



# PARISH TOOLKIT

January 2021

This document provides an overview of the parish consolidation vision for the Tacoma region, background information, and answers to questions raised by the parishioners in the first set of parish meetings.

Prepared by the Strategic Planning Team

+ January 7, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let me first start by wishing each of you a Happy New Year! I pray this year we all experience the love and joy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the first round of parish informational sessions. The goal of those initial December meetings was to share Archbishop Etienne's vision, explain the strategic planning process, outline the challenges our parishes (and those across the archdiocese and country) face, and highlight the initial thinking about a new combined parish and what it may offer.

Your attendance, questions and participation are a sign of your commitment to and love for your Catholic community. We are so grateful to have engaged Catholics at our parishes who are willing to participate in this important journey. This is undoubtedly a challenging journey – and one that none of us would elect to take. However, faced with today's realities – fewer active Catholics, an abundance of parishes, a lack of priests, and a decline in many ministries and Sacraments – we must consolidate our efforts so that we can be better positioned to achieve our mission of spreading the Gospel. A parish is not a building, church asset, nor a single ministry. A parish is a living, vibrant community of faithful people carrying out the mission Jesus gave us. This living community of the faithful is what we aim to build with this new parish.

Please keep in mind that this is an evolving journey and we will embark on it together. The Stakeholders from each of your parishes will help determine the future of this new parish. Sub-Committees selected by the Stakeholders will start meeting regularly to discuss what a vibrant parish looks like and how to combine the gifts from each of the other parishes to bring it to life.

As a follow-up to the initial meetings, we prepared this packet of information. We recognize that not everyone was able to attend the sessions and there were many more questions than we had time to answer. We hope this packet provides you with more details and answers to your questions. Please reach out to your pastor or your Stakeholders if you have more questions or if you have ideas for the new parish.

I ask that you pray for this journey and ask the Holy Spirit to help guide all of us as we navigate the changes over the next year.

With every best wish and an assurance of prayer, I remain,  
Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Daniel Mueggenborg".

Most Rev. Daniel H. Mueggenborg

# PIERCE PARISH FOLLOW-UP TOOLKIT

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## 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 continually 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
- create disciples
- further vibrant parish life
- strengthen ministries
- deepen the experience of Sunday Eucharist and celebration of Sacraments
- encourage lifelong faith formation
- promote vocations
- create a sense of unity and community
- increase charitable works and outreach

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

- the projected number of priests available to serve
- financial resources
- facilities issues
- changing demographics

## PIERCE DEANERY

The Pierce Deanery, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Seattle and Archbishop Etienne, is moving toward a new structure in the Tacoma region to foster a sustainable, thriving Catholic community that helps people grow closer to Christ.

## 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

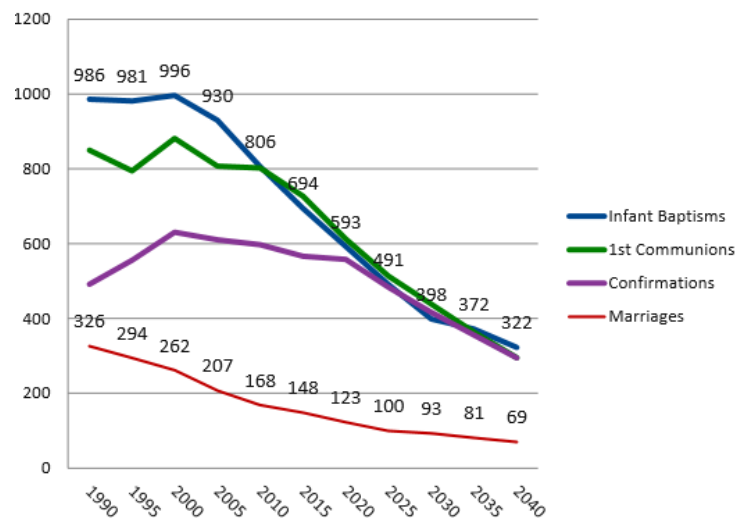
(Sourced from [CARA Church Statistics](#)):

- Catholic marriages are down 55% since 1990
- 1 in 5 children baptized do not receive 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

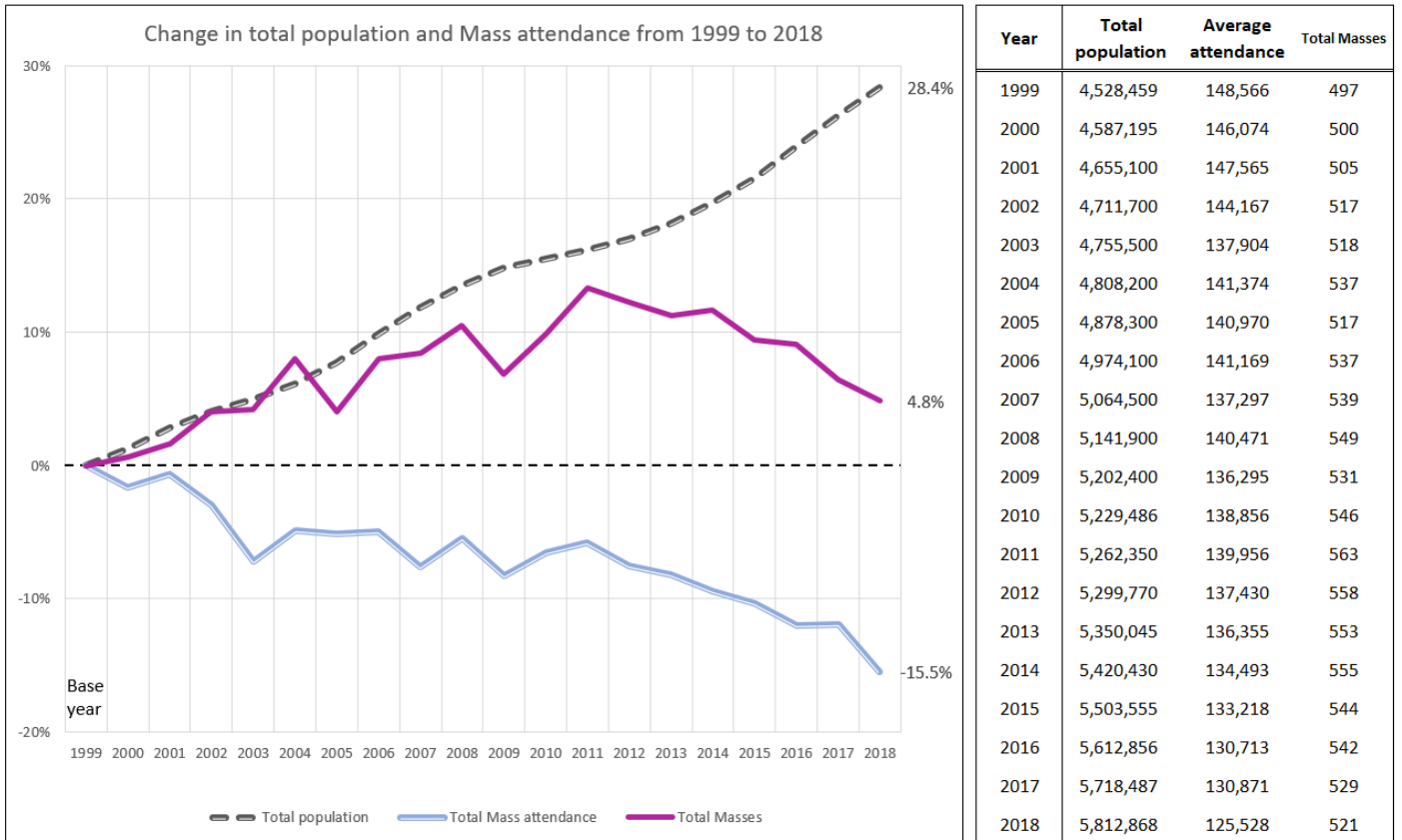
**U.S. Catholic Church Sacramental Forecast  
1990 - 2040 (000's)**



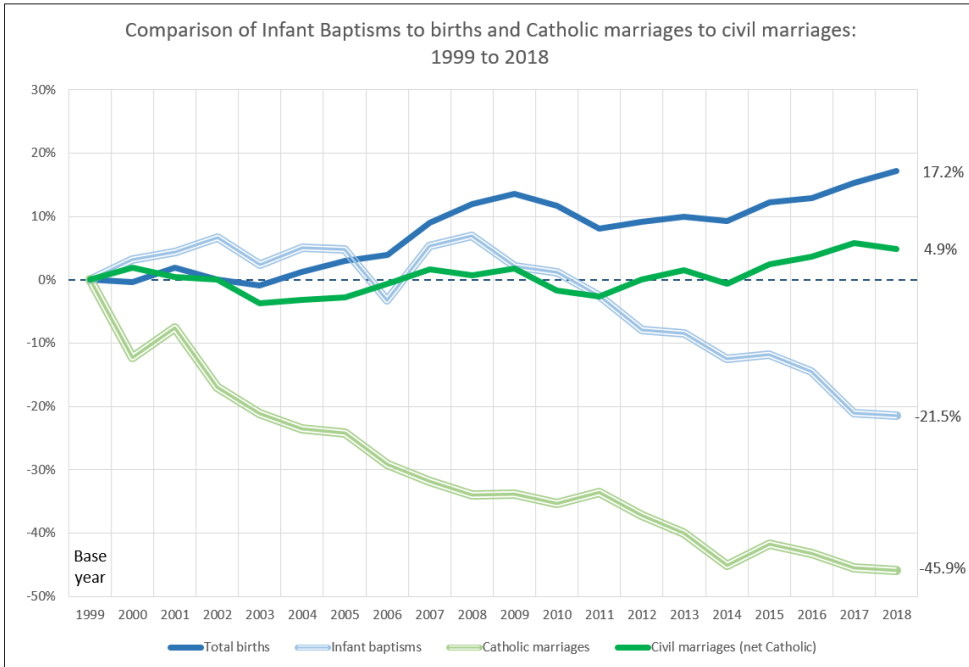
## Archdiocese of Seattle Statistics

(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%, with a high of 13.3% in 2011.
  - Weekend Masses celebrated in non-English languages increased from 46 in 1999 to 92 in 2018.



Year	Total births	Infant baptisms	Civil marriages (- Catholic)	Catholic marriages
1999	60294	6,635	31,363	2,044
2000	60,116	6,847	31,969	1,792
2001	61,479	6,927	31,499	1,888
2002	60,297	7,076	31,394	1,697
2003	59,782	6,795	30,211	1,614
2004	61,031	6,973	30,374	1,564
2005	62,096	6,956	30,510	1,550
2006	62,670	6,419	31,156	1,448
2007	65,759	6,988	31,876	1,393
2008	67,508	7,095	31,592	1,351
2009	68,460	6,778	31,908	1,352
2010	67,382	6,712	30,823	1,323
2011	65,174	6,464	30,530	1,359
2012	65,834	6,111	31,363	1,284
2013	66,296	6,075	31,844	1,227
2014	65,879	5,812	31,162	1,122
2015	67,646	5,848	32,132	1,190
2016	68,042	5,671	32,514	1,161
2017	69,502	5,237	33,184	1,114
2018	70,664	5,209	32,906	1,105

- Baptism and Marriage trends:
  - Between 1999 and 2018 the total births in Western Washington increased 17.2% while infant baptisms decreased by 21.5%.
  - Between 1999 and 2018 civil marriages (excluding Catholic) increased 4.9% while Catholic marriages decreased by 45.9%.

**Tacoma Ministry Overview Statistics**

- 13 parishes with 8,700 registered households
- 8,700 average weekend Mass attendance (pre-COVID) at 43 total Masses, 9 Masses celebrated in 5 languages other than English
- 13 priests serve Tacoma parishes
- 3 parish elementary schools
- 1 Jesuit high school
- Parish ordinary income of \$6.5M pre-COVID

## NEW PARISH VISION

The vision is to bring together Holy Rosary, St. Ann, St. Rita and Visitation into one new vibrant Catholic community that will have a strong and sustainable future in Tacoma. This community would also be affiliated with the mission of St. John of the Woods.

Pastors of these parishes have appointed lay members to a joint Stakeholder group that will lead this process. These Stakeholders will ensure parishioners play an active role in shaping the vision for the new thriving parish that embraces cultural diversity, creates missionary disciples, and provides multiple ministries for the community. This parishioner led group will have the full support of the archdiocese to better understand the operations of each parish and explore parish assets, resources, people, ministries and more.

### Glossary of terms:

- *Stakeholders* – Each parish selected 6-8 lay members to be part of the joint Stakeholder group. These Stakeholders will work together to create the vision for the new parish community.
- *Sub Committees* – The Stakeholders will develop Sub Committees to focus on specific areas. For example, a Sub Committee may focus on the faith formation programs of this new parish.
- *Taskforce* – A Taskforce is a temporary working group assigned to a very specific topic within one of the Sub Committees. For example, as part of the Outreach Sub Committee, a Taskforce may be assigned to review and make recommendations about how this new parish will work with Catholic Community Services or St. Vincent de Paul.

## NEW PARISH OVERVIEW

(These numbers assume 20% attrition and do not include the Mission of St. John of the Woods.)

- Combine 4 parish communities with 1,160 registered households
- 1,623 average weekend Mass attendance (pre-Covid)
- \$757,600 annual parish ordinary income
- 1 pastor and 1 parochial vicar
- 1 parish elementary school
- Parish Revolving Fund (PRF) savings of \$1,288,000
- PRF debt of \$207,000



## VISITATION CATHOLIC STEM ACADEMY

Visitation Catholic School was dedicated on August 23, 1925 as a ministry of the parish staffed by Benedictine Sisters of St. Benedict's Convent in Minnesota. In 2012, Visitation adopted a STEM focus with an emphasis on project-based, collaborative learning that provides an excellent education in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. Blessed with a rich history, the school provides a strong, diverse, faith-based community that offers a modern, research-based curriculum for students.



Moving Visitation Catholic STEM Academy over to the new parish at St. Ann's campus would create a more central location, providing more accessibility and opportunity for students in South Tacoma to attend Catholic school.

The new location provides several benefits:

- In its new location, Visitation STEM Academy will still be a parish ministry, which means it will continue to be an integral part of the parish community – joining together for events, support and programming. The school will be an important ministry of the new parish community and will assist the parish in achieving its mission of helping people grow closer to Christ.
- At the same time, students will enjoy an elevated faith-based learning experience in a newer, more modern building. The new parish campus offers multiple buildings including a parish center with a stage, an outdoor play area and outdoor access to restrooms. With more space, the school has the opportunity to expand its current student population.
- From a maintenance perspective, the new building is much easier and more cost-efficient to maintain than the current nearly 100 year-old building that suffers from expected aging. The single floor also makes it easier to heat and cool. This single floor also means the school will be able to meet increased ADA compliance, which aligns with the school's mission.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

**Q: What will this new parish look like?**

**A:** At this time, no one knows. The vision is to create a united, vibrant and engaged parish community of missionary disciples that reflects the vision set forth by Pope Francis and envisioned by Archbishop Etienne. This new parish will include many ministries, including the current Vietnamese ministries, community outreach opportunities and a Catholic school.

The Stakeholders will engage in dialogue in various meetings and create subcommittees to address topics like evangelization, faith formation, creating disciples, finances, operations, and more.

**Q: How will this change affect me and my faith experience?**

**A:** You're encouraged to participate in the various meetings and feedback sessions to guide the development of a new community that reflects the Archbishop's vision. With these changes, you will have new opportunities to engage in your faith (and with your fellow parishioners), as well as with the broader local community. It's important to keep in mind that a parish and its community exists to achieve the mission of the Church, which is to spread the Gospel and help people know Christ. We must always be aware of this basic mission as discussions around the future of the parish begin. This is an exciting opportunity to experience the workings of the Holy Spirit in our midst!

**Q: Why these four parishes?**

**A:** These four parishes are clustered closely together in Tacoma. The deanery selected these parishes because of their location, their populations, and the needs of the larger community. By combining these four parishes into one new parish, with St. John of the Woods as an affiliated Mission, the new parish will draw from a larger geographic area and have a better potential to form a mission based, thriving Catholic community. Current parishioners will not have to travel much further to join their new parish ministries or attend Mass.

**Q: What was the decision process for this?**

**A:** The Archdiocese of Seattle is divided into 10 deaneries, which represent a region of parishes. Each deanery works together on pastoral and strategic planning taking into consideration the nuances of their region and needs of their people.

In partnership with the archdiocese, the Pierce Deanery, which covers the Tacoma area, began its recent round of strategic planning several years ago to review the changing nature of the region and impacts of this. This planning including meetings at both the deanery level and the parish leadership level. Specifically, initial discussion began around how to better serve the region and solicited input from various parishes through several deanery leadership gatherings.

After this planning began, the ceiling on the Holy Rosary church fell and attention shifted to the immediate pressing needs of the Holy Rosary parish community. The archdiocese worked with Holy Rosary parish leadership to discuss its viability as a standalone parish. Ultimately, it was determined that Holy Rosary parish is no longer a viable community capable of carrying out its mission.

With this pressing need to support the parishioners of Holy Rosary parish, and the reality that other neighboring parishes are also facing serious (and in some cases, similar) challenges, the Pierce Deanery accelerated its strategic planning process. After reviewing multiple assessments, data on parish vitality and in-depth discussions, the deanery leadership recommended that joining Holy Rosary, Visitation, St. Rita and St. Ann would be the best way to form a vibrant and thriving community to evangelize and help the people of the region encounter Christ, with St. John of the Woods as an affiliated Mission.

**Q: What will this new parish be called?**

A: The new pastor and parish leadership and consultation with parishioners will select its three top names and then submit them to the Archbishop for his selection and approval.

**Q: Who will be the new pastor and when will we find out?**

A: At this point, Archbishop is working with his Priest Personnel Board to determine this new pastor. They understand the importance of identifying a leader with the necessary gifts and talents to lead this dynamic community, through much prayer and discernment. We will learn of the decision once it has been finalized.

**Q: How will the pastoral and finance councils combine? Or form a new one? Ministries?**

A: This new group of Stakeholders will examine various aspects of parish life. They will create Subcommittees to review assets and resources from each parish and determine the process for combining them & look closely at all the nuances of the combining different elements like ministries, etc, which includes recommendation for pastoral and finance councils. The final decision for the two councils will be determined by the new pastor in consultation with lay leadership.

**Q: How were the Stakeholders selected? Who will make the decisions?**

A: The pastor of each parish selected the Stakeholders who will be responsible for actively participating in the creation of a new parish community, as well as reporting back to parishioners on the progress.

**Q: What happens to the buildings? And all the artifacts and assets from each?**

A: All the buildings, artifacts, finances and more from each of the four parishes will belong to the new parish. The Stakeholders will develop an inventory and audit process for all the items and then determine how to best utilize them on behalf of the new parish in carrying out its mission. They may choose to move them to the parish campus,

leave them where they are, offer them to other parishes, sell them or a combination of these options.

**Q: Will Holy Rosary church be demolished?**

A: As mentioned in the previous question/answer, all the buildings belong to the new parish. The pastor and the parish leadership will determine over time what to do with the land and buildings at the other campuses and will be responsible for the maintenance of them as well.

**Q: What about sacramental records? What happens to them?**

A: All sacramental records will be part of the new parish. Additionally, older records will be stored in the Archives and Records Office of the Archdiocese of Seattle.

**Q: Does the archdiocese have any experience in closing and blending parishes and if yes, what was the outcome?**

A: Yes, the Archdiocese of Seattle has had experience with this. It has been part of the history of the archdiocese, in response to shifting needs and priorities, to change structures and allocate resources to best further the mission of the Church. Each case has been different, with unique timeframes and circumstances involved. In most cases, parishioners understood and agreed with the reasons for the changes – even if the changes were painful. (We recognize that it's hard to realize that something you've known for a really long time is changing.) Deanery-led strategic planning work has resulted in 11 openings and 7 closings over the past 25 years:

*Parishes/missions that have merged or closed:*

1. St. Urban (2005), former mission of Sacred Heart, Winlock
2. St. Patrick, Dockton (2011), former mission of St. John Vianney, Vashon
3. Sts. Peter and Paul, Aberdeen (2016)
4. Sacred Heart, Winlock (2017)
5. Our Lady of Lourdes, Wilkeson (2017)
6. St. Joseph, Pe Ell; and Holy Family, Frances (2017), merged to form St. Joseph Parish at Holy Family, Frances
7. Sacred Heart, Morton (2019)

*Newly opened parishes:*

1. Holy Disciples, Puyallup (1996)
2. Holy Redeemer, Vancouver (2000)
3. St. Teresa of Calcutta, Woodinville (2004)
4. Holy Innocents, Duvall (2004), former mission that became a parish
5. Holy Cross, Lake Stevens (2004), former mission that became a parish
6. North American Martyrs, Edmonds (2008)
7. Christ Our Hope, Seattle (2009)
8. St. Andrew Kim, Seattle (2010)
9. St. Paul Chong Hasang, Fife (2010)

10. Vietnamese Martyrs, Tukwila (2010)

11. St. Joseph, Tacoma (2015), new community in pre-existing parish

**Q: The materials from the archdiocese talk about the goal of creating a vibrant community. What plans are in place to accomplish this?**

A: The vision is to create vibrant communities comprised of engaged Catholics. Currently the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council is hosting listening sessions and planning for the forthcoming Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, which will help all parishes in the archdiocese focus on the mission of the Church. This document will help guide parishes in creating vibrant communities.

In the meantime, we have prioritized community involvement in this process here in Tacoma. We are encouraging participation in the many available planning sessions. Each of us has different gifts and life situations, and as a result we are called to participate in different ways. For some, that means serving on a committee. For others, that means taking place in outreach activities, participating through prayer, or providing an example for others. The possibilities are virtually endless! We encourage everyone to become active in this new parish.

**Q: What opportunities does this provide for Catholic education in South Tacoma?**

A: Moving Visitation Catholic STEM Academy over to the new parish (currently at St. Ann's campus) creates a more centrally located school, which provides more accessibility and opportunity for students in South Tacoma to attend Catholic school.

**Q: Why a parish Catholic school?**

A: Catholic Schools exist as an evangelizing ministry of the Church where Jesus is at the very center. Proudly displayed at every parish school in our archdiocese is the following statement: *"Christ is the reason for the school, the unseen but ever-present teacher in all its classes, the model of its faculty, and the inspiration for its students."*

In a Catholic school, parents and teachers commit themselves to passing on the faith by challenging each child to grow in knowledge, wisdom, faith and love. All who walk through the doors should know that they have entered a Catholic school by the curriculum, the instructional methodologies in the classrooms, the standards promoting excellence for all, and the partnership with the parish.

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *"Our vision is clear: Our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church...We must respond to challenging times with faith, vision and the will to succeed because the Catholic school's mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation and especially our Church."*

**Q: How will the current parish programs integrate with the school program?**

A: The details of the partnership will be refined in dialogue with the various leadership groups in the parish and school. The goal will be to find ways to honor, embrace, and enhance all programs as ministries of the parish that support the mission of the parish.

**Q: What about Holy Rosary Bilingual Academy?**

A: Holy Rosary Bilingual Academy moved to Fife. This means that the only students who will move over to the new parish will be those from Visitation school.

**Q: Why will St. John of the Woods be a mission and not merge with the rest of the parishes?**

A: Through deanery planning over the years the direction was for St. John of the Woods to be paired with Our Lady Queen of Heaven. More recently, deanery input led to its inclusion in this strategic plan as it seemed to make more sense given location and possibilities for sharing of services. The mission will serve people who live in areas not as accessible to the newly formed parish.

**Q: Why not wait until 2021-2022 to engage in this process when the pandemic is over, and a vast majority of the US population is vaccinated?**

A: The urgency in addressing this particular grouping was triggered by the facility concerns at Holy Rosary parish. As we began that process of addressing Holy Rosary in 2018-2019, we realized we are in a pivotal moment to look at the larger situation. This is the opportune time to do it, since it will involve a redrawing of parish boundaries. In addressing the Holy Rosary situation, we realized that neighboring parishes were in need or lacking ministry vitality for various reasons. Rather than addressing one parish at a time, and going through another change in six months to a year, the consensus of the Pierce Deanery was that it is better for everyone to be part of the larger changes at one time. This planning was well underway pre-COVID and we fully recognize the additional challenges that the pandemic has brought and how the pandemic has accelerated pre-existing trends.

**Q: Is this a done deal or can input be provided to change the direction?**

A: It is such a painful realization that, for the reasons stated above, changes are needed. It is also hard to embrace the idea that while change may not be feel advantageous for an individual, it is vital for the common good of the larger Catholic community. With this reality there has been extensive research and exploration on the best way to proceed. If, during the course of this continued planning, other viable options surface, they will be reviewed.

This is a dynamic and living process, with the sole intent of furthering the mission of the Church in helping people encounter Jesus. Based on the extensive research, consultation and dialogue that has taken place to date, this appears to be the best direction. However, we must always make room for the Holy Spirit to guide us toward other and better possibilities if they exist.

## ST. ANN SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

**Q: Why at St. Ann?**

A: St. Ann has the newest and largest facilities, which put the campus in the best position to house the new parish. Additionally, the St. Ann campus has a building to house the 100+ students from Visitation Catholic School.

**Q: What will happen to St. Ann's Vietnamese community?**

A: The Vietnamese community has been thriving at St. Ann's and will continue to be an integral part of the new parish community. Having a rich diversity will be a cornerstone of this new parish.

**Q: How will be the goals/targets for various financial campaigns (ACA, Call to Serve, Call to Serve Christ campaign, Stewardship, etc.) be determined?**

A: Parish campaign targets and goals will be determined by the new pastor in consultation with the pastoral and finance councils and other appropriate leadership. The Annual Catholic Appeal and other diocesan goals will be determined based on the formulae that apply to all parishes. The first year may involve some adjustment to allow for lack of "new parish" history, since past performance may not reflect future performance due to the combining of parishes.

**Q: We had a school in the past that failed? How will this be different?**

A: The previous school at St. Ann closed more than 30 years ago, during a very different time. Since then we have developed a much more strategic approach to supporting and resourcing our schools. We started the Fulcrum Foundation to support tuition grants, leadership development and to partner with the Office for Catholic Schools on strategic projects. We have also cultivated a much larger staff over the last several years, bringing a new level of professional expertise devoted to supporting schools and their leadership.

Visitation STEM Academy has a strategically developed curriculum and a reputation not only for its academic excellence, but for its strong witness to Catholic identity. STEM curriculum inspires students through Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The school has strong ties to the parish and enhances parish life with its mission of teaching young people about Christ and developing future leaders. We believe the partnership between the parish and the school will strengthen both.

**Q: Can we still have our Vietnamese religious education classes?**

A: Yes, the parish and school leadership will work together to determine the best way to use the parish and school facilities to support all the parish and school ministries.

**Q: Currently, the school building needs some updating and renovation to house both the current parish programs and a fully functioning Catholic school. How will this be accomplished?**

A: First, the new parish and school leadership will determine the needs of the building and work with an architect to create plans that address these needs. With regard to funding the renovations, the finances and assets from each parish will be combined into the new parish. It will be the responsibility of the new parish to cover the expenses. Parish leadership may wish to take a loan from the PRF, fundraise and/or to cover the expenses outright depending on the nature and timing of the building upgrades.

### ST. RITA SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

**Q: St. Rita's church building is in fairly good shape. Can we keep that church building open for special events, funerals, feast days, etc?**

A: Ultimately, this decision is up to the new pastor in consultation with the lay leadership of the new parish.

**Q: The Italian heritage of the parish is important to the history of St. Rita—what will be done to make sure that is not lost during the transition?**

A: Parishioners are encouraged to participate with Sub-Committees in the new parish as a way to foster events celebrating *all* of the cultural heritages represented in the new parish.

**Q: Request for funerals at St. Rita?**

A: At this point, this will be the decision of the new pastor in consultation with the lay leadership of the new parish.

**Q: Date of change, installation?**

A: This is to be determined. We want to work with the communities to identify what makes sense.

### VISITATION SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

**Q: How does this move benefit Visitation Catholic STEM Academy?**

A: The new location provides several benefits for Visitation. In its new location, it will still be a parish ministry, which means it will continue to be an integral part of the parish community – joining together for events, support and programming. Ultimately, the



school will work with the new parish community to achieve the mission of helping people grow closer to Christ.

At the same time, students will enjoy an elevated faith-based learning experience in a newer, more modern building. St. Ann campus offers multiple buildings including a parish center with a stage, an outdoor play area and outdoor access to restrooms. With more space, the school has the opportunity to expand its current student population.

From a maintenance perspective, the new building is much easier and more cost-efficient to maintain than the current nearly 100 year-old building that suffers from expected aging. The single floor makes it easier to heat and cool, and the school will be able to meet increased ADA compliance, which aligns with the school's mission.

**Q: What does this mean for teachers?**

A: Teachers will continue to offer the excellent education they've been providing to students. They will do so now in a new location that improves their teaching environment. The curriculum at Visitation Catholic STEM Academy will remain the same.

**Q: Which parish will take over caring for Visitation parish's neighborhood outreach? The new parish, being on the other side of the highway, will be too far.**

A: Your outreach ministry is very important and we wish to continue that ministry in new ways. Together we will work with the Sub-Committees and the new pastor to discuss all the ministries offered at the new parish. This reiterates to the importance of being involved in the new parish development, helping us work towards strong outreach ministries that enhance what is already offered to the community.

## **ST. JOHN OF THE WOODS SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

**Q: *What does it mean to be a mission? How do we fit in?***

A: In the Archdiocese of Seattle, a mission is described as "a community of Christian faithful established in a particular church that is not a parish or quasi-parish, where the Sacraments are celebrated regularly, and whose pastoral care is entrusted to the pastor of the territorial parish, within whose geographical boundaries the mission is located..." This means that St. John of the Woods would be attached to the new church with the leadership of the pastor, staff and lay leaders from both the parish and mission. Sunday Mass and celebration of other Sacraments would continue. As a mission, St. John of the Woods will not have a separate finance or pastoral council. Instead, as a mission, will have representation on the new parish councils.

**Q: Will we lose the administration help of the Vietnamese sisters?**

A: At this point, we really don't know. There has been a wonderful relationship with the Vietnamese sisters and at this point our hope is that this will continue, but we don't

know. The new pastor, in dialogue with the Sisters and the Stakeholder group will make this determination.

**Q: What happens to our finances? Do they get co-mingled with the new parish or are they managed by us?**

A: The mission would retain finances in separate accounts.

**Q: With St. John of the Woods as a mission, does this mean our Masses will reduce?**

A: Mass times will be determined by the pastor, in consultation with lay leadership.

**Q: What happens if we have a building issue we need to fix? Can we just do it or do we need to ask permission of the new parish?**

A: As with all projects in any archdiocesan buildings, it would be up to the pastor in consultation with the finance council and facilities committee.

**Q: What happened with combining St. John of the Woods with Our Lady Queen of Heaven?**

A: After further discussion with the deanery, it was determined that the current plan would be a better approach.

## 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 Pierce Deanery Dean, Father Jerry Burns; the principal of Visitation, Mark Nuno; and the pastors of each of the parishes involved – Father Tuan Nguyen, Father David Mulholland, Father Martin Bourke, and Father Michael Radermacher play a key strategic planning and execution roll 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; and Managing Director of Communications, Helen McClenahan & other Chancery staff.

## STAKEHOLDER TEAM

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

**Holy Rosary** — Cecilia Brasier, Joseph DeVega, Thom Ryng, and Helen Talbo

**St. Ann** — Cathy Bungler, Bao Tran Doan, L.B. Gilmer, Minh Nguyen, Sr. Theresa Nguyen, Vo Thuy Tien, and Louie Tran

**St. John of the Woods** — Mario Castillo, Gaye Dolan, Paul Giovanni, Twyla Hamrast, Joan Oshea, Daniel Soderlind, Larry Volland, and Mark Wiegman

**St. Rita** — Marla Grassi, Debbi Orlando

**Visitation** — Linda Lamb, Marc Nuno, Owen O’Neill, LoAnn Rector, Rick Keller-Scholz, Dn. Mike Teskey, and Jeannie Wargo