

Community Discernment and Planning Feedback Summary for the Pulaski Corridor Grouping

Submitted to the

Renew My Church Standards and Recommendations Commission

May 7, 2018

Dear Commission Members,

The pastoral leaders in the Pulaski Corridor Grouping are grateful for the opportunity to submit this feedback to you toward the renewal of Jesus' mission in our local church. This summary represents the fruit from our conversations and discernment over the past three months as individual parishes and collectively as a grouping. We are grateful for your prayerful consideration of this feedback as you discern a recommendation for the Episcopal Vicar and Cardinal Cupich. We look forward to receiving the decision of the Cardinal and the Archdiocese.

We come to you as the Pulaski Corridor Grouping, the parishes of Our Lady of Loretto, St. Germaine, St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Terrence. We appreciate the unique identities of the four parishes within the Pulaski Corridor Grouping. St. Terrence Parish, on the south end of the Grouping, has been energized with a growing Hispanic population and an increasing religious education enrollment. Just to St. Terrence's north is St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish which has renewed its congregation and has a strong school enrollment. Continuing north is St. Germaine Parish which has experienced some decline in both Mass attendance and school enrollment but continues to have a committed core group of parishioners and offers a strong academic program. Our Lady of Loretto, the furthest north in the Grouping, has struggled with Mass attendance and has had to close their school but has a very faithful community. The Pulaski Corridor Grouping is committed to maintaining a worship site for the parishioners of Our Lady of Loretto. We appreciate the need for Catholic schools in the Pulaski Corridor Grouping. We believe that both St. Catherine of Alexandria School and St. Germaine School should remain open and at their current locations, continuing a strong Catholic academic program for the Grouping.

OVERALL FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Our strong preference as a grouping would be to maintain a robust Catholic presence in the Pulaski Corridor Region to support the Renew My Church mission imperatives of making disciples, building communities and inspiring witness. At this point in time, given the

demographic projections, Mass attendance, priest availability, geography and current strengths in each parish's lived ministries, we see key possibilities for parish mergers without closure of Church buildings. We recognize that this may involve multi-site cooperation among our priests, staff, councils and parishioners. Our hope is that appropriate staffing in the new structure would support our ministries in the Pulaski Corridor Grouping.

The Renew My Church process is challenging in many ways. We have all struggled with changing our mindsets from one of defending our individual parishes to accepting suggestions for the best of the four parish grouping in its entirety. The road has been long and difficult but the Pulaski Corridor Grouping is proud to present this document for your consideration. The discernment team has determined that, for the reasons outlined in the rest of this report, the Pulaski Corridor would be best served in terms of vitality, sustainability and manageability by Alternate Scenario 1 or Scenario A. One of the primary concerns of the discernment team, as we represent the entire Grouping, is the importance of maintaining a regular worship site for the community of Our Lady of Loretto. We believe that the merging of the Our Lady of Loretto community with the St. Germaine faithful is a natural consolidation. The two communities have already been working together to strengthen the needs of both parishes. This merging is generally accepted by the entire Grouping.

While the Grouping understands the concerns of the Archdiocese regarding long term viability and sustainability and the shortage of pastors, the Grouping struggled with whether or not the merging of the parishes of St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Terrence would be an appropriate decision. Indeed, the only difference between Alternate Scenario 1 and Scenario A is whether or not the two parishes merge. There is strong sentiment for both scenarios. St. Catherine of Alexandria fulfills the requirements under the foundational principles. St. Terrence falls short of the operating revenue benchmark, however, the church has maintained an operating surplus and has cash balances.

The discernment team would also like to emphasize that while we understand the concerns of the Archdiocese and the need for the Catholic Church in Chicago to reflect on its current structures for long-term viability and sustainability, the drastic changes offered in Scenario D would be met with significant disapproval from the parishioners of all four parishes. Based on feedback from the Our Lady of Loretto community, if the parish was closed, the discernment team believes that the parishioners would either go to a parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping or would not go to church at all. Additionally, there has been sentiment from parishioners that, should Scenario D be implemented, people from across all four parishes would seek a new parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping.

OUR STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following are our discerned Grouping's strengths and opportunities that we can respond to, and build upon, to address the three Renew My Church mission imperatives to Make Disciples, Build Communities, and Inspire Witness:

<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>
Sense of Community.	Strengthen Mass attendance.
Committed core group of volunteers.	Improve upon existing youth ministry.
Hospitable, welcoming and friendly.	Improve evangelization within our communities.
Generosity of time, talent and treasure.	Acknowledge and respond to a growing Hispanic community.

Scenario A: 4 church buildings remain open for regular Sunday Mass under 2 canonical parishes.

- St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto would unite as one canonical parish. Both churches would continue as fully active worship sites of the parish. The parish would need to evaluate its ability to continue operating St. Germaine School.
- St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Terrence would unite as one canonical parish. Both churches would continue as fully active worship sites. St. Catherine of Alexandria School would be the parish school.

<p>RENEW MY CHURCH ASPIRATION</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario challenge the grouping to move beyond maintaining current structures to invest a higher percentage of time and resources in ministry?</i></p> <p><i>How will this scenario support vitality and stability for the long-term (10+ years), considering demographic and parishioner trends?</i></p>	<p>Though not unanimous, we believe that this scenario is one of the more viable and presents exciting opportunities for evangelization, growing the Church and moving beyond a “silo” mindset among parishes.</p> <p>This scenario reduces the number of parishes in half while taking advantage of the shared resources already established between St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto and St. Catherine and St. Terrence. While it improves the vitality and stability of the newly-formed parishes, it is noted that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long-term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p>
<p>MEETS LOCAL MISSION NEEDS</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario address particular local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects particular local vitality and culture</i> • <i>Prevents geographical Catholic deserts</i> • <i>Accounts for demographic trends such as shifts in population</i> 	<p>St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto already have a history of working together. This scenario allows the whole Grouping to build upon their collaborative experience to date.</p> <p>Having four active worship sites addresses the need to have an active Catholic presence in the three villages represented in the Pulaski Corridor. Maintaining an active worship site at Our Lady of Loretto is essential to establishing a permanent connection to the newly formed parish of St. Germaine/Our Lady of Loretto. This is especially important so that there is not a Catholic desert created in the Hometown community.</p>
<p>PARISH STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario fit with the Foundational Principles for Structural Viability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 800 parishioners attending Mass for a full-time resident pastor, based on the number of pastors in the future • 1,200+ parishioners attending weekend Mass to support long-term vitality • Operating revenue: \$500,000+ to support basic staffing; \$750,000+ strongly preferred 	<p>The operating revenue of both resulting parishes would be strong and not present concerns related to the foundational principles. However, declining Mass attendance trends pose concern about the long-term viability of the united St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto parish. As noted above, we believe that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long-term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can afford facility repairs and maintenance 	Facility repairs are estimated to be affordable for both parishes. Both parishes would need to evaluate the long term building usage plans and facility repair plans.
MANAGEABILITY	<p><i>Will this scenario be manageable for pastors, clergy, and parish staff?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Geography: potential travel across sites</i> • <i>Administration: Number of buildings</i> • <i>Pastoral care: Sacramental coverage</i> 	Leading a two-campus parish is something that has been manageable in cases across the diocese and the United States. Of course it requires more work and coordination than a single-site parish, but it is manageable.
SCHOOL VITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY	<p><i>How does this scenario support school vitality and sustainability?</i> (i.e., potential to reach minimum of 240 students in PK-8 based on local area demographics and parish student population)</p>	<p>St. Catherine of Alexandria School with an enrollment of 463 is currently sustainable.</p> <p>While St. Germaine School enrollment is slightly below the benchmark, we see potential for growth because of the young families moving into the neighborhood as the housing market improves. Paired with a strong academic reputation, we see the potential for an increase in enrollment at St. Germaine School. There would be potential growth for the strong school of religion at St. Terrence by merging with the students of the school of religion at St. Catherine.</p>
<p><u>Scenario B: 3 church buildings remain open for regular Sunday Mass; 1 church building remains open for worship but would no longer have regular Sunday Mass; under 2 canonical parishes.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto would unite as one canonical parish. St. Germaine would continue as a fully active worship site. Our Lady of Loretto Church would not have regular Sunday Masses scheduled but would remain open and available for occasional Masses, funerals and other events. • The parish would need to evaluate its ability to continue operating St. Germaine School. St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Terrence would unite as one canonical parish. Both churches would continue as fully active worship sites. St. Catherine of Alexandria School would be the parish school. 		
RENEW MY CHURCH ASPIRATION	<p><i>How well does this scenario challenge the grouping to move beyond maintaining current structures to invest a higher percentage of time and resources in ministry?</i></p> <p><i>How will this scenario support vitality and stability for the long-term (10+ years), considering demographic and parishioner trends?</i></p>	<p>While similar to scenario A, we believe that this scenario is not as strong as scenario A since it does not address the Mass needs of the aging parishioners of Our Lady of Loretto.</p> <p>This scenario poses the minimal structural changes but would be devastating to the Our Lady of Loretto community. While it improves the vitality and stability of the newly formed parishes, it is noted that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p>
MEETS LOCAL MISSION NEEDS	<p><i>How well does this scenario address particular local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects particular local vitality and culture</i> • <i>Prevents geographical Catholic deserts</i> 	St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto already have a history of working together. This scenario allows the whole Grouping to build upon their collaborative experience to date.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Accounts for demographic trends such as shifts in population</i> 	<p>With only three active worship sites, the need to have an active Catholic presence in the three villages represented in the Pulaski Corridor is diminished.</p> <p>This scenario creates a Catholic desert in the Hometown community. Based on feedback from the Our Lady of Loretto community, the discernment team believes that the parishioners would either go to a parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping or would not go to church at all.</p>
<p>PARISH STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario fit with the Foundational Principles for Structural Viability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 800 parishioners attending Mass for a full-time resident pastor, based on the number of pastors in the future • 1,200+ parishioners attending weekend Mass to support long-term vitality • Operating revenue: \$500,000+ to support basic staffing; \$750,000+ strongly preferred • Can afford facility repairs and maintenance 	<p>The assumed operating revenue of both resulting parishes would be strong and not present concerns related to the foundational principles. However, given the feedback from the Our Lady of Loretto community regarding where they would attend Mass, the assumption of combined Mass attendance and combined operating revenues may not materialize.</p> <p>Declining Mass attendance trends pose concern about the long-term viability of the united St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto parish. As noted above, we believe that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p> <p>Facility repairs are estimated to be affordable for both parishes. However, addressing the needs of a church that is only utilized on minimal occasions presents a special challenge both from a maintenance perspective as well as from a security concern. Both parishes would need to evaluate the long term building usage plans and facility repair plans.</p>
<p>MANAGEABILITY</p>	<p><i>Will this scenario be manageable for pastors, clergy, and parish staff?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Geography: potential travel across sites</i> • <i>Administration: Number of buildings</i> • <i>Pastoral care: Sacramental coverage</i> 	<p>Leading a two-campus parish is something that has been manageable in cases across the diocese and the United States. Of course it requires more work and coordination than a single-site parish, but it is manageable.</p>
<p>SCHOOL VITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p><i>How does this scenario support school vitality and sustainability?</i> (i.e., potential to reach minimum of 240 students in PK-8 based on local area demographics and parish student population)</p>	<p>St. Catherine of Alexandria School with an enrollment of 463 is currently sustainable.</p> <p>While St. Germaine School enrollment is slightly below the benchmark, we see potential for growth because of the young families moving into the neighborhood as the housing market improves. Paired with a strong academic reputation, we see the potential for an increase in enrollment at St. Germaine School. There would be potential growth for the strong school of religion at St. Terrence by merging with the students of the school of religion at St. Catherine.</p>

Scenario C: 3 church buildings remain open for regular Sunday Mass; 1 church building remains open for worship but would no longer have regular Sunday Mass; under 2 canonical parishes.

- St. Germaine, Our Lady of Loretto, and St. Catherine of Alexandria would unite as one canonical parish with two fully active church worship sites at St. Germaine and St. Catherine of Alexandria. Our Lady of Loretto Church would not have regular Sunday Masses scheduled but would remain open and available for occasional Masses, funerals, and other events.
- St. Terrence would continue as a single-site parish with a full-time pastor.
- The parishes would need to evaluate the sustainability of continuing two PreK through 8th grade schools. While there would not be a school on St. Terrence’s campus, St. Terrence would offer both pastoral and financial support to the Grouping’s school programs.

<p>RENEW MY CHURCH ASPIRATION</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario challenge the grouping to move beyond maintaining current structures to invest a higher percentage of time and resources in ministry?</i></p> <p><i>How will this scenario support vitality and stability for the long-term (10+ years), considering demographic and parishioner trends?</i></p>	<p>While this scenario addresses some of the concerns in Scenarios A and B, overall, we feel this scenario does not meet the needs of the Pulaski Corridor. This scenario does not address the Mass needs of the aging parishioners of Our Lady of Loretto. Sustaining one parish from these three parishes would diminish the strong individual identities of these communities and is not well received from the parishioners in general.</p> <p>This scenario reduces the number of parishes in half, however, the exclusion of St. Terrence from a merging with any other parish in the Grouping lends to the impression that the community of Alsip is not part of the group. Additionally, while the combined parish of St. Germaine/St. Catherine/Our Lady of Loretto would support long-term vitality and stability, there is a concern for the long-term sustainability of St. Terrence given their lower operating revenues.</p>
<p>MEETS LOCAL MISSION NEEDS</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario address particular local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects particular local vitality and culture</i> • <i>Prevents geographical Catholic deserts</i> • <i>Accounts for demographic trends such as shifts in population</i> 	<p>With only three active worship sites, the need to have an active Catholic presence in the three villages represented in the Pulaski Corridor is diminished. This scenario creates a Catholic desert in the Hometown community.</p>
<p>PARISH STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario fit with the Foundational Principles for Structural Viability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 800 parishioners attending Mass for a full-time resident pastor, based on the number of pastors in the future • 1,200+ parishioners attending weekend Mass to support long-term vitality • Operating revenue: \$500,000+ to support basic staffing; \$750,000+ strongly preferred • Can afford facility repairs and maintenance 	<p>The operating revenue of the St. Catherine/St. Germaine/Our Lady of Loretto parish would be strong and not present concerns related to the foundational principles. However, the operating revenue of St. Terrence Parish does not meet the \$500,000 threshold in the foundational principles. As noted above, we believe that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p> <p>Facility repairs are estimated to be affordable for both parishes. However, addressing the needs of a church that is only utilized on minimal occasions presents a special challenge both from a maintenance perspective as well as from a security concern. Both parishes would need to evaluate the long term building usage plans and facility repair plans.</p>

MANAGEABILITY	<p><i>Will this scenario be manageable for pastors, clergy, and parish staff?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Geography: potential travel across sites</i> • <i>Administration: Number of buildings</i> • <i>Pastoral care: Sacramental coverage</i> 	<p>This scenario with two fully active campuses and a third campus would pose a more difficult administrative challenge for a pastor and leadership team at the first parish.</p>
SCHOOL VITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY	<p><i>How does this scenario support school vitality and sustainability?</i> (i.e., potential to reach minimum of 240 students in PK-8 based on local area demographics and parish student population)</p>	<p>St. Catherine of Alexandria School with an enrollment of 463 is currently sustainable.</p> <p>While St. Germaine School enrollment is slightly below the benchmark, we see potential for growth because of the young families moving into the neighborhood as the housing market improves. Paired with a strong academic reputation, we see the potential for an increase in enrollment at St. Germaine School.</p> <p>The discernment team is concerned that requiring a newly formed parish to make determinations about the two independent schools is concerning when the implementation team will be working towards bringing parishioners together to create one cohesive parish. The independent identities of both schools are extremely important to both the St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Germaine communities and requiring the decisions surrounding the two schools could tear the parish apart. Additionally, there is concern that if the schools were to merge, there would be a loss of Catholic school students in total which would also be detrimental to the parish and, ultimately, to the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole. This could create a hostile, divisive merger situation. No matter what model is decided for the schools by the newly formed parish, consensus would be difficult to achieve.</p> <p>The school of religion at St. Terrence is very strong with an enrollment of 548.</p>
<p><u>Scenario D: 3 church buildings remain open for regular Sunday Mass; 1 church building fully closes; under 1 united canonical parish.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All four parishes would form one canonical parish. • St. Germaine, St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Terrence would continue as fully active worship sites. • Our Lady of Loretto Church and campus would be fully closed. <p>The parish would need to evaluate the sustainability of continuing two PreK through 8th grade schools.</p>		
RENEW MY CHURCH ASPIRATION	<p><i>How well does this scenario challenge the grouping to move beyond maintaining current structures to invest a higher percentage of time and resources in ministry?</i></p>	<p>Overall, we feel this scenario is the least viable.</p>

	<p><i>How will this scenario support vitality and stability for the long-term (10+ years), considering demographic and parishioner trends?</i></p>	<p>This scenario would require a total restructure of the existing parishes from four to one with one full-time resident pastor. This is in direct contradiction of one of the foundational principles for parish viability, “balance workloads for priests”.</p> <p>While this scenario would fulfill the Renew My Church aspirations from a structural perspective, sustaining one parish from these four parishes would diminish the strong individual identities of these communities and is not well received from the parishioners in general.</p>
<p>MEETS LOCAL MISSION NEEDS</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario address particular local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects particular local vitality and culture</i> • <i>Prevents geographical Catholic deserts</i> • <i>Accounts for demographic trends such as shifts in population</i> 	<p>This scenario completely dismantles the identities that so many parishioners in the Pulaski Corridor grew up with and that keep Catholics returning to the same parish generation after generation. While change is necessary, this level of change would result in widespread anxiety within all four parishes.</p> <p>Additionally, the combination of the four parishes encompasses a large geographical area which would be difficult for one pastor to appropriately serve.</p>
<p>PARISH STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario fit with the Foundational Principles for Structural Viability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 800 parishioners attending Mass for a full-time resident pastor, based on the number of pastors in the future • 1,200+ parishioners attending weekend Mass to support long-term vitality • Operating revenue: \$500,000+ to support basic staffing; \$750,000+ strongly preferred • Can afford facility repairs and maintenance 	<p>While the foundational principles would be met with this scenario, the overall impact on the Pulaski Corridor Grouping would be emotionally devastating. Based on feedback from the Our Lady of Loretto community, the discernment team believes that the parishioners would either go to a parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping or would not go to church at all. Additionally, there has been sentiment from parishioners that people from across all four parishes would seek a new parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping.</p> <p>The closing of a parish is different than the merging of the parishes. The Our Lady of Loretto community would lose their identity, their voice and any ownership in the implementation of the new parish. The parishioners of Our Lady of Loretto have many attributes that make them a vital part of the Grouping and losing their voice would be to the detriment of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping.</p>
<p>MANAGEABILITY</p>	<p><i>Will this scenario be manageable for pastors, clergy, and parish staff?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Geography: potential travel across sites</i> • <i>Administration: Number of buildings</i> • <i>Pastoral care: Sacramental coverage</i> 	<p>This scenario with three fully active campuses would pose a more difficult administrative challenge for a pastor and leadership team. This scenario creates a Catholic desert in the Hometown community.</p>
<p>SCHOOL VITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p><i>How does this scenario support school vitality and sustainability?</i> (i.e., potential to reach minimum of 240 students in PK-8 based on local area demographics and parish student population)</p>	<p>St. Catherine of Alexandria School with an enrollment of 463 is currently sustainable.</p> <p>While St. Germaine School enrollment is slightly below the benchmark, we see potential for growth because of the young families moving into the neighborhood</p>

		<p>as the housing market improves. Paired with a strong academic reputation, we see the potential for an increase in enrollment at St. Germaine School.</p> <p>The discernment team is concerned that requiring a newly formed parish to make determinations about the two independent schools is concerning when the implementation team will be working towards bringing parishioners together to create one cohesive parish. The independent identities of both schools are extremely important to both the St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Germaine communities and requiring the decisions surrounding the two schools could tear the parish apart. Additionally, there is concern that if the schools were to merge, there would be a loss of Catholic school students in total which would also be detrimental to the parish and, ultimately, to the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole. This could create a hostile, divisive merger situation. No matter what model is decided for the schools by the newly formed parish, consensus would be difficult to achieve.</p> <p>There school of religion at St. Terrence is very strong with an enrollment of 548.</p>
<p>Alternative Scenario 1: 3 Parishes, 4 worship sites, 2 schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto would unite as one canonical parish, with a full-time pastor. Both churches would continue as fully active worship sites of the parish. (Scenario A-B-C) • St. Catherine of Alexandria would continue as a single site parish, with a full-time pastor, but further their collaboration with St. Germaine for both parish and school (St. Vincent de Paul, bible study groups, teacher professional development, and curriculum meetings and resources, etc.). St. Catherine of Alexandria would further collaborate with St. Germaine, Our Lady of Loretto and St. Terrence for youth ministry and young adult ministry, a need which has been identified by all four parishes. (New) • St. Terrence would continue as a single site parish with a full-time pastor (Scenario C). 		
<p>RENEW MY CHURCH ASPIRATION</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario challenge the grouping to move beyond maintaining current structures to invest a higher percentage of time and resources in ministry?</i></p> <p><i>How will this scenario support vitality and stability for the long-term (10+ years), considering demographic and parishioner trends?</i></p>	<p>With close to unanimous opinions, we believe that this scenario is the most viable.</p> <p>This scenario poses the least structural change of all the scenarios. While it improves the vitality and stability of the newly formed parishes, it is noted that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p>
<p>MEETS LOCAL MISSION NEEDS</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario address particular local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Respects particular local vitality and culture</i> • <i>Prevents geographical Catholic deserts</i> • <i>Accounts for demographic trends such as shifts in population</i> 	<p>St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto already have a history of working together. This scenario allows the whole Grouping to build upon their collaborative experience to date.</p> <p>Maintaining an active worship site at Our Lady of Loretto is essential to establishing a permanent connection to the newly formed parish of St.</p>

		<p>Germaine/Our Lady of Loretto. Having four active worship sites addresses the need to have an active Catholic presence in the three villages represented in the Pulaski Corridor.</p>
<p>PARISH STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES</p>	<p><i>How well does this scenario fit with the Foundational Principles for Structural Viability?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 800 parishioners attending Mass for a full-time resident pastor, based on the number of pastors in the future • 1,200+ parishioners attending weekend Mass to support long-term vitality • Operating revenue: \$500,000+ to support basic staffing; \$750,000+ strongly preferred • Can afford facility repairs and maintenance 	<p>The operating revenue of two of the three resulting parishes would be strong and not present concerns related to the foundational principles. While St. Terrence does not meet the foundational principle for operating revenue, the parish is still operating within its means and has an operating surplus. However, declining Mass attendance trends pose concern about the long-term viability of the united St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto parish. As noted above, we believe that a strong evangelical program is necessary for the long term vitality of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping as a whole.</p> <p>Facility repairs are estimated to be affordable for all three parishes. The parishes would need to evaluate the long term building usage plans and facility repair plans.</p>
<p>MANAGEABILITY</p>	<p><i>Will this scenario be manageable for pastors, clergy, and parish staff?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography: potential travel across sites • Administration: Number of buildings • Pastoral care: Sacramental coverage 	<p>Leading a two-campus parish is something that has been manageable in cases across the diocese and the United States. Of course it requires more work and coordination than a single-site parish, but it is manageable. This scenario would only require this of one pastor.</p>
<p>SCHOOL VITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p><i>How does this scenario support school vitality and sustainability? (i.e., potential to reach minimum of 240 students in PK-8 based on local area demographics and parish student population)</i></p>	<p>St. Catherine of Alexandria School with an enrollment of 463 is currently sustainable.</p> <p>While St. Germaine School enrollment is slightly below the benchmark, we see potential for growth because of the young families moving into the neighborhood as the housing market improves. Paired with a strong academic reputation, we see the potential for an increase in enrollment at St. Germaine School.</p> <p>The school of religion at St. Terrence is very strong with an enrollment of 548.</p>

Additional Feedback and Implementation Concerns for Consideration:

The people on the south side Chicago metropolitan area relate more to their parishes than they do to their villages. When you ask a Catholic on the south side where they live, the answer is never “Oak Lawn”, “Hometown” or “Alsip”. The answer is “St. Catherine”, “St. Germaine”, “Our Lady of Loretto” or “St. Terrence”. You will find the same answer throughout Vicariate V. The biggest challenge will be asking parishioners to abandon an identity they have held for generations. Members in the Pulaski Corridor identify with their parish as a part of their family. With all of the changes proposed, the discernment team has heard many parishioners concerned that the Archdiocese is taking away their identity. The discernment team’s main concern stemming from this sentiment is that without the identity of their existing parishes, people will feel as if they do not have a home and will not worship at the new parish. Rather than increase our flock, we will see a decrease. Additionally, we are concerned that our parishioners will not be as generous with their donations. The parishioner’s generosity is a product of their relationship with the family atmosphere of their parish. When that identification changes, people may not be as generous with their donations and, in turn, the vitality of the parishes will be affected. Change is inevitable. People will have to adapt to the change. But, if, as a part of the implementation process, the parishioners can still feel a sense of identity with their current parishes, implementation will be smoother.

As a group, we have heard the plight of the aging community at Our Lady of Loretto. The Pulaski Corridor Grouping is committed to supporting at least one weekly Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Loretto. Using Our Lady of Loretto Church for only occasional events, funerals or weddings would be a detriment to the Hometown community and would not serve the Pulaski Corridor from a parishioner perspective. Based on feedback from the Our Lady of Loretto community, the discernment team believes that the parishioners would either go to a parish outside of the Pulaski Corridor Grouping or would not go to church at all. It is imperative that Our Lady of Loretto continues to provide their community with at least one weekly Sunday Mass.

The parish of St. Germaine has struggled over the last six years. Declining Mass attendance followed by declining enrollment in the school plagues the community. The parishioners are upset that this trend has not been brought to the parishioner’s attention either at the local level or by the Archdiocese. However, the parish meetings through the Renew My Church process have sparked a renewed sense of urgency and passion to rebuild St. Germaine parish and school. Already, steps have been taken to rejuvenate St. Germaine. The school community continues to point to our student’s academic successes both in high school and beyond as a testament to the impressive things happening in St. Germaine School. A marketing campaign to spread the word of the school’s successes has begun. The community is beginning to accept a union with Our Lady of Loretto and is willing to work to become a larger, stronger community. Many parishioners of Our Lady of Loretto became a part of St. Germaine when Our Lady of Loretto’s school closed. They maintain “dual enrollment” in both parishes and have volunteered to be a part of the implementation process. As previously stated, it is imperative that the parishes find a way to keep an identity to St. Germaine and Our Lady of Loretto during any uniting of the two parishes.

Over the past four years, the parishioners of St. Catherine have had a strong sense of commitment working on structural and spiritual renewal. \$500,000.00 has been invested in plant maintenance and improvements. A major renovation of the church is scheduled for June 2019. The school enrollment has grown strong at 463 students. This has created a new sense of ownership and involvement. The demographics show a multi-generational community with many children of past graduates attending the school at present. Various organizations have been revitalized with the Pastoral Council focusing on evangelization this past year. Continuing this parish renewal would seem to be paramount for the future of St. Catherine. Changing the structure of the parish at this time may have an adverse effect.

St. Terrence Parish has both healthy Mass attendance as well as a robust religious education program. While the parish does not reach the foundational principles for operating revenue, it is important to note that the parish is operating in a surplus position and is not in financial duress. The Alsip community has only one parish, St. Terrence, and with a rising Hispanic population, the growing need for a bilingual mass and ministry makes St. Terrence unique in the Pulaski Corridor Grouping. St. Terrence, along with the other parishes in the Grouping, is ready and willing to work together to improve our youth ministries and our social justice programs.

Conclusion

We respectfully submit this summary for your evaluation. The pastors, pastoral leaders, parish delegates and the hundreds of parishioners that participated in some way in this process look forward to your feedback and response. We are committed to furthering our collaborative efforts in the areas of ministry and social justice. We know that we all are called to mission to continue inspiring disciples to accompany all people to a deeper, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We thank you for your consideration of our combined input outlined in this summary. We pray the Holy Spirit will guide you as you review and assess our feedback.

Submitted respectfully with the endorsement of the pastors and parish-school leaders,

St. Germaine Parish

Fr. Michael Furlan, Pastor

Kevin Reedy, Principal

Jim Antos

Peg Donnelly

Tom Hamilton

Frances LaBella

Dan McGrath

St. Terrence Parish

Fr. Ed Barrett, Pastor

Ana Soria Campos

Judi Haines

Jen Jensen

Alberto Rocha

St. Catherine of Alexandria

Fr. Dennis Ziomek, Pastor

Fr. Nick Cavallari, Asso. Pastor

Michelle Edwards, Principal

Mike Bentley

Kristen Heidorn

Chris Ivers

Meaghan Leonard

Kathy Terborg

Our Lady Of Loretto Parish

Fr. Thomas Cabala, Pastor

Guy DiBenedetto

Becky Kapjon

Angela Mottl

Marianne Powers

APPENDIX

DOTS ASSESSMENT: After discussing Archdiocesan Scenarios A-D and Alternative Scenario 1 the Grouping Feedback & Discernment Team generated, individual team members assessed how each scenario addresses the Renew My Church Aspirations criteria: Green Dot = Meets Criteria, Yellow Dot = Somewhat Meets Criteria, Red Dot = Does Not Meet Criteria. Note: There were 25 team members present. The numbers support that some did not place dots on all possible scenarios.

Scenario	Green Meets Criteria	Yellow Somewhat Meets Criteria	Red Does Not Meet Criteria	Total
A	16	1	6	23
B	0	13	11	24
C	3	12	10	25
D	0	0	21	21
Alternative 1	19	2	0	21