



In 2019 the Diocese of Lansing Realign Resources for Mission Committee was established with the specific task of seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the presbyterate, the parish and school staffs and the faithful men and women of this diocese to determine how best to realign our resources (personnel, property, financial, material), in order to further the mission of forming communities of missionary disciples who go announce the Gospel of the Lord.

In the latter part of 2020 the Realign Resources for Mission Committee facilitated **67 parish meetings** across our **10-county diocese**. Some meetings were in-person. Many were virtual. All very lively and good-natured and insightful. **Thank you** to all who participated. We prayed, you spoke, and we listened. We heard you. Having now processed all 1700 survey responses and direct letters sent to our committee, here is what you had to say.

Overwhelmingly, but with some exceptions:

- You love your parish;
- You love your priest;
- You are doing many good things with respect to works of mercy and service;
- You have dedicated staff that are committed and try hard to do the right thing;
- You would love to see more collaboration between parishes, sharing of parish resources, and other activities and partnerships that might enrich each individual community.

You also have concerns. Generally, but with some exceptions:

- You are concerned over the lack of participation by a wider body of laity;
- You are concerned over the role of deacons and senior priests and might like to see them more involved in sacramental life and ministries;
- You are concerned over the downward trend in youth activity and engagement;
- You are concerned with the downward trend in the presence of young(er) families;
- You are concerned about the aging population of parish communities;
- You are concerned about how performance is managed and how the Vision/Mission would be promoted and sustained in the future;
- You are concerned about change, resistance to change, and past wounds caused by change.

After reviewing the over 1,700 written correspondence from the parish meetings rest assured, we heard you. Generally, but with some exceptions:

- You appreciate the Vision, its four principles, and its call to unity;
- You expressed a desire for strong leadership by the Bishop and diocesan staff to move us toward this Vision and get us fully on Mission;

- You know we all need to grow in discipleship;
- You know we need to build strong community and communal life within our parishes
- You know we need to grow our evangelization efforts, going out to seek the lost and invite others by our love and service;
- You know we need to deepen our relationship with Jesus through a shared sacramental life, scripture, prayer and service;

We also heard you tell us that in general, but with some exceptions:

- You want more training and formation in discipleship and evangelization;
- You want to see an invigoration and renewal of active discipleship that turns into more participation, more encounter with Jesus, and more opportunities to grow and serve;
- You want to see more help for pastors and for the staff, but at the same time you want to see more in the way of performance coaching, counseling, management, and performance assurance and human resource management;
- You want to see more personal growth and warmth in parishes and have that expressed in more welcoming parish environments;
- You want to see parish changes managed better than in the past – which has led to a residue of untended wounds and need for healing in individuals and communities;
- You want to see your current community and culture respected, honored and preserved to the extent practical.

So, it seems that we are all open to change. Indeed, the vast majority of us see the need for change. However, we don't want change just for the sake of change but change that makes sense, has a distinct, intentional purpose and accounts for the feedback that was shared. That's why we listened.

The next steps of the Realign Resources for Mission Committee are:

- Develop various scenarios to be presented to the Bishop.
- Fine tune these scenarios based on Bishop's feedback.
- Present the revised scenarios to our priests this June and then fine tune the scenarios based on their feedback.
- Conduct regional meetings to present the scenarios to the lay faithful and gather their feedback.
- Finalize scenarios and provide a final proposal to Bishop Boyea on October 1, 2021.

It is our desire that these ongoing communications will keep you will-informed on the Realign Resources for Mission process. If you would like to subscribe to our weekly email communications please visit: <https://dioceseoflansing.flocknote.com/NewsfromtheDiocese> to sign up.