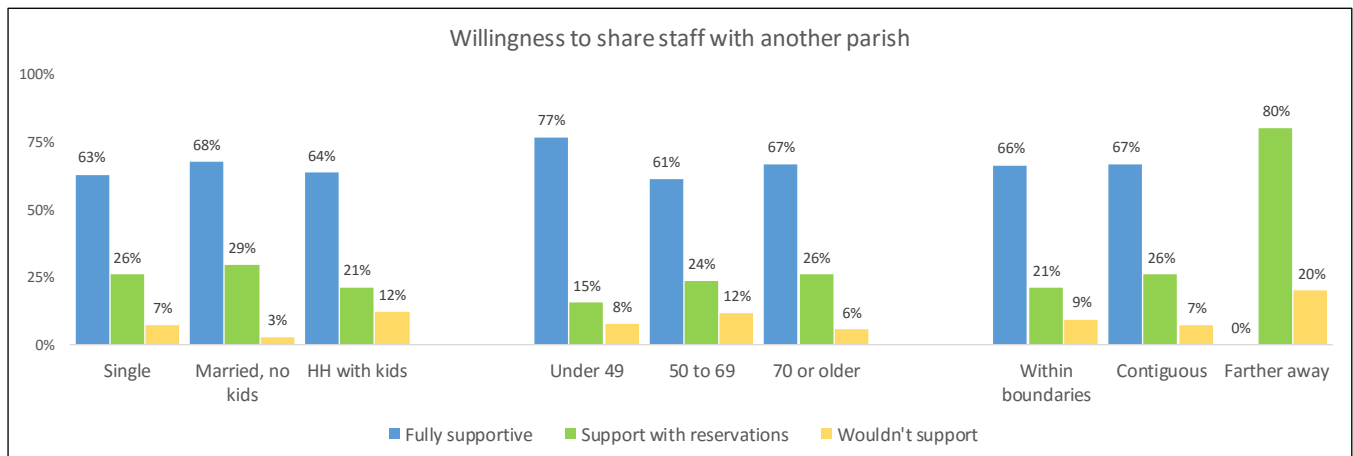


Those parishioners who expressed reservations about sharing a priest were clear that their concerns were twofold: (1) that the effect of doubling the workload of a pastor could negatively affect the health and effectiveness of the priest, and (2) that the parish and the school would suffer from the loss of the pastor's presence and attention. There was clear concern specifically for Fr. Crispin and support for his continued presence in the community.

How supportive are you of sharing staff (administrative, sacramental preparation, youth ministers, others) with another parish?

Parishioners responding to this question were even more willing to support sharing of parish staff than sharing the pastor with another parish. Over 80% of each subgroup supported this option, with or without reservations. There were fewer reservations about this option, and these reservations were a fainter echo of the reservations about sharing a pastor: what would be the effect on the staff members? Would they burn out, or simply leave? And what would be the effect on the quality of the programs under the direction of the different staff members? Would quality be diluted? There were also questions about whether the shortage of priests would necessarily mean a shortage of lay ministers; i.e., whether this is a move that would affect the central problem being addressed.

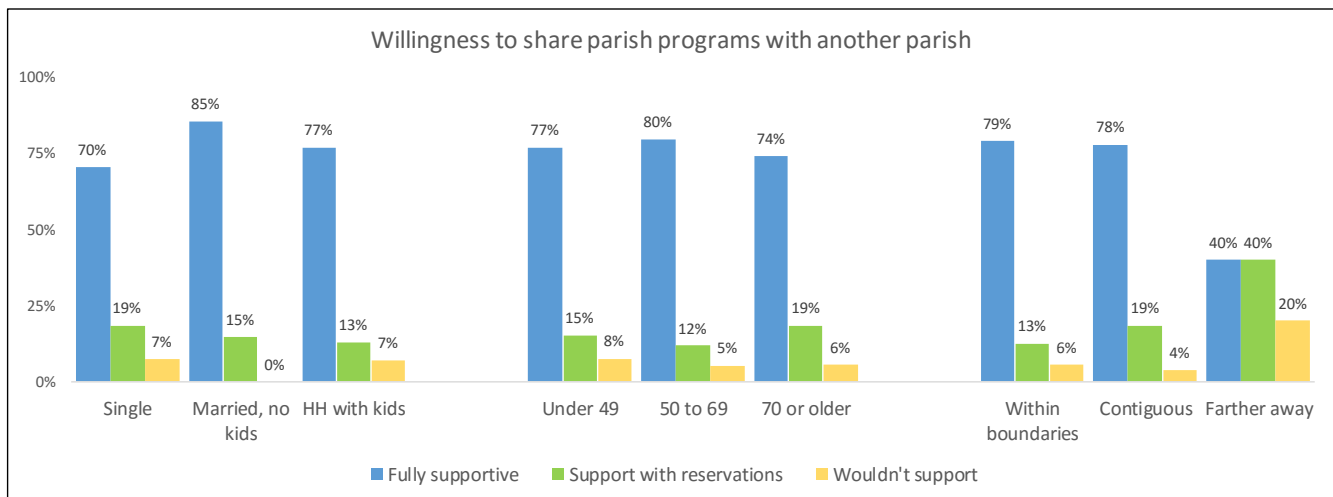
Sharing parish staff?	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Very supportive	103	64%	63%	68%	64%	77%	61%	67%	66%	67%	0%
Supportive with reservations	38	24%	26%	29%	21%	15%	24%	26%	21%	26%	80%
Not supportive	15	9%	7%	3%	12%	8%	12%	6%	9%	7%	20%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5



How supportive are you of sharing programs (RCIA, baptisms, marriage prep, youth ministry) with another parish?

Even more strongly than with regard to parish staff, responding parishioners are very supportive of sharing programs with another parish when there are shortages of priests or other resources. There was very little difference among respondents by age, but single parishioners were somewhat less likely to be willing to share programs than parishioners in other types of households, and the very few respondents who live a long distance from the parish were much less likely than other respondents to support sharing programs.

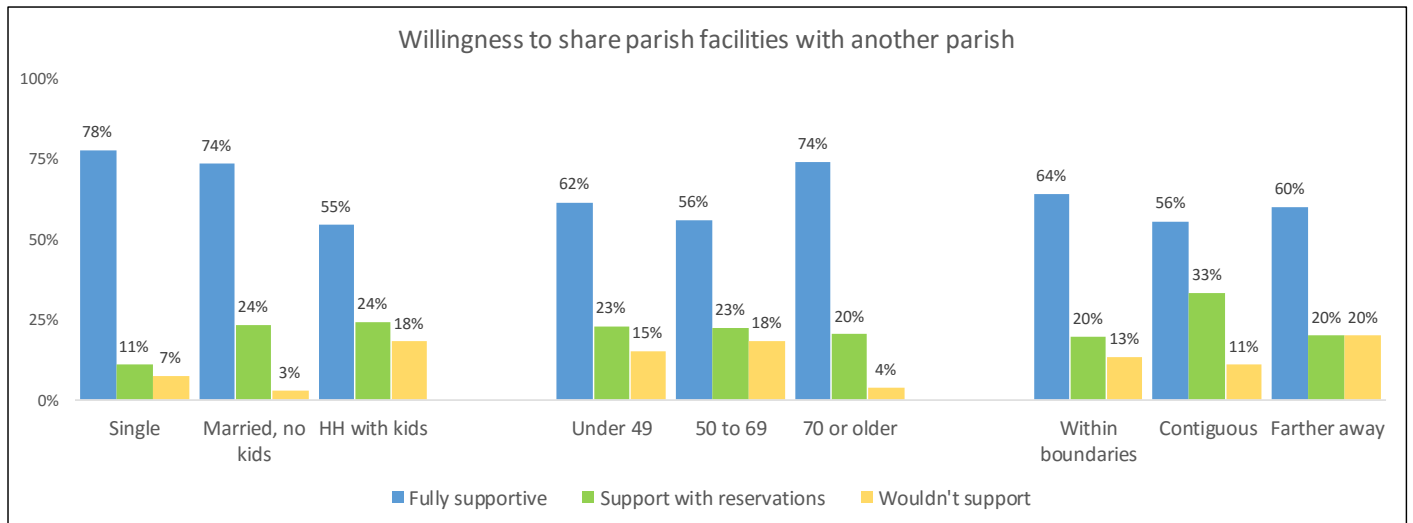
Sharing parish programs?	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Very supportive	124	78%	70%	85%	77%	77%	80%	74%	79%	78%	40%
Supportive with reservations	23	14%	19%	15%	13%	15%	12%	19%	13%	19%	40%
Not supportive	9	6%	7%	0%	7%	8%	5%	6%	6%	4%	20%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5



The reservations shared by respondents echoed some of the themes mentioned earlier: staff are already spread thin; quality of programs might suffer if untied from the parish connection; there might be a mismatch between the cultures/expectations of the parishes involved that would hurt the effectiveness of the programs. As with the question about sharing staff, there were concerns that sharing programs (and, it follows, staff) would respond to the needs created by a shortage of priests.

How supportive are you of sharing of facilities (rectory, gym, parish halls) with another parish?

Sharing parish facilities?	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Very supportive	100	63%	78%	74%	55%	62%	56%	74%	64%	56%	60%
Supportive with reservations	35	22%	11%	24%	24%	23%	23%	20%	20%	33%	20%
Not supportive	21	13%	7%	3%	18%	15%	18%	4%	13%	11%	20%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5

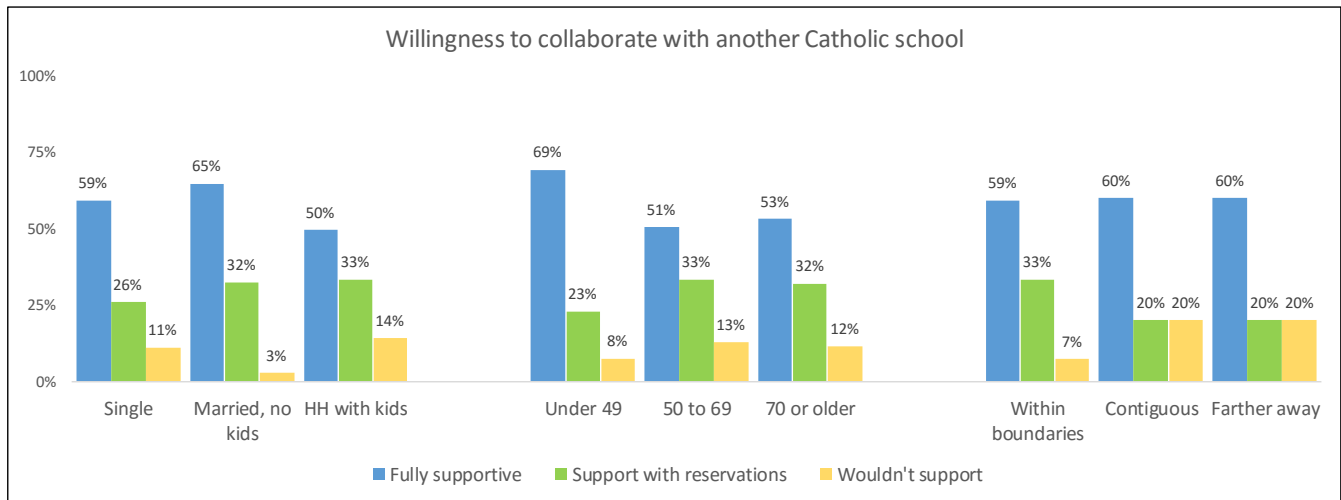


Although almost two-thirds of those responding said that they would support sharing facilities with another parish, the support was weaker than for sharing programs or staff. Respondents in households with children were the least likely to fully support sharing facilities, while single (and older) parishioners were more likely to support such sharing.

Many of the reservations expressed by parishioners had to do with the fact that parish facilities are already used to capacity and that use of these facilities by St. John parishioners and school families should have priority.

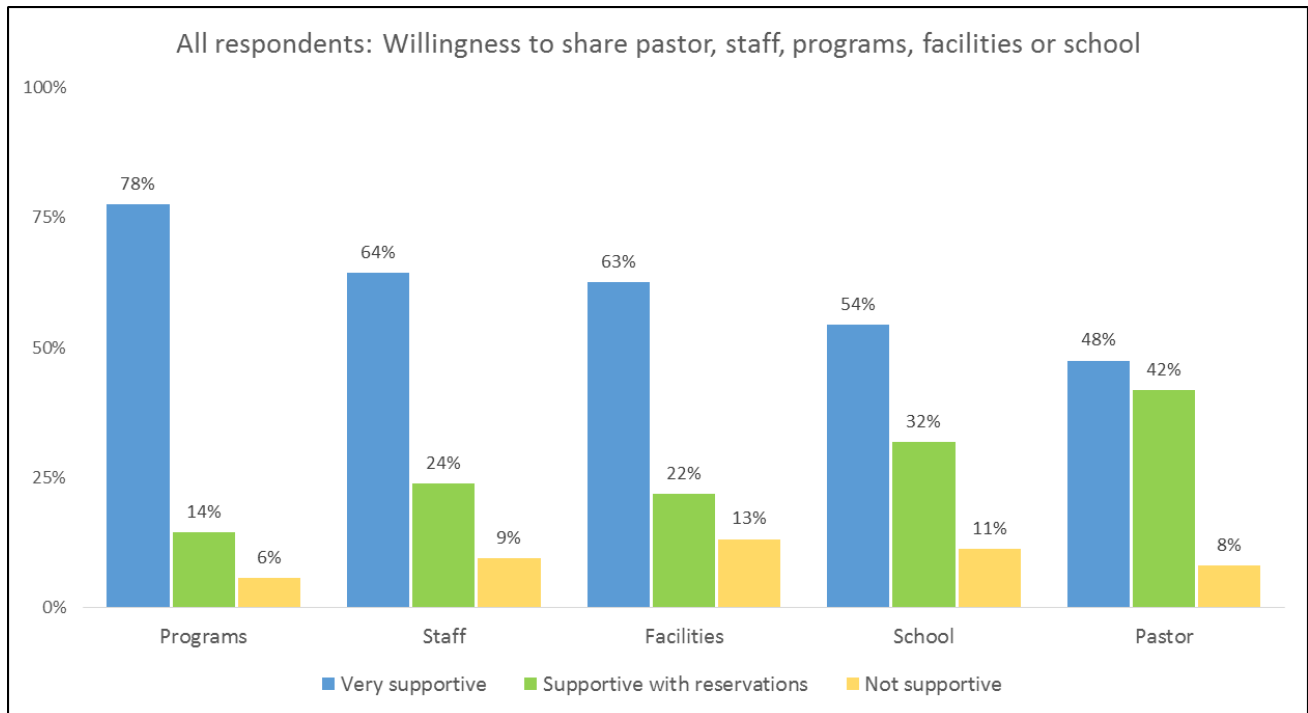
How supportive are you of collaborating with a neighboring Catholic school?

Collaborate with other school?	All respondents		HH Composition			Age group			Distance from parish		
	#	%	Single	Married, no kids	HH with kids	Under 49	50 to 69	70 or older	Within boundaries	Contiguous	Farther away
Very supportive	87	54%	59%	65%	50%	69%	51%	53%	59%	60%	60%
Supportive with reservations	51	32%	26%	32%	33%	23%	33%	32%	33%	20%	20%
Not supportive	18	11%	11%	3%	14%	8%	13%	12%	7%	20%	20%
No response	4	3%	4%	0%	3%	0%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Total	160	100%	27	34	99	13	93	54	128	27	5



Willingness to collaborate with another school receives less full support than sharing programs, staff or facilities. As might be expected, full support is lowest among households with children and among that age group of parishioners most likely to have children. The comments in this case tend to follow the themes seen with regard to facilities: the school is full and is a critical part of the parish's mission and identity. There may be ways in which collaboration could benefit another school, but it wouldn't be likely to benefit St. John's. In short, responding parishioners appear to be open to some options for cooperation, but (in this case at least) do not see that school collaboration would address the central issue of the clergy shortage.

The big picture: parish response to sharing



Respondents to this survey showed strong support for St. John’s and its pastor, staff and school and strong support across the board for cooperating with others to address the effects of a shortage of priests to serve in parishes. The five areas of concern formed three factors; i.e., people who fully supported (or didn’t support) sharing in one of the areas would take a similar stance toward the other area within that factor. The three factors are:

Programs: sharing staff and programs with another parish (the factor receiving the most support across the board)

Buildings: sharing facilities and/or the school with another parish (less support, but still accepted without reservation by over half of those responding)

Pastor: sharing a pastor with another parish was seen as the least desirable of the sharing options.

Additional comments on the survey were primarily about the need for more priests, with suggestions about ordaining women and/or married men. Overall, the spirit of both reservations and comments was positive and supportive. There is clearly a willingness to explore ways in which the parish can cooperate with other parishes in the mission of the Church, but a question about whether such sharing (other than sharing a pastor) would, in fact, address the presenting problem of the priest shortage.

Appendix

Reservations: Losing usual Mass time

A lot would depend on the liturgy & whether a good organist was available elsewhere.
Will depend on time of Mass.
Go where my daughter goes. Or if Fr. Crispin goes (hopefully back north) to his Mass there.
It will depend on what times masses are - I would prefer attending St John's, but would be comfortable attending another parish if the time was more convenient.
We would attend wherever necessary to fit our schedule at any given time.
because of my work hours I already attend Mass at different parishes at varied times
Attend another parish--would depend on the closeness of that parish to St. John's.
Prefer to attend at St. John's rather than leave our community but it depends on the time. Early Sunday mass is preferred.
It depends. This is my home parish and I know a lot of people. However if the music and liturgy are not well crafted I will look for another close parish whose liturgy style matches my prayer style.
I regularly attend Vigil because I prefer the setting. I'm not sure if I would attend Mass at another time or attend another parish. Depends on what is offered.
We would try to make it to the mass is conveniently close and fits our schedule.
I would like a Sunday evening option. 5pm
If 8:30am was not available, I might go to the Cathedral downtown rather than the 10:30am mass at St. John because of the guitar music/singing. I really love the traditional hymns and quality of the singing at the 8:30am mass at St. John. It has been just lovely.
We would attend mass at St. John's if mass time was after 10am.
Both of the above answers. They were both marked with a note "Maybe part of the time" on the first one and "Probably part of the time" on the second one.
I volunteer at my parish. It will be hard to attend at another parish and figure out how to make my volunteer commitment work for two parishes. I realize change is hard.
Probably a mixture of the two options : attend mass at St John's at another time or attend mass at Blessed Sacrament.
probably a mixture of the first two options.
Probably a bit of both to find a worship service that is most meaningful. For example, liturgical music is very important to my faith experience, so if the choice was between St. John at 10:30 or another church, I would choose another church to find traditional music (i.e.,
Not sure if I'd choose another parish or another time at St. John.
Either attend at St. John at a different time, or go to another parish outside the north deanery as I often do already.
Either possibility is open, I can't predict how I will react to something in the future. Spouse is non-Catholic and does not attend Mass with me.
I already attend daily Mass at Christ the King because it is not regularly available at St. John's
I don't really know how it would change my schedule. I really like attending mass at St. John and it is wonderful for my daughter to see her teachers and friends celebrating together outside of school. We would probably try and attend at St John's at a different time but would
We will attend mass at our community Catholic Church
I will not attend.
Not attend

Reservations: Sharing a pastor

Do we have a choice?
What services remain at St John?
I would want our current Reconciliation schedule to stay the same or get better (more frequent).
Only if absolutely necessary.
St John is a big parish who needs the full attention of a pastor
Other parish close by? No School?
So many variables! How involved could the pastor be?
Being available for spiritual leadership at two parishes would require reduction of the administrative burdens that normally accompany being a pastor. Sharing a pastor would require beefing up the parish administrative staff to take some of the administrative and financial management burden off the pastor.
consequence in saying mass on a regular basis not hit & miss at the same time each week no matter what days each week
Our pastor is pretty busy now, how can he be spread even thinner?
I MUCH prefer this over not having a pastor.
Anything that makes for an active viable parish life community
I think it is important for the planning process to prioritize Parishes with schools. If there are Parishes without schools or Parishes that are underutilized, we should face the tough decisions that need to be made and close some locations. Reducing the number of Masses can also be accomplished by closing very few Parishes that have limited
Concerned about the Pastor becoming overworked and stretched too far when trying to cover multiple Parishes. Provided the priest has enough parish staff and assistant lay ministers, then possible sharing the Pastor would work well for everyone.
No comment given. skm
Just feel un-easy about this. Not sure why! Need more info on how it would work.
If it is possible with time-frames.
Supportive but hope it is not necessary
As someone who is getting older are they going to make provisions if someone needed to be anointed or were dying.
We can't exhaust our priests. It would be better to close parishes. Most of us have a car, we can drive to the next parish.
While I realize it may be necessary to share, I just can't see Fr. Crispin, who seems full of boundless energy, (or any other pastor) doing more than he already does. We have a large congregation, a K-8 school, & several buildings on our parish property to manage. This is in addition to other behind-the-scenes duties & responsibilities Fr. has that I feel a parish with a school as large as ours should not have to share a pastor.
Ideally I would like to have enough priests as I think we need more sacraments
I realize this change is inevitable. I hope the Archdiocese can use lay people in creative ways to bridge the gaps. We are former members of St. Therese Parish, which now shares a priest with another church. Even though we were lucky enough to have a deacon helping with the priest-sharing logistics, membership at St. Therese dropped
We already are. Fr Crispin is stretched thin and everyone would benefit if he was around more at the school's key events.
Recognizing limited resources should serve the greatest numbers, my reservation would be based on concern pastoral leadership can then keep pace with the growth of STJ's parish/ school/ community
Parish priests are overwork, and dealing with two schools and two parishes is just too much. Plus, sometimes I have gone to masses with shared priest arrangements and waited for 1 hour for the priest to arrive because he was stuck in traffic.
Although our pastors are committed to a life of service, how can one person serve more than one parish and develop the relationships needed to support both?
If we're not going to have a dedicated pastor, then we need a dedicated lay person in charge of the faith life of the parish. Honestly, it's more important for that person to be positive and enthusiastic about the faith than that they have a theology degree. Father in Heaven, save us from surplus faith formation staff!
Impact on school liturgy.
I am fully supportive of this option but I also believe there are other options that should be considered in order to increase the number of priests: mainly opening up the priesthood to married priests and to women. Perhaps it would then not be necessary to share pastors and resources with other parishes.
I think they need to open the priesthood up to women and married men to solve the problem.
Our parish school is a huge ministry and one of the largest in the North Deanery. Having a priest full time to interact and engage with the children is critical to the long-term success of keeping the children practicing their faith as they get older.
How would it work and what would the impact be on mass times? We have guest priests regularly, so how would it be different?
Sharing a pastor with another parish can only work well if that parish does not have a school. Schools have pastoral needs that are greater than those of a parish alone.
I feel our pastor is already stretched quite thin and worry about exhaustion/burnout when he has to minister to so many.

Sharing a pastor: continued

I feel like Fr Crispin is already so busy with St John community that he would not be able to be as productive if shared.
I would accept this, but it would be a shame.
Do all parishes have a school? The Pastor should be a part of the school as well. Will the Pastor be shared between a parish with a school and a parish without. Or will the Pastor be shared by parish geographically
Fr Crispin is an important factor in our children's growth at school.
It is great, but I also wish the Archdiocese was able to use another resource we have: women. If women could be deacons, for example, we'd be in business. Have you ever noticed how many of our volunteers at masses are female?
I think this could work so long as both parishes did not have schools. For two parishes with schools, it would be unreasonable to expect 1 priest to be fully present for the schools and to support all of the rest of the parishes' needs.
The job of Pastor is enormous. While I think priests can be shared across parishes in terms of celebrating Mass, a parish of our size needs its own pastor/administrator.
Worried how that will change the parish. Do not want to lose Fr Crispin.
I don't know how one Pastor could handle more than one parish without a huge amount of responsibility being transferred to lay staff and volunteers. The infrastructure is just not in place.
Having Fr. Crispin to ourselves is wonderful and I don't want to share him. But the Christian thing to do is share him and we will support the decision of the North Deanery
I believe it will be challenging for a priest in the deanery to adequately serve so many parishioners and Catholic school children. It's a lot to expect of one person. We don't want priest burn out, nor do we want parishioners to move away from the church because the clergy can't serve them, especially in their time of need. I think the
I feel we already see little of Fr. Crispin, especially around school. I would worry about him being stretched really tight.
I am supportive of sharing Fr Crispin w/ other parishes, but am not as supportive of having a parish priest who isn't consistent with the values of our parish. So I understand the need to share priests and just want to make sure they are aligned with the right parishes.
With one of the largest schools in the deanery, and a desire for our parish priest to engage with our students, I'm concerned about the priest's capacity for sharing parishes and demonstrating love for his calling (which will hopefully inspire some students to consider a similar calling)
I think it dilutes the ability of the Pastor to get to know all the parishioners and for this person to devote to one parish. I think the archdiocese is not looking at a very easy solution in that the time has come to ordain women priests and married priests. I love the Catholic church and would not leave however as a professional woman I cannot find any biblical reference from Jesus that supports such discrimination. Jesus loved and honored all people of every race, creed and gender. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Currently our Priest does not have an assistant and I feel that it's challenging for him to give his time to the current members as needed. By sharing him there would be even less time for him to be available.
I really like Father Crispin and am afraid that he won't have enough time to do as much with St. John's
If our priests have sufficient help this could work.
We have moved parishes before due to not having a great connection with the priest. Also afraid frequent changes may undermine the sense of community.
I would be supportive only if the pastor had administrative support so as to focus solely on pastoral duties rather than administration of the parishes.
It depends on how often in attendance, pastoral vs. administrative duties shared, etc.
Only if the priest has some additional administrative staff that can attend to issues when he is not present to the parish.
Our pastor is already fully booked in his schedule and I am worried at his availability for the parish members
I want to ensure that the school has access to a priest
As long as we could have regular access to the sacraments, which would be difficult if we were sharing a pastor, it would not be a problem.
I want to make sure Father Crispin will continue work with our school.
I would hate to see Father pushed to the limit and feel the need to then leave our community because he was overworked.
St. John has a parish school. His attention is needed for both the parish and the school.
How many co-Pastors per parish and how much time spent at each Parish would be a concern,
Given we have a school, feel it is important a full-time Pastor be in the role to administer the overall campus and Parish community.
I'm concerned priests will be overworked and we would miss having Father Crispin at mass.

Reservations: Sharing staff

My answer to all these questions is - we'll do our best to make it work - That's not to say that it will be easy - It would be hard not to have 5:00 Sat Mass for example.
With a great, helpful plan!
Same reason as for sharing a pastor
See #2-same answer also. Some positions easier to share than others. Office MUST be staffed.
Our staff is pretty busy now, how can they be spread even thinner? How do you build loyalty for multiple parishes with separate maintenance needs, history, and friendships. It will be a big change to give us a North Deanery vision when we have been focused on our parish. A stretch for planning and for implementation.
If the staff is on board with it, we can see it working- hard to tell; we've become attached to staff.
Similar concerns as with sharing a Pastor, that the parish staff may become overworked when trying to attend to the needs of two or more church communities.
No comment given skm
Supportive if performance does not suffer and both parishes share expense.
For some ministries it would work but not administrative
Please see above - substituting "parish priest" w/ "staff." The difference here being that staff might b more likely to vote w/ their feet if their workload became unbearable.
Seems easier to do than sharing a pastor.
There is a priest shortage, not a lay person shortage. Unless there are underlying financial difficulties, there should be no reason to cut administrative positions at a thriving parish. I understand there might be reasons to do this, but I think it would start cutting the ties people have to their church and the larger Church.
Similar to concern for #2.
I am fully supportive of this option but I also believe there are other options that should be considered in order to increase the number of priests: mainly opening up the priesthood to married priests and to women. Perhaps it would then not be necessary to share pastors and resources with other parishes.
How would this impact schedules? Getting things done on time?
We are already spread thin. We'd love to partner with other parishes (as St John does with St Al for CYO sports), but not sure how we'll gather the additional volunteers needed and staff time.
I know our supportive staff are very busy as well and I see a huge challenge for them if they have to split time between 2 parishes.
Administration would be hard to share, but Sacramental Prep and Youth Ministries might benefit from collaboration.
Depends. While I understand a reduction of Pastors, why is there a reduction of other positions that would require a need to share them?
Sacrament Prep at St John has recently changed and sharing of staff is great as long as the work at St Johns continues.
Done well, sharing of some staff could work and provide some efficiency. However, it would likely require more vigorous oversight from pastor, so may not really help address the priest shortage issue.
How does this affect our Parish?
I am not really supportive of this because I don't understand the need. There's a shortage of clerical, Sacramental, Youth Minister staff? Then parishes should do better about recruiting or ask the congregations how much they value these positions. These positions are volunteer or if paid, certainly not extravagantly paid. Why should we ask them to double
It would depend on the size of the other parish
I feel that we could use some help at our Parish in this area.
As long as the parish philosophies were similar. For example, it would be difficult to share a youth minister with a parish that was significantly more conservative.
As long as things are organized to work with maximum efficiency it would not be a problem.
time
We have a good sized parish with a 500+ school. It would be difficult to share staff services with another parish.
If staff are compensated fairly for their work I'm supportive of sharing. More volunteers will be needed for larger class sizes.
Staff would always need to be available to our Parish.
As long as they are contributing to salaries, benefits packages, etc. for all employees co-used.
No comment was given.
Some sharing may work but some staff are already working at full capacity.
administrative should be one parish
It seems some staff is part-tme,voluntary so not sure how much time will be shared.
As one of the ministers I would need to make sure it was a good fit for me .

Reservations: Sharing programs

Again, I wonder if the priest shortage problems could be alleviated if women were allowed to have a more active role in the church such as being allowed to become deacons or someday even as priests.
All Catholics should have a common goal, a Living Faith.
As long as the sacrament happens in our own parish. My brother who passed recently received all his sacraments at St. Patrick's. They had no priest available to do his memorial, so a lay person is handling it. No big deal, but they asked if we would want to try another parish. NO!
As long as things are organized to work with maximum efficiency it would not be a problem.
Fellow church w/wo school attached.
I am fully supportive of this option but I also believe there are other options that should be considered in order to increase the number of priests: mainly opening up the priesthood to married priests and to women. Perhaps it would then not be necessary to share pastors and resources with other parishes.
I have mixed feelings here. We already share a bit w/St. Al's. It's good for parishes to get to know each other better, but I worry that in the process each parish would begin to lose its own, unique identity & culture.
I think the preparation classes could be combined with another parish quite seamlessly, however I would like to see the sacraments performed at St. John.
If this is necessary, I would like some kind of location sharing so people can stay in the Parish for at least some sessions.
Is this the issue?
It makes a fair amount of sense as long as the identity of the parish is not lost--ie open/moderate vs conservative
It would depend on the ministry.
It's not clear if sharing of baptisms would mean that parish children would be baptized at another parish instead of their home parish. If sharing the baptismal preparation classes only, then fully supportive.
My answer to all these questions is - we'll do our best to make it work - That's not to say that it will be easy - It would be hard not to have 5:00 Sat Mass for example.
Only if there is enough staff to handle the sharing of these programs.
Our parish already is limited in staff that volunteers for these programs.
RCIA programs are a good idea to share; we already welcome other parish couples to baptism prep and would do so more if needed. Ditto marriage prep.
Receiving the sacraments at one's own parish and surrounded by the community is an important aspect of the experience. See my previous comments. It is important to serve all Catholics in the Archdiocese, but I have reservations because of my experience with St. Therese and how we witnessed first-hand the unraveling of our once-thriving parish.
Sharing staff will require more volunteers and staff must be fairly compensated for their work.
The ones listed should be ok, but I think each parish should have the programs (eg baptisms and wedding in home parish.)
This could be trickier than #3 above, because many of these programs are really the face of the parish to its members, so if people don't feel like they are really interacting with their parish, they might tend to drift.

Reservations: Sharing facilities

As long as rent is paid, or money deducted from our remodeling loan to cover the costs to keep the lights on and staff.
As long as sharing parties are responsible for upkeep, insurance, maintenance, etc.
As long as they're OUR facilities...😊
Concern would be over scheduling of activities if shared facilities then cause a need to drop programs because shared facilities are not available.
Facilities shouldn't sit idle.
Fully support but St John and St Al already co-share their gyms for CYO. CTK/St Ben's has for many years used Egan Hall.
Hesitant.
I am fully supportive of this option but I also believe there are other options that should be considered in order to increase the number of priests: mainly opening up the priesthood to married priests and to women. Perhaps it would then not be necessary to share pastors and resources with other
I don't think we're short of facilities.
I know this model works in other Christian churches, especially in churches and areas of the city where the congregation can't afford to pay 100% of the rent/maintenance, etc. to me, this feels like what Boston has done in shutting down churches and folding them into other parishes.
I think this would work but not sure why facilities would need to be shared...
I would want to know St John parish and school still had first priority for use
I would welcome other parishes to use the facilities at St. Johns, but I think they are necessary for the school.
Is this the issue?
Key is making the community stronger together and knowing the people sharing the facilities. st. John is bigger and even then do not know all families, so would be difficult to know who's who and if they are taking care and using facilities appropriately. concern is keeping children safe and making sure
My answer to all these questions is - we'll do our best to make it work - That's not to say that it will be easy - It would be hard not to have 5:00 Sat Mass for example.
My impression is that many of these facilities such as Egan Hall are quite busy with St. John events, I would be concerned about St. John needs being shut out.
not sure what this would entail or how it would impact our family
Only if the facilities are St John's. I like being able to walk to church
Our facilities are already fully booked at certain periods.
Our members should have some priority if the facility is financed by our parish
Priority on events will be given to St. John church and school first. The other parishioners will have to rent to minimize cost.
Share how?
Similar. I'm "not supportive"

Sharing facilities: continued

St. John's has such great facilities, that serve the Greenwood community as well as our own. I would hate to see those sold or sitting empty...

That is a scheduling issues. Things seem fairly booked up. Why not just combine the parishes at that point?

This will need to be discussed

We already share our Gym with St Alphonsus don't we?

We already share resources with another Parish. It works with an occasional bump.

We are already combined for athletics with St. Alphonsus and scheduling for after-school programs, such as Boy/Girl Scouts is already a challenge at times.

We are so busy now with very little free space--I don't see how we could possibly share with another parish.

Welcome to share if equal opportunity.

Who would be responsible for cost of upkeep and maintenance?

Yes on the rectory. The gym and parish hall already are very busy.

Reservations: Collaborating with another school

(I should have added a comment similar to the one below in my response to #5...) To me, it would depend on what would happen to the "abandoned " school facilities. (For example, does Blessed Sac have any use of its former school facilities? This isn't a rhetorical
Again--as long as our identity remains intact. We already cooperate with St. Al's for sports and that seems to work just fine.
As long as St Johns maintains its identity.
As long as this would not be to the detriment of the school. Currently it is the strongest asset to the Parish and needs to be preserved, and expanded, as much as possible.
Big picture, I think the Church should get out of the general education business - leave it to the public school system,.
Big reservations on all of the above!
Funding shared? Faculty/coaches/resources?
Higher or Reduction of tuition fees?
I am curious how that would work or what this even would mean?
I am fully supportive of this option but I also believe there are other options that should be considered in order to increase the number of priests: mainly opening up the priesthood to married priests and to women. Perhaps it would then not be necessary to share pastors and I am hesitant with how this would look. As a teacher at St John I would welcome working with other Parish schools, but do not fully understand what that would look like.
I am not a school administrator so I don't want to underestimate the additional responsibility it places on our staff. Will it affect the quality of education and the timeliness of decisions?
I Am opposed to collaborating with a school that has a Pre-Vatican II orientation.
I am supportive of the idea in general but want to make sure parishes are aligned with similar values. St John's school is a strong school and have no issues with sharing our strong values.
I don't have children in the school so I don't feel qualified to answer this. I love our school and I hope none of the Parish schools have to close.
I recall years when we had fewer students in classes. Now techies are making more money and more students may want to enroll. If they're Catholic, okay. But remember, the public schools are great.
I think all Catholic schools in the North Seattle Deanery are good, and a few are great. Our parish school, St. John's, is one of the great ones. I'd want us to be very careful about mandating collaboration in ways that could tear down the excellence of our truly excellent
I would like another school collaborating with St. John's to explore adapting a "fair share" philosophy similar to what is done at St. John 's.
I would need to know what "collaboration" looks like and fully understand how it would affect my children's schooling.
If the staff can find a way to make it work in spaces available, the youth will learn to accept the change. It is our responsibility to lead.
In what way? Combine Schools? St Johns and St Als already combine sports, and it works well, so that type of collaboration makes sense.
Is this the issue? I thought it was an issue with not enough priests to support all of the parishes. You should look at dealing with the issue.
It depends if they have same values and approach as STJ
It depends. My kids went to school at SJ and valued the close community ties, it's why we also chose the Phinney Kids program because they were neighborhood based. My son spent two abysmal years busing to another school for a special program. It was 90-120 min a day
It is a space issue, we already need more space for the school and kids we have.

Collaboration with another school: continued

it seems like we already share many things with St. Alphonsus. Clear communication of the schools will work together.
It seems to work for the CYO sport programs. It might work for other extracurricular activities.
It would depend on the details of what the collaboration entails
Leave this up to parents with children actively in the school. It's important to think of continuity for the students, and if you do it, it should be done as they enter kindergarten and move up from there.
My answer to all these questions is - we'll do our best to make it work - That's not to say that it will be easy - It would be hard not to have 5:00 Sat Mass for example.
Not Supportive. St. John Fair Share is working. Don't break it please. The school is basically full, and thriving.
Not sure what this means.
On the surface this seems like an opportunity to create broader diversity and offer students a larger understanding of our city and region. However I am not an educator /administrator but I can see this presenting many challenges that could also weaken our students close knit
Our parish school is operating at capacity and does not need to collaborate from what I can see.
Our school is already full. Who would pay to add more space to accommodate?
Our school is full and I would like to see this continue.
Our school is full, but clearly some consolidation in smaller schools is required.
Our school is so large already. How?
Similar to #3 and 4 above, this could create some economic efficiencies if done in a way that does not make the kids and parents feel like they are losing touch with "their" school. But CYO experience with St. Als shows that we can have very successful partnerships with sister St John is a large, full, school. We could collaborate, but would need more support from the Archdiocese to do that--our teachers and staff are fully occupied.
St. John already collaborates with St. Al in combining sports teams, and I think this model could definitely work on a larger scale.
This already is in place with St Als.
This would take great planning for schools that are already over 90% full.
unable to assess impact on education
We already do this with St. Al's for CYO sports and activities and it has worked well.
We already work with another school. However, each school has different means/methods of educating their students. I prefer to have a say on that for my children's school only.
We are already combined for athletics, so it's not clear what other collaboration is being considered. Since our schools do not have school buses, transportation would need to be considered as well.
We don't have children at St John's so I don't feel I can answer for the parents who do have children in the school.
we have only toured St. John's and are on the waiting list, but we were so impressed ! would want any sharing to be to the high standards of SJS.
We need more details.
Would need more information to make a final decision

Other comments and suggestions:

easy solution--stop excluding half the population from the priesthood
I don't need to be contacted, but would like to respectfully suggest that we use this situation as an opportunity to encourage dialogue around ways to expand the priesthood, including allowing priests to marry, and allowing women to be priests. I also hope Pope Francis' exploration of women deacons makes progress. All of these could help solve
I think we could be using our deacon program better to augment our spiritual leadership teams.
I would like to be supportive in any way.
I would like to know specifically how the church is planning to use lay ministers to cover gaps because of the priest shortages? What role will women play in this new model?
I'd like to know how many responses we get, and what we learned.
If there is a regional panel/group discussion
It is time for women and married priests
It isn't necessary to contact me. My info is here in case I was unclear (imagine! ☺) & you need/want further clarification or information. Thank you for providing us w/a way to give input! 🙏
Just need more information before commit.
Thank you for making wise changes to allow us to pursue our shared mission (salvation) as best possible with the gifts and opportunities before us.
The Catholic Church needs to allow women and married men and women to become priests! This would solve the problem immediately!!
The Church seems destined to go the way of the Shakers with its restrictions on participation in the priesthood.
The questions in the survey are around staffing issues for parishes. Father Crispin has discussed in his homily last Sunday the issue of a shortage of priests. Why is the survey not addressing the issue?
We are willing to assist with further discussions or focus groups regarding this planning process.
Why no discussion of more layministers (men/women) or married pastors, sisters leading parish - changing architecture of church hierarchy to sustain future church leaders. That is what is needed.