



PARISH TOOLKIT

June 2021

This document provides an overview of the strategic planning process for St. Patrick's parish.

Prepared by the Strategic Planning Team

And annotated in red by Mike Wagner with contributions from our Advocates and Paul Sampson, checking statistical validity. Black text is from the Archdiocesan Strategic Planning Team

ST. PATRICK’S PARISH FOLLOW-UP TOOLKIT

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StP: page numbers have not been updated to reflect annotation additions

PASTORAL AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne is committed to furthering Pope Francis' dream of a "missionary option" for the parishes of the Archdiocese of Seattle. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis explains that the "renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion" is part of the effort for the Church to be "more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open" (#27). This requires a renewed focus on a mission-oriented church that draws people closer to Christ, regardless of where they are in their faith journey.

To promote sustainable, thriving Catholic communities that help people grow closer to Christ, Archbishop Etienne launched Pastoral and Strategic Planning efforts across the archdiocese to evaluate and improve our resources, systems, and infrastructure to best serve the people of God in Western Washington. The primary focus of these efforts is to:

- help people encounter Jesus *Saint Patrick Catholic Church (StP) does this through multiple channels: Eucharistic celebration, social justice education and outreach, hospital and home communion and visitation, St Vincent DePaul, outreach to the LGBTQIA+ community, Facebook Live and Zoom on-line masses, a 28-year ministry to the Deaf and Deaf/Blind, a 20-year relationship with Noel House, a 30-year relationship with our Sister Parish Neuva Trinidad, our newly initiated Sacred Encounters Seattle homeless street ministry, and the list goes on ...*
- create disciples *StP does this in various ways: weekly Bible study, "Encountering God", a weekly women's reflection group, adult, teen, and childrens faith formation programs including "Catechisis of the Good Shephard"*
- further vibrant parish life *StP examples: Coffee & Conversation w/ Dn. Dennis & Fr. Bryan, Virtual Game Nights (including Deaf), annual talent shows and auctions, Sunday "Coffee Hours" averaging 90 individuals (virtually on Zoom with lesser attendance since Covid), semi-annual all-parish work parties, solidarity marches for our Sister Parish and other initiatives*
- strengthen ministries *StP has 13 active liturgical ministries and 36 active, additional ministries/programs spanning areas such as environmental and social justice, legislative advocacy, immigration support, facilities and grounds maintenance, youth, food pantry, grief, alcholics anonamous, Sister Parish, etc. **134 individuals** signed up for ministries at our last ministry fair, that's a huge percentage of our 217 registered households who are involved in one or more of these ministries.*
For example we have 18 Lectors, 33 EMs (with 1st wine EMs acting as Altar Servers), 14 Cantors, 8 Ushers, 4 Sacristans, 14 Church environment ministers, 7 Lay Word and Communion presiders, 4 (+2 additional during Covid) Communion ministers (nursing, hosp, home), 10 Bread bakers. 30 Choir members, L'Arche Core Member gift/cross bearers, 4 ASL/D&DB Interpreters; 10-20 Liturgical movement ministry participants, including children.
- deepen the experience of Sunday Eucharist and celebration of Sacraments *StP: A few examples: tactile and visual ASL signing for the deaf & deaf blind, ASL lectors, Participatory ASL signing of liturgical responses and songs by nearly all parishoners, liturgical movement with child and youth involvement, L'Arche adult Downs Syndrome core members participation in liturgies, an exceptional choir, even reaching out to include homebound parishoners in song videos. Collectively, with the liturgical movement ministry, the choir*

continues to produce excellent videos proclaiming the Gospel message.

- encourage lifelong faith formation *StP examples: weekly “Breaking Open the Word” bible study, “Wednesday Movie Night”, adult faith formation (e.g., “The Joy of the Gospel” “Laudato Si”)*
- promote vocations *StP: via faith formation programs and monthly youth service opportunities*
- create a sense of unity and community *StP: Not only within the parish by nurturing our Vatican II focus, supporting and integrating participation of individuals with special needs, but as well by outreach to the local community, e.g., Interfaith/eccumenical events, creating/sharing our labyrinth, Covid pop-up use of our facilities with Seattle Prep/AD/Seattle Fire Department and Seattle Prep AP testing, Annual picnics inviting also the local community*

In addition to the primary focus outlined above, other important factors to consider in Pastoral and Strategic Planning are:

- changing demographics
- the projected number of priests available to serve *StP: Maybe the primary driver? Perhaps it’s time to increase qualified lay support for pastoral care, exclusive of priest/deacon-reserved sacramental rites.*
- financial resources *StP is fully solvent, fully contributes to AD funds, has zero debt and probably one of the best-maintained facilities in the AD. Additionally, we support robust social justice initiatives financially.*
- facilities issues *StP has NO deferred maintenance, a formal facilities look-ahead and recurring maintenance program.*

SOUTH SEATTLE DEANERY

The South Seattle Deanery is at the heart of a rapidly growing metro area. Twelve priests serve 15 parishes, 9 elementary schools and 2 high schools. There are 11,700 registered households with an estimated pre-COVID Mass attendance of 10,900 per weekend.

The South Seattle Deanery planning process took place over a multi-year period and involved an outside consultant and lay representative leadership from each parish.

The deanery presented its plan to Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, which was put on hold as he retired.

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne created a Strategic Planning Committee to review the plans in place, conduct new research and develop plans for how the archdiocese can foster vibrant, sustainable parishes that are mission focused, while balancing today’s realities.

THE REALITIES WE FACE

Many of today's realities are not just affecting the Archdiocese of Seattle, but Catholic parishes across the United States. Changing demographics and the shift away from the local Catholic neighborhood church has led to declines in Mass attendance and celebration of Sacraments, a decline in stewardship for parishes and their resources, and an abundance of parishes without the priests needed to provide sufficient support. **Over the last decade, 7% of parishes nationally have been closed, according to the Catholic Leadership Institute.**

National Statistics

According to Barna's State of the Church report (which looks at Christian Churches):

- In every age category, weekly church attendance has dropped over the last 20 years.
- In 2000, 45% of all those sampled identified as practicing Christians. As of early 2020, just one in four Americans (25%) identified as a practicing Christian. In essence, the share of practicing Christians has dropped by nearly half since 2000.
- Barna Group says it is likely that one in five U.S. churches will shut its doors for good because of a downturn in donations and attendance caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

According to the Catholic Leadership Institute

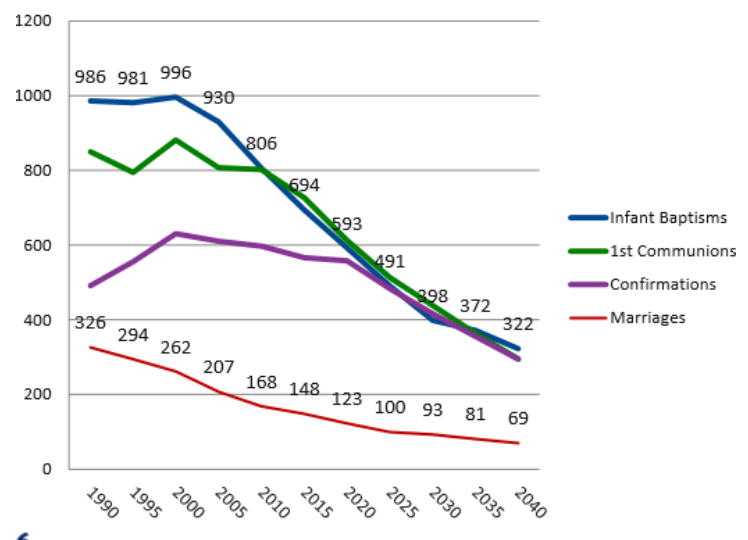
(Sourced from [CARA Church Statistics](#)):

- Catholic marriages are down 55% since 1990
- 1 in 5 children baptized do not receive 1st Communion
- 2 in 5 children baptized are not confirmed
- 85% of children confirmed stop practicing their faith by age 21

According to [CARA Church Statistics](#):

- Total U.S. priests in 1970 was 59,192, but that dropped to 35,929 in 2019.
- In 1970, 571 U.S. parishes were without a resident pastor: by 2019, 3,572 parishes were without a resident pastor.
- In 1970, there were 9,366 Catholic Schools. In 2019, there were 5,038.
- Celebrations of Sacraments are down, with Baptisms dropping from 1.089M in 1970 to 582,331 in 2019.

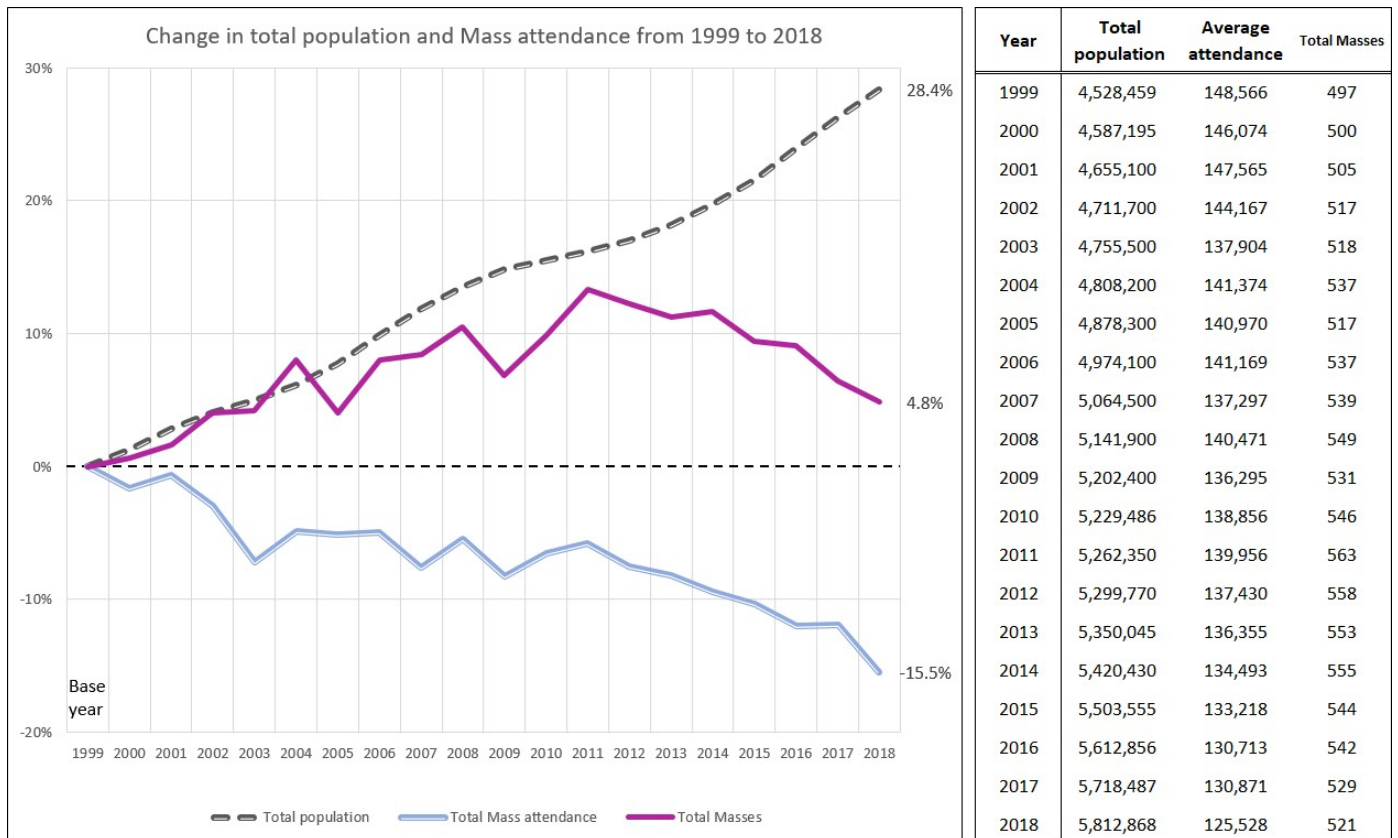
**U.S. Catholic Church Sacramental Forecast
1990 - 2040 (000's)**



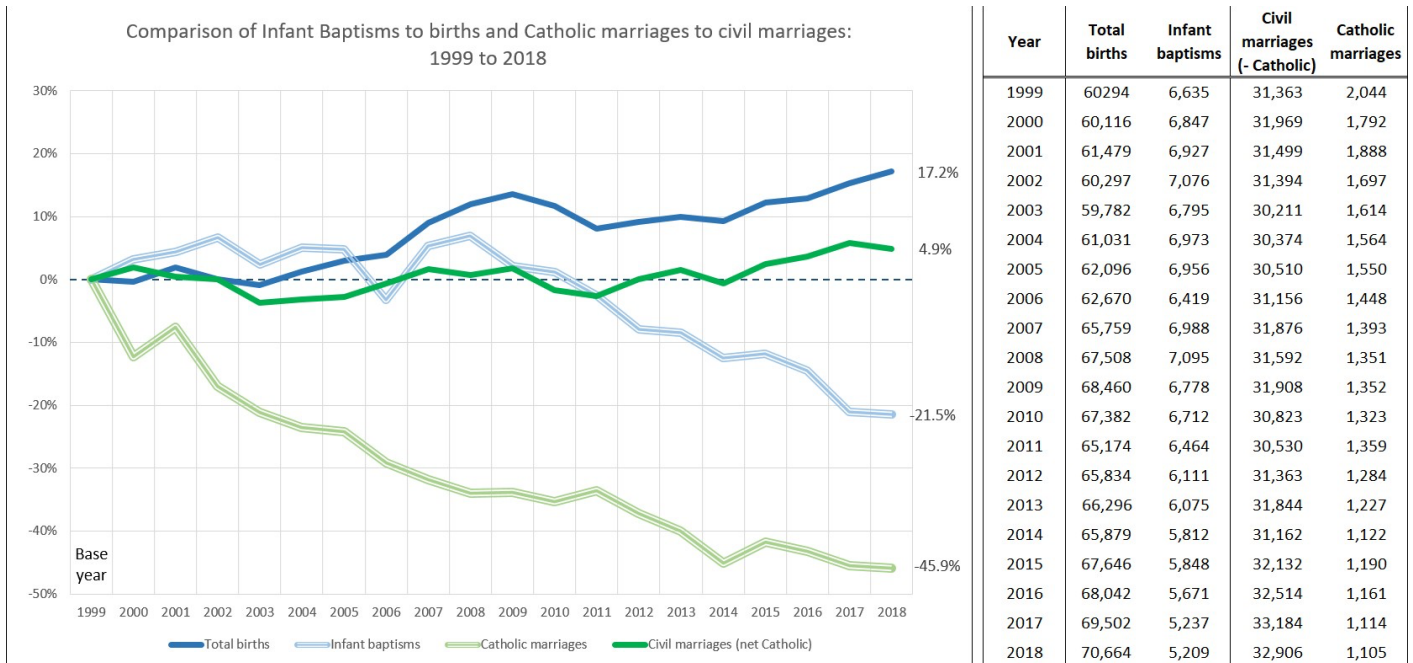
Archdiocese of Seattle Statistics

(Please note that Catholic Community Services of Western Washington is not included in these statistics.)

- The Archdiocese of Seattle has 168 parishes and missions, and 72 Catholic schools, in addition to Associated Catholic Cemeteries, the Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center and CYO Camps.
- The Archdiocese of Seattle has 221 active priests, which include 68 “senior priests” who are beyond retirement age.



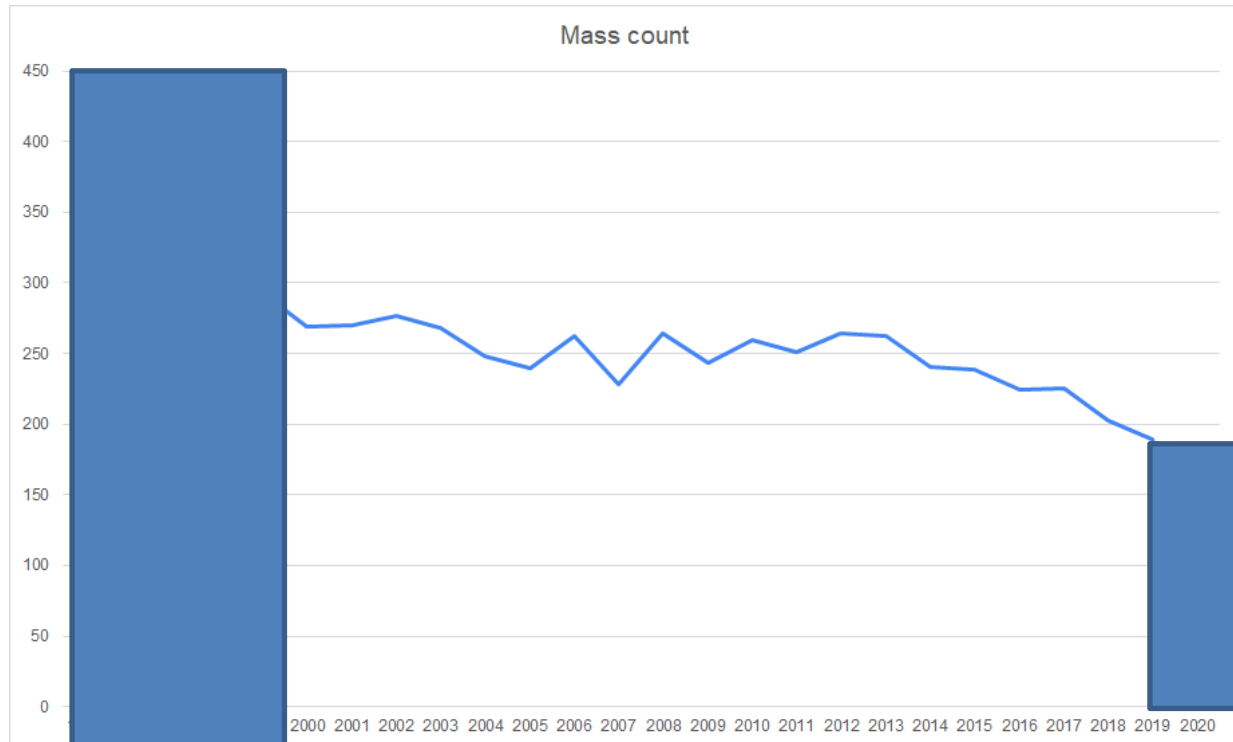
- Mass trends:
 - Between 1999 and 2018 the total population in Western Washington increased by 28.4% while weekend Mass attendance decreased by 15.5%.
 - From 1999 to 2018 the total number of Masses offered on a given weekend has increased 4.8%.
 - Weekend Masses celebrated in non-English languages increased from 46 in 1999 to 92 in 2018.



- Baptism and Marriage trends:
 - Between 1999 and 2018 the total births in Western Washington increased 17.2% while infant baptisms decreased by 21.5%.
 - *At StP: Baptisms are essentially flat over the past 15 years (accounting for year-to-year variation, as illustrated in the figure below).*
 - Between 1999 and 2018 civil marriages (excluding Catholic) increased 4.9% while Catholic marriages decreased by 45.9%.
 - *At StP: Marriages are not inconsistent with the AD-wide trend.*

StP: What happened to the equivalent Deanery-wide statistics (to also include mass attendance) that we advocates requested?

St. Patrick's Statistics



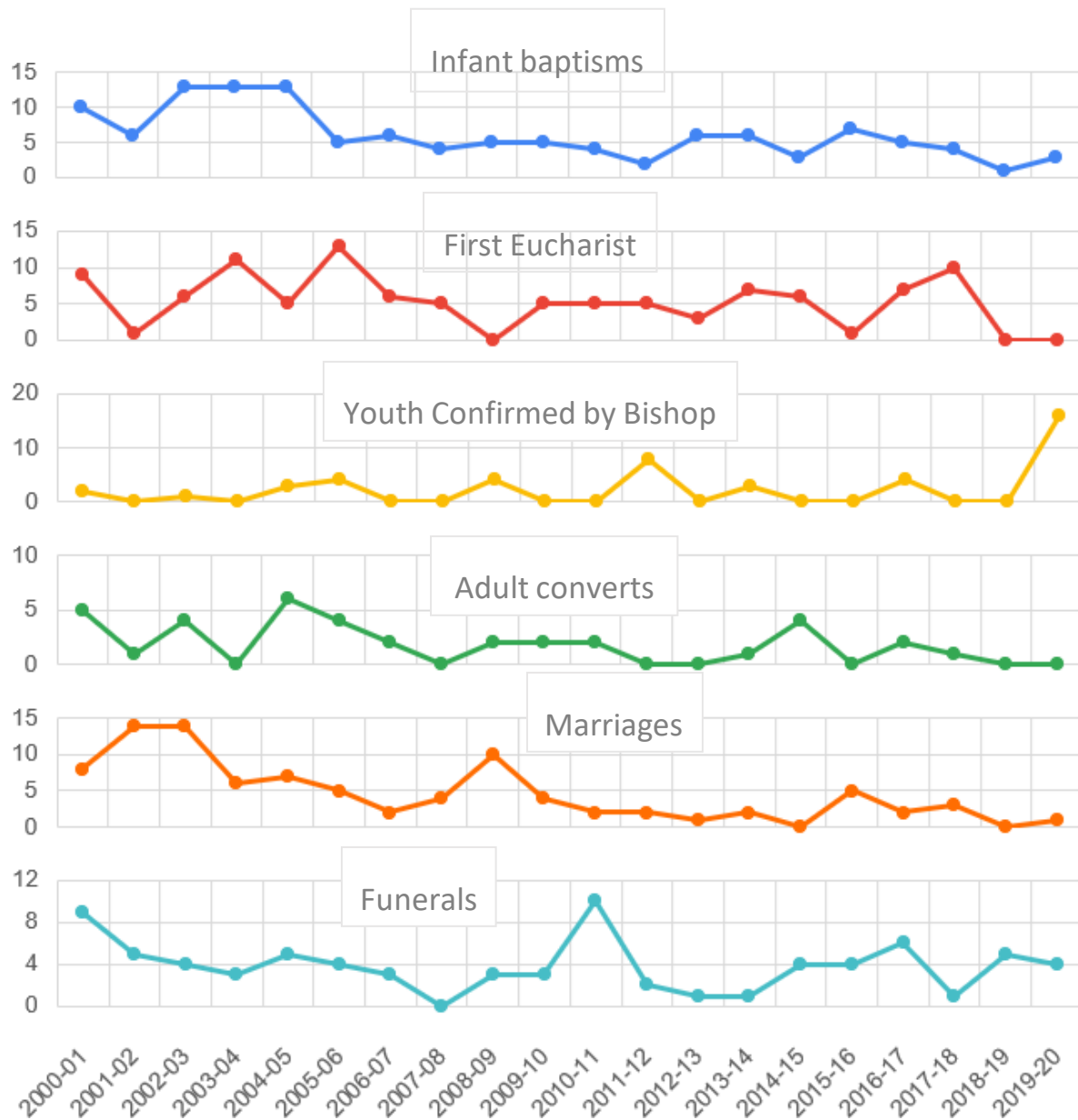
StP: Statistical citations should all span the same time period, starting in 1999 or 2000. 2020 should be removed as well due to Covid-19.

Mid-Year 2019 the AD dropped our 8AM mass when sharing Pastoral resources with Christ our Hope. Multiple parishioners work or have commitment schedules that did not permit a shift to the re-timed 10:30 mass, and therefore had to leave the parish. A dozen or so new families have registered within the past year, despite Covid-19. Despite the loss of one mass, we still keep the same number of lectors and Liturgical Ministers, and there is an increase in the amount of ministries involved in liturgical environment and social justice.

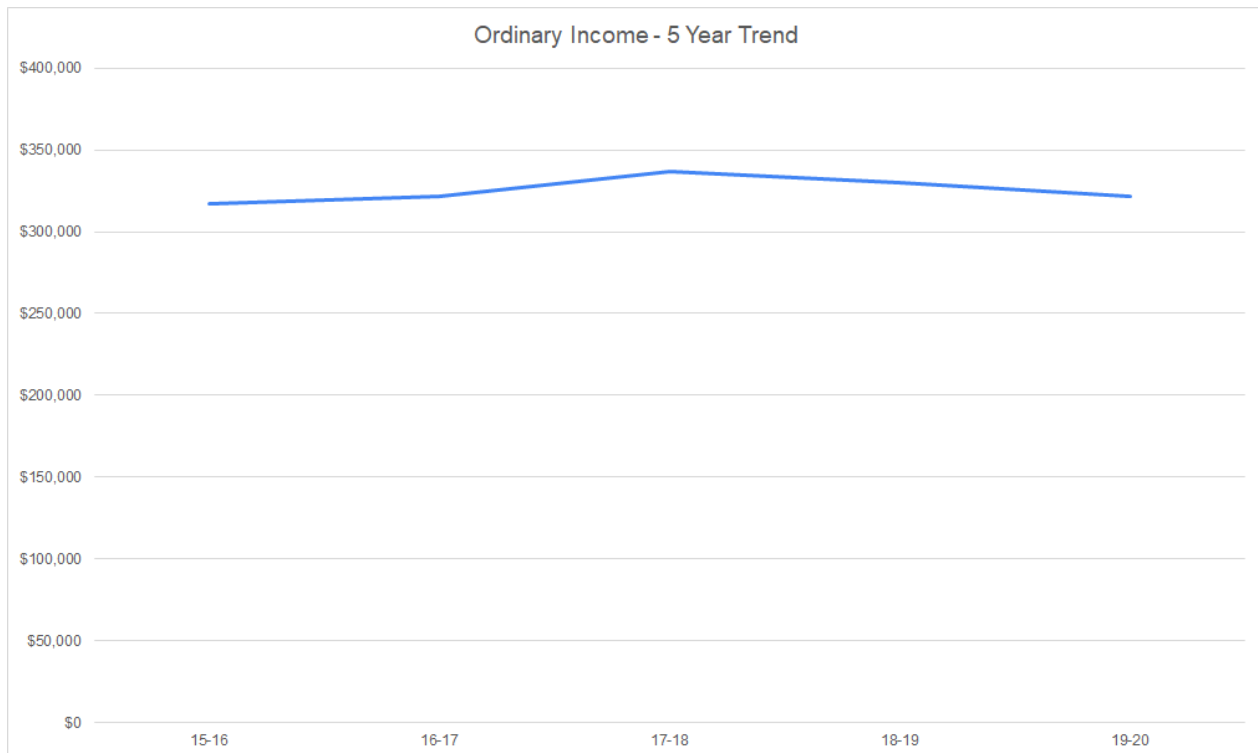
2020 mass physical attendees maxed AD Covid-19 capacity guidelines, with on-line attendees apparently uncounted in AD statistics? Since we re-opened our parishioner-only Facebook Live mass to the public at the end of January this year, on-line live connections have greatly increased, averaging 408 for several recent weeks (we don't know if these are just curious or participatory folk – we do consider at least 90 remote parishioners connect weekly). Posted masses are frequently viewed after the fact as well.

St Patrick Synod 2020 initiatives to expand membership have been highly constrained to-date due to Covid restrictions.

St. Patrick Sacramental Trends



StP: For the last 15 years, we have been essentially flat in view of year-to-year variation.



At StP: The parish ordinary income remains consistent, allowing us to comfortably live within our means, with significant Social Justice outreach funding, and while fully contributing to AD and Rainbow Schools needs.

NEW VISION FOR ST. PATRICK'S

Our goal with these efforts is to become a more mission-oriented Church that continually draws people closer to Christ, regardless of where they are in their faith journey. We are one Catholic community and we must act and think that way, even when it is difficult and feels very personal.

As a result of this planning, the team recommended that St. Patrick merge with either Sacred Heart parish (where there is pastor who is fluent in American Sign Language)

StP: Note: the Sacred Heart parish pastor is the LAST member of the order who is ASL fluent—his comment--and there is no guarantee that his appointment will continue indefinitely. StP's has a fully-functioning 28-year ministry and developed culture supporting the deaf and deaf-blind community, with national recognition. To our knowledge, NO other parish in the Archdiocese has such, nor is this an easily transferable resource. , or with St. Joseph parish, or divide between both parishes. St. Patrick parishioners will collaborate and decide what will be best for them moving forward.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

The Strategic Planning team is led by Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg in partnership with the Director of Strategic Planning, Leigh Stringfellow. They are supported by the Director of Applied Research for Mission Effectiveness, Jim Hochstein and the Community Liaison to Mission Effectiveness Deacon Sam Basta.

In addition to the Strategic Planning team, the South Seattle Deanery Dean, Father Michael Ryan, and Deacon Dennis Kelly, and the pastors of each of the parishes involved play a key strategic planning and execution role in this journey.

Several other Archdiocesan leadership team members are also involved to offer support to the parishes and provide expertise. This includes Chancellor and Chief of Staff, Mary Santi; Executive Director of Planning and Mission Effectiveness, Tim Hunt; Chief Financial Officer, Joe Schick; Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Kristin Dixon; Managing Director of Communications, Helen McClenahan, and other Chancery staff.

STAKEHOLDER TEAM

This work is only possible through the continued support of our incredible St. Patrick's parish Stakeholders. These Stakeholders are:

- Laura Ash
- Betsey Beckman
- Lisa Dennison
- Sr. Judith Desmarais
- Mickey Dunn
- JoAn Choi
- Jennifer Farrell
- John Hale
- Kate Speltz
- Kim Stege
- Byrony Treser
- Mike Wagner
- Polly Young
- *Patrick Dunn (representing our incredible youth)*

GENERAL QUESTIONS

5/10/2021 AD Listening Session Questions/Comments

Logistics

- **What will be the disposition of properties? If we still have control over property disposition and the Bishop still insists on shutting us down, can we vote to turn over the property to Seattle for homeless people? What happens to the Church and who maintains it?**

All the buildings, artifacts, finances and more from St. Patrick's parish will merge with and belong to the new adjoining parish(es) depending on how the Stakeholder group decides to proceed. The Chancery Archives department will assist with an inventory and audit process for all the items at St. Patrick's, which will be shared with the Stakeholders of the other parishes to determine how to incorporate various items and create a plan for items that are not needed. Options may include to move items to the other parish campus, offer them to other parishes, sell them, or a combination of these options. This means that the new parish will assume responsibility for the property – including its maintenance and any future plans for it. It should be clearly noted that the Archdiocese of Seattle does not financially benefit from a parish merger like this.

- **Why can the parish not be “allowed to die a natural death (if that ever comes)” rather than being closed?**

Discussions around this action have been taking place for multiple decades with the most recent deanery planning process addressing urgent and timely needs across the archdiocese. These changes address several issues impacting the archdiocese as a whole, which involve multiple parishes – not just St. Patrick's.

The recommendations were made after much consultation and discernment of parish and deanery leaders, the Strategic Planning Committee, Archbishop Sartain and Archbishop Etienne, and even parishioners.

StP: The recommendations for St. Patrick from the deanery, made February 4, 2019, involved the parish leader and three representatives from each of the parishes. The plan did not include closing parishes. Rather it stated that St. Patrick's was to share pastoral coordinator leadership with another parish and share a parish priest.

The strategic planning committee recommended to Archbishop Etienne the current plan to close parishes. The deanery was not part of that decision.

However, the following statement was in the 2019 Deanery plan: Should the worshipping community at St. Patrick remain at its current size or further shrink, we recommend that St. Patrick eventually close. It would appear this sentence is being used by the Archdiocese as deanery justification for closing the parish.

Please remember that no one involved *wants* to close parishes or make them feel targeted. Instead, we must face today's realities, look at the needs across the entire archdiocese, and make very hard decisions. With that in mind, the South Seattle

Deanery focused its attention on parishes that were smaller in size *StP: (why, if still vibrant?)* while in the midst of a multi-million population metro area. The reality is that we have an over-abundance of parishes in South Seattle as compared to need *StP: (but some of these parishies serve distinctly different populations, some are non-geographic in terms of traditional parish definition; StP is a prime example)*. The number of parishes in South Seattle is a luxury we can no longer afford if we are to equitably serve the needs of all Catholics through Western Washington.

StP: Does this "luxury [to] afford" refer solely to the numbers of ordained ministers, at least with regard to parishes that are financially solvent? Is there any other sense in which the Archdiocese cannot afford to have a parish like St Patrick operating? Specifically, how will closing or merging StP mitigate this needs inequity?

Overall, the hope is that by merging some parish communities, we will strengthen the other communities. By not doing so, we believe we will continue to see a continued decline and weakening of certain parish areas, which does not promote the mission of the Church and does not provide excellent pastoral care for Catholics in the archdiocese.

- **What is the problem? Is it a problem across the Archdiocese or just in St Pats?**
It seems St. Pats' is being targeted because of the size relative to other parish sizes in central Seattle... can you provide other examples? The letter explained that sacraments in the Archdiocese are down. Does that mean St. Pat's are? What are the real reasons? Is it lack of money and our property can fetch a high price to help the Archdiocese financially?

This is a complicated question because there isn't one single answer. The "problem" is really a multifaceted collection of issues at an archdiocesan level, the deanery level and the parish level.

At an archdiocesan level, we see an excess of parishes in certain areas and a lack of parishes in others. Many of our parishes were built 100+ years ago when people walked to Mass, which is no longer the case today.

Additionally, we see some general declining trends related to Mass attendance, Sacraments, stewardship and outreach. And there is the real challenge of providing necessary pastoral care with fewer priests.

On a deanery level, the South Seattle Deanery is located at the heart of the growing metro area of Seattle, with a population of 3.8M people. Overall population in the region has skyrocketed, yet the parish household numbers and Mass attendance are declining. In South Seattle there are 15 parishes with the shortest distance between parishes at 1.8 miles, and these parishes are situated in the smallest geographical area of any deanery. This means that people have many options for Mass. *StP: While true for the typical parishoner, StP is exceptionally unique in its non-geographic and*

wonderfully welcoming support of special needs communities such as the deaf and deaf-blind and L'Arche. Our central location at the intersection of Interstate 5 and State Highway 520 is optimal for special needs Catholic families that cannot receive at their local churches StP's 28+ year ASL support for deaf and deaf-blind and for their culture. Nor would it be cost-effective for the AD to provide such on a distributed basis. This is very different in other parts of the Archdiocese where parishioners must drive up to 55 minutes to reach the nearest parish.

Within the deanery, St. Patrick's is one of the smallest communities and is located less than 2 miles from two other parishes. This configuration made sense 100+ years ago when people walked to Mass, but we no longer have the luxury of providing this many parishes in such a small geographic area. *StP: Perhaps it's time for the AD to recognize the reality of 2021 where attendance is not strictly geographic, may include virtual access (e.g. see the 400+ Facebook Live mass connections cited above), and recognizes alternative communities of Catholics/potential faithful who don't need geographic proximity as a fundamental basis for them to enter and express their faith?*

For St. Patrick's specifically, we recognize that you have had a wonderful impact on the region. You are recognized for your social justice work, your community outreach, your vital deaf/blind ministry and much more. These are all important ways you live out the Catholic faith and we encourage you to continue to do so at your new location. The goal of all these changes is to strengthen our faith communities!

While the St. Patrick's community has wonderful qualities, there are a few reasons why St. Patrick's was included in strategic planning efforts echoing back to the 1990s. In general, fewer people participate in the life of the parish each year, which is not sustainable for a vibrant parish. *StP: With due respect, we disagree with this argument. There is an (exceptionally) large fraction of the parish that participates in the life of the parish (ministries and other activities, as noted in comments early in this document), and is fully sustainable for what is clearly a "vibrant", if small, parish.* Specifically, St. Patrick's has had a 20-year historic decline in sacramental numbers and parishioners. Here are a few key data points about St. Patrick's (please note, these are all pre-Covid numbers):

- experienced a >50% reduction in Mass attendance from 1995- 2019 (390 – 189) *StP: For consistency, the time period should be 1999-2019, reflecting a 27.6% decline versus the AD-wide decline of 15.5% What is the Deanery decline percentage?*
- lost nearly 40 families between 2018-2020 *StP: With change of parish leadership and AD-directed loss of our 8AM mass in 2019 (see comments above), but simultaneously gaining ~15 new families in 2020 despite Covid-19 restrictions.*
- percent of registered households contributing financially declined from 83% in 2015

to 77% in 2020. Paired with the decline of overall parishioners, this represents a 32% decrease (247 to 168 contributing households) *StP: The AD states that these are all “pre-Covid numbers”, but 2020 is certainly not pre-Covid. So we need to have the relevant numbers to comment and understand the possible impact of Covid-19. That being said, we would argue that the percent contributing is the more relevant measure of “vibrancy” and the drop from 83% to 77% is clearly minor, and influenced by the change in leadership, drop of our 8AM mass and covid. Also not reflected are those households who do contribute in cash but do not use envelopes or on-line giving.*

- all Sacraments are in a general decline, with the exception of Confirmation, which spiked due to the change of Confirmation age *At StP: For the last 15 years, we have been essentially flat in view of year-to-year variation.* Additionally, a parish is responsible for caring for the community within its geographical boundaries. While some may celebrate the idea that a parish is drawing from other places, it should not do so at the detriment of caring for its own community. *StP: The fact of other nearby parishes means that the valuable attraction and contributions of St Pat’s are not to the detriment of “its own [geographic] community” due precisely to easy access to neighboring parishes.*

Currently there are only 13 registered households in the parish boundary that attend St. Patrick’s parish, while the other 176 live outside its boundaries. *StP: Where did this information come from, it is inconsistent with our 217 registered families?*

- **Since the number of priests is likely to continue to decline has the archdiocese considered forming communities that rely on the Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest as is done in Alaska and several other states? If not ... why not?**
First, it is important to recognize that a Pastor is responsible for pastoral care beyond the Sunday Mass. What you describe is relevant for geographically vast locations with very few priests. It does not pertain to a growing metro environment, where we have numerous parishes clustered together and a relatively high concentration of priests as opposed to other areas of the Archdiocese. *StP: Irrespective of geographic spread, is the AD’s only response to close parishes due to declining priests? What of other pastoral care models.*
- **If the Bishop is using “numbers” to shut us down, can he give us goal and a time frame to reach this goal?**
As mentioned above, there isn’t one factor that led to the decision, but instead multiple reasons at the archdiocesan, deanery and parish level. All parishes should continuously strive to build and grow a vibrant parish. *StP has a strategy to build and grow resulting from our 2019-2020 Synod initiatives do do such. We have only been able to implement these in limited scope (e.g., our Sacred Encounters Seattle homeless street ministry) due to Covid-19 restrictions.* St. Patrick’s has had a steady 20-year decline in multiple areas, *as has the Archdiocese (and Deanery?) as well,* which is why it is highlighted as a parish

community that can be strengthened by merging with another parish community.

- **How will closing St Pat's not lead to a further decrease in use of the sacraments? So, exactly how would closure of St Pat's contribute in any way to meeting these goals?**
The goal behind all of these changes across the archdiocese is to strengthen parishes and form more vibrant sustainable Catholic communities. Our hope is that merged parish communities find new life together – sharing a deep love of the Catholic faith, sharing ministries, sharing resources, and sharing a renewed energy and hope for the future. Vibrant parishes attract people and engage them into a deeper faith life, which includes participation in parish life and charitable ministries. *StP: This seems a long-leap of hope, more likely the vibrant, cohesive non-geographic community of StP will scatter among the 51 zip codes now drawn to our Vatican II focused mission. The synergy and focus we exhibit is at risk.*

For your community specifically, you will have more Mass options, more opportunities to access the Sacraments, more opportunities to expand the youth group, more resources to staff ministries, more faith formation experience, and more opportunities to attract new people to join your faith community.

- **What benefit does the Archdiocese derive from closing St Pat's?**
The Archdiocese benefits by forming stronger Catholic communities that are on fire about their faith and evangelizing to others. This is the mission of the Church and why we exist. *StP: And we seem to exhibit just these qualities.*

Additionally, by merging some communities, we ensure that we are not stretching our pastoral coordinators, priests and ministry leaders too thin across multiple parishes. Merging parishes in areas where there are multiple parishes in a relatively small geographic area ensures we are able to serve people in more remote areas where they do not have any other option for pastoral care. Overall, merging some parishes helps balance the efficient use of resources at the archdiocesan and deanery level, to the local parish level in terms of pastoral coordinators, priests, ministries, etc. In a real way, the Archdiocese as a whole benefits when we practice the good Stewardship we ask of others.

It is important to note that when parishes merge the archdiocese **does not** benefit financially from the sale or alienation of properties – resources are passed through to the parishes to which they merge.

Culture

- **How will the long history of social justice and solidarity (esp. relating to El Salvador) from St. Pats be respected?**

We love and appreciate this long history of social justice and want to see it continue! These efforts are not intended to cease ministries. These efforts are about enriching ministries. We encourage you to continue these efforts within the new parish community where you will have the opportunity to invite more people to participate and may be able to make an ever greater impact.

Why do parishioners from 51 zip codes. drive past other parishes to worship at St. Pat's? Is St. Pat's a model parish? What can the "by-passed" parishes do to pull in parishioners like St Pats does?

As mentioned above, a parish is primarily responsible for caring for the community within its geographical boundaries. While some may celebrate the idea that a parish is drawing from other places, it should not do so at the detriment of caring for its own community. Currently there are only 13 households in the parish boundary that attend St. Patrick's parish. *StP: See above, this figure does not compute at present.*

What is it about this Vatican II parish that we feel we cannot find at other parishes that we must drive by to get here? And, consequently, what will the Archdiocese lose if it closes St. Pat's?

Our hope is that we don't lose anything. Our goal is to strengthen parishes. While this experience is painful now, we hope it brings new life in the merged community. We want this to be an enriching experience for everyone involved so that we can continue to live out our Catholic faith and help others grow closer to Jesus.

Mission

- **What is the vision for St. Patrick's when it merges with another parish?**
Our hope is that the new merged community will grow stronger together. We encourage St. Patrick's parishioners to become active participants in the merged parish, working with parish leadership to determine the future of the campus. We hope you become active in parish life, not just with Mass, but by joining the councils, leading ministries and more. This is not about where to attend Mass on Sunday – this is about truly integrating to form a strengthened community.
- **Given the ministries with the deaf and blind community and the L'Arche community, isn't there a way for us to become a "Mission" Parish?**
We have a very strong desire to support this ministry and will be spending significant time over the next year on plans for this ministry in partnership with you. However, this

ministry alone would not constitute a “mission” parish. Mission parishes are not based on one ministry and they are typically in remote areas, not in the heart of a metro area. *StP: And yet, Christ our Hope is a mission parish, and we are currently joined with them per Deanery recommendations and actions. Why cannot this continue?*

Accessibility

- **Deaf and Deaf-Blind integration is key to the success of St Pats. Is there a possibility of the Deaf/Deaf-Blind moving to Sacred Heart?**

Yes! This is definitely an option we wish to explore with you over the next year. *StP: Note comments above regarding the sole ALS priest remaining in the order. Moving that piece of our community to Sacred Heart would break the important integration as it is certain that the entire community would not move there.*

- **What considerations have been made regarding accessibility requirements of other possible parishes for Deaf/Deaf-Blind Catholics to attend? St. Pats is very accessible, other parishes not so much. What about accessibility at Sacred Heart?**

This is a very important issue that requires ongoing study over the next year. We really want to uncover the challenges and come up with appropriate solutions so that we can ensure the deaf/deaf-blind community is well served.