

Conrad Deanery Proposed Plan



Parish Input Process

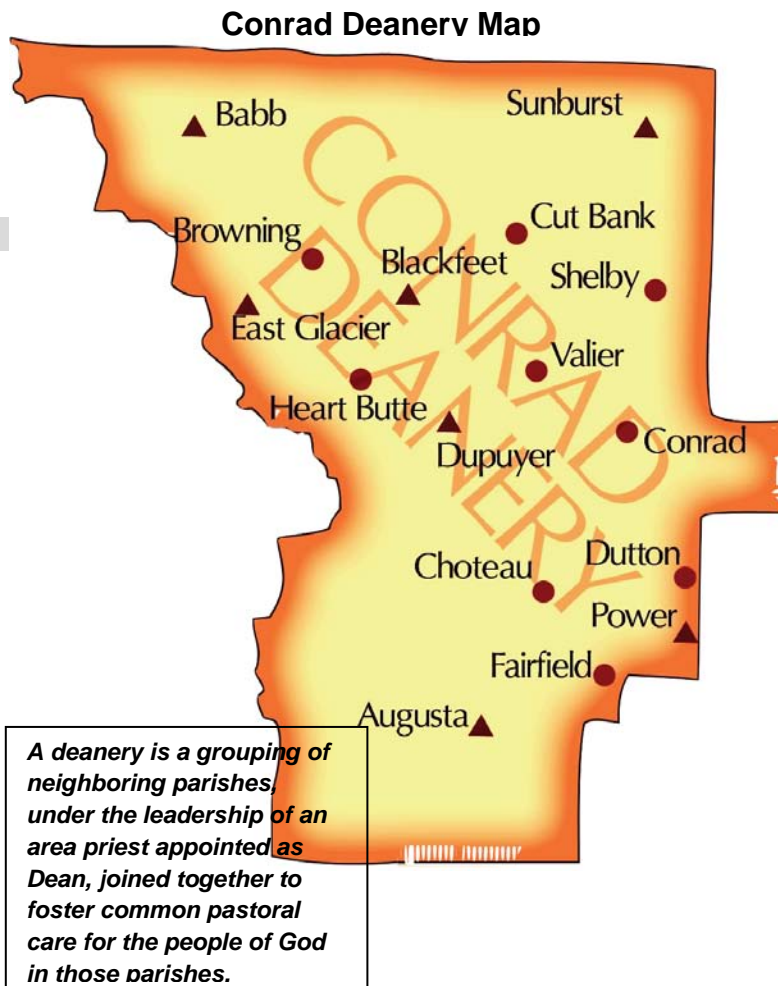
The plan that you find below is the result of the work of a Planning Committee composed of parish representatives and Pastors/pastoral administrators from each parish in the Conrad Deanery who gathered to look at the reality of providing quality pastoral care with fewer priests to serve our Diocese in 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 (2nd page);
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.



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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Currently one priest is assigned to administer and provide sacramental ministry for five sites, **in Cut Bank, Shelby, Sunburst, Valier** with a ***“church of occasional worship” in **Dupuyer**. This area was recently served by two priests, but it is not envisioned that there will be an additional priest to send to serve in this area, and the Planning Group wanted to ease the responsibility by moving one of the clustered churches to a different configuration. The new configuration would include **Cut Bank, Shelby and Sunburst** and these sites would be clustered with one priest. As financially feasible, there would be assistance from non-ordained to provide pastoral support for this area. (Note: Sister Gwendolyn is currently living in Cut Bank and ministering in that area.) **Dupuyer** would remain as it is with the designation of a ** “Church of Occasional Worship” and with Mass celebrated in the Church at least once per year.

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The parish at **Valier** would be *clustered with **Conrad** with one priest serving the area.

Choteau and Fairfield would be *clustered with Power and Dutton. The mission in **Augusta** would remain open as a **"Church of Occasional Worship," but would not have a regular weekend liturgy celebrated there. The Power and Dutton churches will be evaluated for the possibility of reestablishing the pattern of dividing the weekend Mass schedule between Power and Dutton with each site having Mass on two weekends per month. The plan also envisions maintaining Parish Administrators at both Power and Dutton for as long as it is financially feasible, with Dutton as the parish and Power as the mission.

Heart Butte and Browning currently are assigned one priest (a religious order Jesuit priest) in the Heart Butte area and one diocesan priest in Browning. This plan envisions no change in this configuration. When a Jesuit priest is no longer available to serve in Heart Butte, the Diocese will need to consider how to provide ministry for the parish and its missions.

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 Mass 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. Below you will find the statistics for the 2010 "October Counts" in the Conrad Deanery.

Conrad Deanery "October Counts" 2010

Browning (all sites)	280
Choteau	141
Conrad	167
Cut Bank	135
Dutton	35
Power (mission)	28
Fairfield	91
Augusta (mission)	21
Shelby	129
Sunburst	41
Valier	109

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* **“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 financed by the local community.