

## **The Monroe-Clinton Parishes**

**Saint Boniface**  
**330 Gregory St.**  
**Rochester, NY 14620**

**Blessed Sacrament**  
**259 Rutgers St.**  
**Rochester, NY 14607**

**Saint Mary's**  
**15 St. Mary's Place**  
**Rochester, NY 14607**

*Below are responses to questions parishioners have asked at town meetings and in direct communication with members of the Monroe-Clinton Strategic Leadership Committee:*

### **What is the relationship among the three churches?**

Blessed Sacrament, St. Boniface, and St. Mary's have been working together, as part of the Monroe-Clinton planning group, since 1998. For the past several years we have shared staff members in the areas of faith formation and youth ministry. As of June 2011, Blessed Sacrament and St. Boniface will be clustering and will be in partnership with St. Mary's.

### **Why is St. Mary's not part of the cluster?**

At the time the pastoral plan was being developed, there was considerable discussion within the Monroe-Clinton Strategic Leadership Committee and among the three parish pastoral councils regarding the advantages/disadvantages of clustering all three churches or just two. At town meetings at each parish during October 2005, parishioners at all three parishes indicated that they could support the clustering of Blessed Sacrament and St. Boniface with St. Mary's remaining a single parish and all three parishes sharing two priests for sacramental ministry. When asked if they could support the alternative clustering of all three parishes, St. Mary's parishioners said that they could not, at least not at that time. The majority of parishioners at St. Boniface also said they could not. Blessed Sacrament parishioners said that they could. When asked which parish configuration they preferred, parishioners at all three parishes said that they preferred that Blessed Sacrament and St. Boniface cluster, with St. Mary sharing the ministry of the two appointed priests. This preference was incorporated into the 2005 pastoral plan and approved by Bishop Clark. More recently, the Blessed Sacrament pastoral council indicated that it would prefer all three parishes be clustered, but neither the leadership of St. Boniface nor St. Mary's expressed the desire to re-visit this part of our pastoral plan.

### **What does it mean to be clustered?**

A cluster consists of two or more parishes served by a single pastor or pastoral administrator. Over time the parishes move toward greater unity, most often sharing staff members, ministries, and committees. Most clustered parishes in our diocese merge into a single parish with multiple worship sites over the course of 3-5 years.

### **When parishes are clustered, do the parishes remain as separate entities?**

Yes, under church and civil law, each parish in a cluster retains its own separate legal identity and name.

### **Do the individual parishes share in one another's collections and other income? Do they share each other's debts?**

The income of each parish remains separate, and the parishes are not legally responsible for each other's debt.

### **How will finances be handled among the three parishes?**

March 19-20, 2011

The Monroe-Clinton Finance Group—consisting of the three parish business managers and a representative from each Finance Council—works with the pastoral leaders to pro-rate the expenses of our shared staff positions. We now know that a Pastor has been appointed by Bishop Clark to lead Blessed Sacrament and St. Boniface. Once we know whether the second priest serving all three churches will be full time or part time, the Finance Group can work out how expenses for the priests will be allocated. One parish will be designated to handle the shared finances and will bill the other two for their portion on a regular basis. All non-shared expenses will be handled by the individual parishes.

**If I attend Mass at one of the other churches, will my envelope go back to my own parish?**

All envelopes placed in the collection at any of our three parishes are returned to the parish of origin. However, cash from the collection plate will go to the hosting parish.

**Are there any priests of religious orders who could help us keep our current Mass schedule?**

**Will Fr. Jim Coughlin continue to say Mass at St. Mary's?**

Local priests from religious communities are already serving within the Rochester area. We could not count on their presence every week because of school- or congregation-related duties. St. Mary's has been fortunate that Fr. Jim Coughlin, SJ, has been able to preside at Masses fairly frequently. We hope that he will be available to help our priests on an occasional basis, particularly when they are away on retreats or vacations.

**When will we learn who the two priests will be?**

We now know that Fr. Bob Kennedy has been appointed as Pastor of St. Boniface and Blessed Sacrament and that he will also provide sacramental ministry to St. Mary's. We expect to know the name of our second priest by the end of May.

**If I have a question, how can I get an answer to it?**

If you have any other questions that you would like us to answer, please use the space below.

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Fold and tear off; drop in collection basket. Your question will be addressed in a future bulletin insert. Please include your name and phone or e-mail if you want to be contacted by a member of the Monroe-Clinton Strategic Leadership Committee.

**Name (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone or e-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My question is:**

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