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New Orleans | Three Sections

Advancing the Church's mission for all



Archbishop
Alfred C.
HUGHES

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

The report that follows in this special 12-page wrap-around section of the Clarion Herald was released on Wednesday, April 9, 2008. This report concludes the pastoral planning effort and offers a blueprint for the way in which the Archdiocese of New Orleans will offer pastoral, educational and social services for the immediate future.

We are one Church in this archdiocese even though some sectors have been more severely impacted. Severe destruction of homes has made it very difficult for many to return. Meanwhile, expansion and growth mark other sections. Our figures show that approximately 80 percent of pre-Katrina active Catholics have returned, but not necessarily to their

original homes. Tens of thousands of Latinos have come to help with reconstruction. We project a net loss of about 18 active priests in the next five years due to retirement, death or other factors. We have estimated about \$120 million in uninsured loss to church-owned property. Obviously, we cannot responsibly try to live or offer pastoral ministry in precisely the same way as we did prior to the storm.

As we began planning last fall, I appointed a Criteria Committee to develop guidelines for assessing the vitality and viability of each parish and for taking into account the relocation of parishioners, a needed redistribution of fewer priests, the condition of school plants and the special pastoral needs of African-American, Latino-American and Asian-American faithful. These criteria and guidelines were reviewed and recommended by the Administrative Council and Presbyteral Council.

Each pastor was then asked to use the parish criteria to acquaint parishioners with the process and the challenges, as well as to do an internal review of his parish in consultation with the Parish

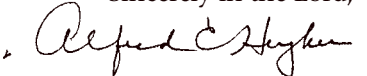
Pastoral Council. Then, each of the 12 Deaneries worked on the development of a deanery-wide plan. The Council of Deans used the Deanery plans as the basis for developing the first draft of an archdiocesan-wide plan. This draft plan was tested with the archdiocesan Administrative Council, Presbyteral Council and Finance Council, and the Major Religious Superiors whose communities serve in the archdiocese. Each consultation led to further refinements and improvements. The archdiocesan Catholic Schools office and Catholic Charities were asked to develop their own plan as well. The final plan was promulgated on April 9, 2008, with implementation dates of July 1, 2008, or January 1, 2009, depending on the tasks which need to be accomplished as outlined in the plan.

This plan will significantly reconfigure some sectors of the archdiocese. All sectors are being asked to share in the sacrifices that it will entail. We are now a missionary diocese. We will move forward together with fewer priests, fewer churches, fewer schools, but hopefully with a greater evangelizing spirit. It

is my hope that we can encourage more young men and women to be open to priesthood and religious life. It is my hope that a lively outreach, pastoral, educational and social, in the locations that will be open, will advance the mission of the Church for all. We want to find the best uses for the property not included in this new configuration so that we can serve the mission of the Church and the wider common good.

I invite you to join me in prayerful understanding and support of this pastoral plan. Inevitably, it will involve the loss of some sacred places with a rich religious history. Such loss, understandably, will cause great pain and may also lead to anger. The cross is never easy. But in this Easter season, we celebrate the triumph of Christ over suffering and death. I pray that we can move forward together sharing in his victory by his grace.

Sincerely in the Lord,


Most Reverend Alfred C. Hughes
Archbishop of New Orleans

AT A GLANCE

The Pastoral Plan for the Archdiocese of New Orleans will take effect July 1, followed by a facilitation period that could last until Dec. 31:

PARISHES REOPENING (3)

- Our Lady of Lourdes, Violet
- St. Bernard, St. Bernard
- St. Thomas, Pointe a la Hache

PARISHES CLOSING AND MERGING BY DEC. 31, 2008 (25)

- Blessed Sacrament, New Orleans (merging with St. Joan of Arc, New Orleans)
- Epiphany, New Orleans (merging with Corpus Christi, New Orleans)
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, New Orleans (merging with St. Maria Goretti, New Orleans)
- Incarnate Word, New Orleans (merging with Mater Dolorosa, New Orleans)
- Our Lady of Good Counsel, New Orleans (merging with St. Stephen, New Orleans)
- Our Lady of Good Harbor, Buras (merging with St. Patrick, Port Sulphur)
- Our Lady of Lourdes, New Orleans (merging with St. Matthias, New Orleans)

- Prince of Peace, Chalmette (merging with Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette)
- Sacred Heart of Jesus, New Orleans (merging with St. Anthony of Padua, New Orleans)
- San Pedro Pescador, Florissant (merging with St. Bernard, St. Bernard)
- St. Brigid, New Orleans (merging with Mary Queen of Vietnam, New Orleans)
- St. Frances Cabrini, New Orleans (merging with St. Raphael the Archangel, New Orleans)
- St. Francis de Sales, New Orleans (merging with Holy Ghost, New Orleans)
- St. Henry, New Orleans (merging with St. Stephen, New Orleans)
- St. Julian Eymard, New Orleans (merging with Holy Name of Mary, New Orleans)
- St. Lawrence the Martyr, Metairie (merging with Our Lady of Divine Providence, Metairie)
- St. Louise de Marillac, Arabi (merging with Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette)
- St. Mark, Chalmette (merging with Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette)
- St. Mary, New Orleans (merging with St. Louis Cathedral)
- St. Maurice, New Orleans (merging with St. David, New Orleans)
- St. Monica, New Orleans (merging with St. Matthias, New Orleans)
- St. Raphael the Archangel, New Orleans (merging with St. Frances Cabrini, New Orleans)
- St. Raymond, New Orleans (merging with St. Leo the Great, New Orleans)
- St. Robert Bellarmine, Arabi (merging with Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette)
- St. Simon Peter, New Orleans (merging with St. Maria Goretti, New Orleans)

PARISHES CLOSING AND MERGING BY JUNE 30, 2009 (2)

- Nativity of Our Lord, Kenner, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Kenner

PARISHES CLOSING AND BECOMING MISSIONS BY DEC. 31, 2008 (4)

- Holy Guardian Angels, Bridge City, will become a mission of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Westwego
- Infant Jesus of Prague, Harvey, will become a mission of St. Martha, Harvey
- St. Anthony, Gretna, will become a mission of Holy Name of Mary, Algiers
- St. Pius X, Crown Point, will become a mission of St. Anthony, Lafitte

PARISHES CLOSING AND BECOMING CAMPUS MINISTRY CENTERS (2)

- St. Thomas the Apostle (UNO Newman Center)
- St. Thomas More (Tulane Catholic Center)

PARISHES SHARING A PASTOR (8)

- Our Lady of Lourdes, Violet, and St. Bernard, St. Bernard
- St. Anthony, Luling, and St. Mark, Amarr
- St. Bonaventure, Avondale, and Our Lady of the Angels, Waggaman
- St. Gertrude, Des Allemands, and St. John the Baptist, Paradis

TOTAL SUNDAY WORSHIP SITES

- Currently: 122 (117 parishes and 5 missions)
- After plan: 119 (108 parishes, 9 missions and 2 university campus ministry sites)

Inside

12-PAGE WRAP-AROUND SECTION

- Main Story 2
- Common questions 2
- Parish plan 3-9
- School plan 10
- Social service plan 11-12