

Kalispell 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 Kalispell 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.



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.

Map of the Kalispell Deanery

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St. Matthew Parish, Kalispell remains as it is currently with one priest.

Blessed John Paul II in Big Fork would continue with the services of one priest. When there is no longer a priest available to serve there, there is a possibility that St. Matthews and Blessed John Paul II would share a priest with a Pastoral Administrator on site.

St. Richard, Columbia Falls and **St. Charles, Whitefish** would be clustered parishes with one pastor serving both sites. The proposal is to look for land in an appropriate place between the two sites to form, in time, one amalgamated parish.

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Risen Christ, Kalispell would, in time and when there is not a priest available to serve, look at the possibility of becoming part of the amalgamated parish from the Columbia Falls and Whitefish sites.

Our Lady of Mercy in Eureka would remain with one priest but would need to look for other options for service for Eureka in the long run. Perhaps service from Libby would be considered.

St. Joseph Parish in Libby and **Immaculate Conception Mission in Troy** would remain with the services of one priest.

Immaculate Conception in Polson would retain one priest who also serves **Sacred Heart Parish in Ronan**. The Mission church at **Charlo** becomes a **Church of Occasional Worship" or service there is discontinued.

St. William, Thompson Falls, St. James, Plains and **Sacred Heart Mission in Hot Springs** are all served by one priest from Thompson Falls. The mission at **Noxon** is discontinued.

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, pastors are encouraged 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 Kalispell Deanery.

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Kalispell Deanery "October Counts" 2010

Blessed Pope John Paul II – Big Fork	413
St. Richard – Columbia Falls	336
Our Lady of Mercy -- Eureka	134
St. Matthew – Kalispell	906
Risen Christ - Kalispell	351
St. Joseph – Libby	181
Immaculate Conception – Troy	48
Immaculate Conception – Polson	356
Sacred Heart – Ronan	132
St. Joseph – Charlo	31
St. Charles – Whitefish	312
St. James – Plains	64
Sacred Heart – Hot Springs	30
St. William – Thompson Falls	138
Noxon Mission - Noxon	20

Some Definitions

* **"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.