

# Holy Trinity Pastoral Unit

## Re-Founding Our Church

Report presented to the General Parish Meeting, December 2, 2009

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### Introduction & Welcome - Fr. John Mathew

Dear sisters and brothers:

We thank you all for being here this evening and especially we thank Deacon Robert Doyle for leading us in the prayer reflection as we are gathering for our General Assembly.

The primary goal of the Holy Trinity Pastoral Unit's coming together today, (December 2, 2009) as one family under one roof is to be with the Pastoral Council as they present their findings on the current situations and the future of the Church in the Sackville-Mount Uniacke area.

Let me introduce our current Pastoral Council members from our three faith communities. They are Paul Benoit (Chair), Robert Rankine (Secretary), Earnest Boutilier, Nikki LaChance, Brad MacRae, John MacRae, Mark McNeil, Steve O'Quinn, Doug Pickup, Fr. Zachary Romanowsky, Deacon Robert Doyle, Tom Ross and myself, Fr. John Mathew – Pastor.

Recall how the Blessed Virgin Mary responded from the time of the Annunciation to the very end at the foot of the cross. She pondered about what she heard from the angel. And she pondered about what was happening on the cross! Pondering in Hebrew means “to hold, carry and transform tension so as not to give it back in kind, knowing that whatever we don't transform we will transmit.” Mary could not understand the incarnation or stop the crucifixion; however, she could cooperate with God's will. Mary neither resisted nor protested. She tried to understand - placing everything in perspective. What could this mean to me?

We are in the process of re-founding our Church. Let us ponder and reflect together and make decisions based on the information we have today. Let us ponder in a spirit appropriate for our mission as Catholic Christians.

I invite Paul Benoit, the Chair of the Pastoral Council to lead the presentation.

Following is a summary of the presentation

### Presentation Objectives:

- Review work to date
- Present Findings and Recommendations

- Receive Feedback on Findings and Recommendations
- Outline Next Steps to Moving Forward

### Forward In Faith

In 2002 Archbishop Prendergast established a committee whose mandate was:

- “To study the demographic shifts in the Archdiocese, to anticipate emerging pastoral needs and to make recommendations that would position the church of the Archdiocese of Halifax to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”
- A document was published by the Archdiocese in January 2004
- Recommendations In 5 Principle Areas:
  1. Liturgy and Worship
  2. Evangelization
  3. Justice and Charity
  4. Parishes
  5. The Archdiocese

### Implementation of Recommendations in our Parishes:

- Forward In Faith Management Committee Formed – 2004
- Meetings held, information gathered,
- Produced their report June 2005
- Recommended the adoption of a Pastoral Unit consisting of the existing three Parishes using the existing three buildings

### Forward In Faith – Management Team's Recommendations

- Pastoral Team makeup – focus on Adult formation
- Staffing changes: consolidation
- Committee structure – consolidation
- Parish Council makeup
- Liturgy & Worship – Continue strengthening
- Evangelization – further strengthening of youth religious education program
- Justice and Outreach – continuation and strengthening of support
- Financial review of finances of the three parishes

### Implementation Committee's Work

- Parishioners Invited to name new Pastoral Unit

- Holy Trinity Pastoral Unit Adopted, Consisting of: St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, St. Francis of Assisi Parish and St. John Vianney Parish
- Pastoral Council Initiated in Fall of 2005
- Pastoral Council took over from Implementation Team in February 2006
- Implementations to date:
  - Staff has been unified
  - Most committees & councils unified
  - Children's Catechetical programs unified
  - One bank account and envelopes, but accounted separately

**Forward in Faith recommendation regarding our Parish**

The Forward in Faith document published by the Archdiocese made a specific recommendation regarding our Parishes as follows:

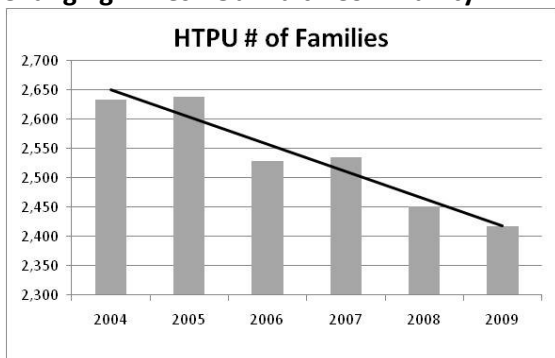
**“A parish at Lower Sackville to serve the people of Lower Sackville, East Hants, Mount Uniacke and the Beaver Bank area”**

The Pastoral Council’s recent work has been focussed on addressing this particular recommendation and how best it can be implemented in our Pastoral Unit. In studying this, Council looked at several areas and gathered information from various sources to aid in its deliberations.

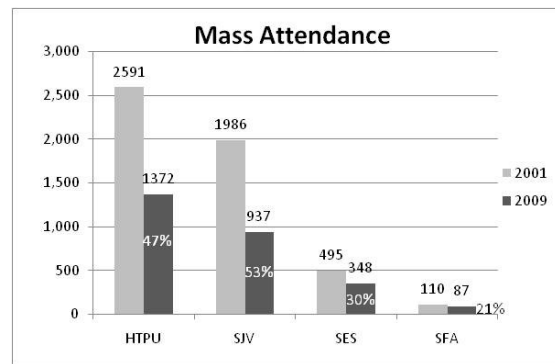
**Changing times – Our community**

- HRM 25 Year Growth Projections (2001 – 2026)
    - Sackville Beaver Bank – Not considered a growth area
    - Mt Uniacke: Not in Planning area but may experience modest growth
    - Growth areas are in Surrounding communities including Fall River, Bedford West
  - School Population On A Decline (2004 - 2008)
    - Elementary: 381 drop = 9%
    - Junior High: 168 drop = 14%
    - High School: 84 drop = 5%
- All Schools: 633 drop = 9%**

**Changing Times - Our Faith Community**



**Changing Times – Our Faith Community**



**Changing Times - Our Faith Community -Stewardship of Our Resources**

Year	2001	Jan/Feb 09	Current	Future
# Priests	5	3	2	1
# Masses	10	7	6	6
Masses/Priest	2	2.3	3	6
Attendance	2,591	1,372	1,372	1,372
% Pews Used	72%	49%	55%	55%

In order to address our current and projected situation and make the best possible use our resources, particularly priests resources, the Pastoral Council adopted as its mandate the following goal:

**To become one parish, able to function with one priest**  
- Time-Line June 2010

**Meeting with Bishop Mancini**

Representatives of Pastoral Council met with the bishop to review work that we had been doing and seek his counsel

- Agreed that we were on the right track and stressed:
- We are in a time of “re-founding” our church
- Look at what we have inherited and consider if we can continue to do all that we have been doing , working with the resources that we now have or will have
- Look at what it means to be Church
- What things must remain and what things can change
- Cautioned that “we will never become one parish if we maintain three groups

**Information Bulletin Distributed to Parishioners – May 2009**

- Outlined our goal
  - Asked for your input centred around two questions
1. What is important to us as a faith Community?

- How can we best serve the faithful with the resources we will have? (Laitly, Deacons and ONE Priest)

### Parishioners Responded

- Approximately 50 responded = 4% of worshipping parishioners
- Many fear a “loss of community” if amalgamated
- One church at SJV seems to be the “resigned to” option
- Hospitality needs to be a priority
- Must continue to involve all who are now ministering
- Must address parking issues at SJV
- Must address accessibility issue of hall at SJV

### Meetings with Parish Groups and Committees

- Met with most parish committees and councils to get their input, specifically on how the “One Parish goal” will impact their area of ministry.
- Met with: Finance Council, Priests Deacons and Staff, Catechetical Committee, Liturgical Committee, Knights of Columbus councils, Building and Maintenance committee plus earlier meetings with the CWL and Women’s group
- General Feedback was very encouraging and a good sense of support and help for working through the challenges of implementing our “One Parish” goal

### Becoming One Parish – One Community of Faith

#### Parameters:

- Accommodate current number of worshipping parishioners
- One Priest to serve the worshipping community
- One Place of Worship
- 4 Masses - Maximum per weekend

### Options Considered

- Build a new church in Lower Sackville**
  - Sell existing facilities
- Use existing Facilities in Lower Sackville**
  - Use SES For Worship**
    - Requires building new worship space added to existing facility
    - Sell SJV facility
    - Review continued use of SFA Facility
  - Use SJV for Worship and SES for Parish Centre**
    - Review continued use of SFA Facility

### St. Francis of Assisi

- Separated from Lower Sackville by considerable distance
- Presents travelling hardships, particularly for seniors, especially in winter
- Situation re SFA needs more review
- Meet with representatives of SFA to deliberate on how we can address these challenges
- Explore possible solutions to distance separation
- Explore if there are any alternatives

### Evaluation of Options

#### -Value of Current Facilities

Church	Property Acres	Building Sq. Ft.	Market Value
SJV	1.89	17,725	\$3,100,000
SES	4.978	9,075	\$1,400,000
SFA	5.0	4,000	\$500,000
<b>Total Market Value</b>			<b>\$5,000,000</b>

#### Evaluation of Options – Build A New Church

- 4.5 Acres of land available - owned by Archdiocese (Beaver Bank Rd. before tracks)
- Cost to build estimated at \$9,000,000 (Based on cost of similar churches being built in the area)
- Less \$4,500,000 - Maximum estimated from sale of SJV and SES
- \$4,500,000 Shortfall – Based on current market information
- How would we cover this shortfall?

#### Evaluation of Options – Expand SES

- Add a new worship space and other required space to existing SES facility to meet Parish needs.
  - Sell SJV facility
- Estimated cost = \$5,000,000
- Less Sale of SJV = \$3,000,000
- Shortfall = \$2,000,000
- Same concern – How would we cover this shortfall?

#### Evaluation of Options – Uses SJV & SES

- Use SJV as place of worship
- Use SES as the “Parish Centre” for various parish uses.
- Required enhancements to SJV to address deficiencies:
  - Parking needs expansion and improvements
  - Hall needs to be accessible to persons with disabilities

- Estimated costs of improvements:
  - Parking = \$300,000
  - Elevator for Hall = \$75,000
  - Other improvements = \$25,000
  - Total Cost = \$400,000

#### Addressing SJV Deficiencies – Accessibility to Hall

- Provide access to hall for people with disabilities
  - Install an elevator from main level
  - **Estimated cost = \$75,000**
    - Lift – Installed = \$50,000
    - Construction = \$25,000

#### Addressing SJV Deficiencies - Parking

- **Problems**
  - Insufficient parking
  - Layout blocks people in
- **Possible Solution:**
  - Negotiate a Long term lease arrangement to use Ben's Property
    - Redevelop parking lot to include both properties and provide accessible parking spots
    - 200 parking spaces – Increase of 80 spaces +67%
    - Estimated cost = \$300,000

#### Proposed New Parking Layout for SJV



#### Recommendations:

- **Come together as One Parish, One Community of Faith who will worship at St. John Vianney Church**
- **SES Facility to be used as the Parish Centre** for various programs and functions such as: youth centre, meetings, conferences, banquets, day care and others.
- Establish sub-committee to further deliberate on issues relating to SFA
- Establish and/or mobilize task forces as required to implement the recommendations by June 2010
- Carry out improvements to SJV, to address deficiencies including parking and hall accessibility

#### Benefits of Recommendations:

- Brings our Faith Community together
- Is practical to operate with one Priest
- Enables the faith community to worship together with only 4 masses per weekend
- Makes good use of our resources and existing facilities
- Can be accomplished with a minimal investment of money
- Enables us to develop existing and new programs that will enrich our community of faith

#### Next Steps:

- Receive Questions and Comments from parishioners at large
- Establish Sub Committees and/or task forces as required to further develop recommendations
- Finalize recommendations
- Submit Recommendations to Bishop Mancini

#### Questions and/or comments

Your input to this Report and Recommendations is encouraged. Questions comments or suggestions can be submitted to the Pastoral Council by:

**Email:** [holytrinitypc@xdal.org](mailto:holytrinitypc@xdal.org)

**Letter:** Dropped off at the Parish office

Placed in the collection

Mailed to the Parish office at:

4 Beaver Bank Rd., Lr. Sackville, NS, B4E 1G3