

Bozeman Deanery Proposed Plan



Parish Input Process

The plan that you find below is the result of the work of a Planning Committee composed of parish representatives and Pastors/pastoral administrators from each parish in the Bozeman Deanery who gathered to look at the reality of providing quality pastoral care with fewer priests to serve our Diocese in the future.

The following plan is a possible roadmap for the future and, if adopted, would be used as it became necessary.

You are asked to read and prayerfully consider the plan, and make any comments or recommendations to the Planning Committee on the form provided.

For your study there is provided:

1. Copy of the Proposed Plan (below);
2. A map of the Deanery (above);
3. Listing of the average weekend attendance for the parishes/missions of the Deanery;
4. A form for returning your responses to the Deanery Planning Committee (Please turn this completed and signed form to your parish by **February 8, 2012**).
5. For more information, please plan to attend your **Parish Input Meeting**—watch your bulletin for details.

Bozeman Deanery Map

A deanery is a grouping of neighboring parishes, under the leadership of an area priest appointed as Dean, joined together to foster common pastoral care for the people of God in those parishes.



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There are four priests and one retired priest currently serving in the Bozeman Deanery. The shape of the Deanery and the distances it covers creates some challenges around placement of our priests. After studying the areas of anticipated population growth, the current placement of our priests, and the projections for the near future, this Deanery Planning Group recommends the following:

That the Bozeman deanery be served by no fewer than four priests in the future. The Gallatin Valley is projected to be an area of growth and there is a possibility that four priests may not be sufficient to serve this population as the growth in the area translates to growth in parish populations. The yearly parish census and sustainability study will track the growth in the parish communities especially in this area.

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There is concern for the future in the **West Yellowstone and Big Sky** areas. These parishes are currently served by a retired priest; in the future there needs to be a plan to provide sacramental ministry in these areas. There is interest from the Deanery Planning Group to explore ways to make the Bozeman area a more attractive area for priests at or close to retirement age who might want to continue their service as sacramental minister for a parish community (or two). There currently is no housing provided for a retired priest in the area and that is a way to make this area more attractive to a retiring priest. Transportation to and from the mission church is currently provided by parishioners and this would need to continue, especially during the winter months if a retired priest continues to serve there. Maintaining a Pastoral Administrator is important as the vision is that West Yellowstone and Big Sky would continue to be served by retired clergy in the future. There is great hope for a consistent presence for sacramental ministry in these areas.

It is recommended that **Bozeman maintain two priests to serve the two sites in that city. Holy Rosary Parish** is the largest parish in the Deanery and in the middle of a major building project. **Resurrection Parish** is likewise planning for a major project and has a unique ministry to the university population in Bozeman.

Also, part of the Bozeman plan would **change the designation of Valley of the Flowers Mission in Belgrade from mission to parish status and change Holy Family Parish in Three Forks to mission status.** The rationale for this change is that the population growth is projected to be much accelerated in the Belgrade area, which is confirmed by the parish demographics. The **Belgrade and Three Forks area would maintain a priest to serve the parish and mission**

The current projection is that the diocese continue to plan for **a priestly presence in the White Sulphur Springs/Harlowton area.**

All sites in this Deanery and throughout the Diocese will be part of a yearly on-going process to study their sustainability. Some of the aspects of this study will include a yearly look at: Parish Mass attendance, annual offertory income, debt retirement (if any), parish plant maintenance, parish and diocesan financial obligations met. It will also consider parish vitality and engagement. This study will be completed each year and any adjustments needed to the plan will follow.

Average Weekend attendance

“October Counts” (Average weekend attendance): Each year the diocese asks each parish and mission to do a hand count of all those attending Mass on three weekends in October. October is chosen as there is no holiday or celebration that might take people away from their parish. If there are local reasons to change this to a more “normal” weekend, we encourage pastors to do so. The numbers for the three weekends are sent to the Diocese and the average of the three is taken to get the usual number actually attending Mass on a weekend in each site. Following you will find the statistics for the 2010 “October Counts” in the Bozeman Deanery.

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Bozeman Deanery “October Counts” 2010

Holy Family – Three Forks	89
• Valley of the Flowers--Belgrade	408
Holy Rosary – Bozeman	1087
Resurrection – Bozeman	564
Our Lady of the Pines – West Yellowstone	90 (Winter Season average approx.325)
• St. Joseph -- Big Sky	41 (Winter season average approx.250)
St. Joseph – Harlowton	54
St. Bartholomew – White Sulphur Springs	43
• Immaculate Conception –Judith Gap	10

* **“Clustered parishes”**: A clustered parish has a priest as its pastor; however the priest may live at another location and will be pastor of more than one community. The goal is that, by clustering parishes, the identity of each parish will be maintained.

** **“Church of Occasional Worship”(Oratory)**: Churches are designated as such by the Bishop for the benefit of some community or group of faithful; Mass is not celebrated regularly on weekends but is celebrated at least once per year, usually on the feast day of the Church. Church maintenance, repairs, insurance, upkeep is supported by the local community.

Parish: Canon 515 paragraph 1: “A parish is a certain community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor as its proper pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop.”

Mission: A community and worship site within the boundaries of a constituted parish, served and administered by the pastor of the parish.