

2026 Strategic Realignment

Listening Session II

Diocese of Springfield

Catholic Leadership INSTITUTE

Diocesan Strategic Realignment Initiative Prayer

Heavenly Father, You have called your Church to proclaim the Gospel in every age and to be a living sign of your love in the world.

As we begin this journey of strategic realignment, fill us with the wisdom of your Holy Spirit. Help us to honor the rich history we cherish while remaining open to the new paths you are calling us to embrace.

Grant our Bishop, pastors, deacons, parish leaders, and all the faithful hearts that are open to your guidance. Give us the humility to listen to one another with charity, the patience to discern carefully, and the courage to make decisions that will strengthen the mission of your Church for generations to come.

May this process never be driven simply by buildings, budgets, or boundaries, but by a renewed commitment to healthier parishes commissioned to making disciples, celebrating the sacraments, serving those in need, and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Help us to remember that the Church is not merely the places where we worship, but the people you have called together as the Body of Christ. Unite us in faith, preserve us in charity, and inspire us to become vibrant missionary disciples.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, and under the patronage of Saint Michael the Archangel, protector of our Diocese, may all that we do give glory to you and lead others to your Son.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Agenda

Opening Prayer

Realignment Review & Update

Modeling Objectives & Process

Review Draft Models

Realignment Review

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Our Goal for Realignment



The diocese desires an educational, prayerful, and customized approach that best addresses the unique challenges facing each region within scope.

Vibrant Parishes

Fostering a vibrant parish experience

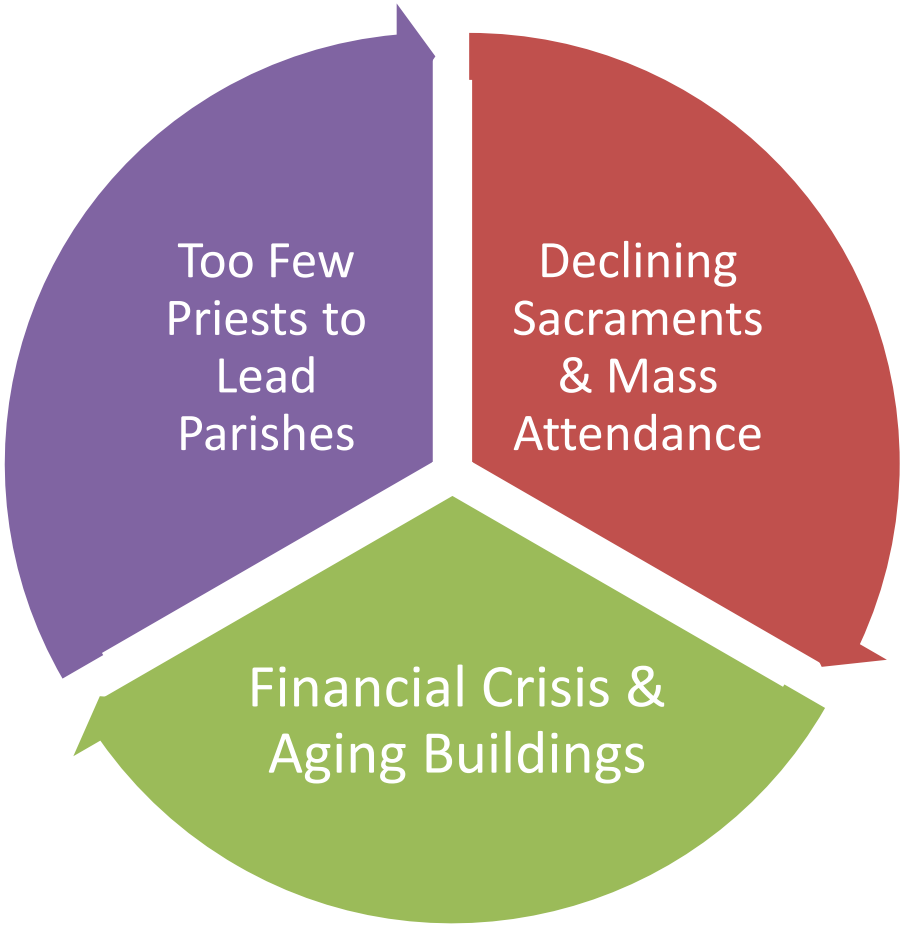
Mission over Maintenance

Working together to evangelize, catechize and engage others to grow in their relationship with Christ and strengthen our Church.

Sustainable Future

Strategic Realignment

Diocesan Realignment Challenges



1 STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT TIMELINE (HIGH-LEVEL)

July – November 2026

JULY

July 27

PPOC & KPL Introduction Webinar

6:00 – 7:00 PM

Facilitator Introduction Webinar

7:30 – 8:30 PM



AUGUST

Aug 14

Website Launch

- Bishop's video
- FAQs
- Bishop's letter



Aug 15–16

Parish Announcement Weekend

- Letter read at Masses
- Bulletin insert
- QR code to website



Aug 17

Public Announcement

- Press release
- Catholic Mirror article online



Aug 22

Facilitator Training Session 1

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Bishop Marshall Center



SEPTEMBER

Sept 15–16

Modeling Working Sessions



Sept 19

KPL Session 1

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Knights of Columbus, 460 Granby Road, Chicopee



Sept 19

Facilitator Training Session 2

12:30 – 2:30 PM

(Following KPL Session 1)

Knights of Columbus, 460 Granby Road, Chicopee



OCTOBER

Oct 1–21

Parish Listening Session 1

- PPOC selects date via sign-up form
- Match facilitators to dates



Oct 13

Convocation

Show models to the priests



Oct 24

KPL Session 2

Review of Draft Models

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Location TBD



NOVEMBER

Nov 1–21

Parish Listening Session 2

Review of Draft Models



Ongoing

Refinement of Models and Preparation for Recommendations



Update & Review

- **Parish Listening Sessions Completed:** Round 1 sessions began October 1 and we held our last session on Wednesday October 21, providing parishioners an opportunity to review diocesan and parish data and share their perspectives in close to 60 listening sessions

- **Strong Parish Engagement:** Parishioners are being invited to reflect on the current realities facing the Diocese, identify strengths and challenges, and share their hopes for the future.

- **Regional Models Developed:** Initial realignment models have been drafted for each participating region, exploring potential parish configurations and opportunities for collaboration.

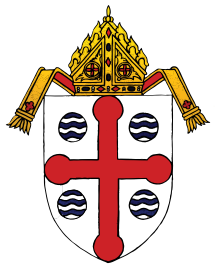
- **Feedback Will Inform Refinements:** Input from priests, parish leaders, and parishioners will help shape the proposed models.

- **Second Round of Listening Sessions:** Scheduled for November 1–21, these sessions will provide an opportunity to review proposed models and offer additional feedback in larger groups to build cross regional communication & collaboration.

- **No Final Decisions Have Been Made:** The process remains focused on listening, consultation, and discernment before recommendations are presented to Bishop Byrne.

- **Our Shared Goal:** To strengthen parish life, support our priests, and establish a sustainable structure that advances the mission of the Church across the Diocese.

Modeling Objective & Process



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Objective

Develop two viable models (options) for parish groupings (communities) that best advance the objectives of the realignment initiative, using the established criteria and working within the defined constraints.

Communities

- New parish collaboration models
- Possible shared pastor arrangements
- Possible consolidation of ministries and administration
- Possible shared staff and resources between parishes
- Enhanced evangelization and outreach efforts
- Alignment of Mass schedules and sacramental coverage
- Renewed focus on mission, discipleship, and Catholic identity
- New opportunities for regional cooperation and ministry growth



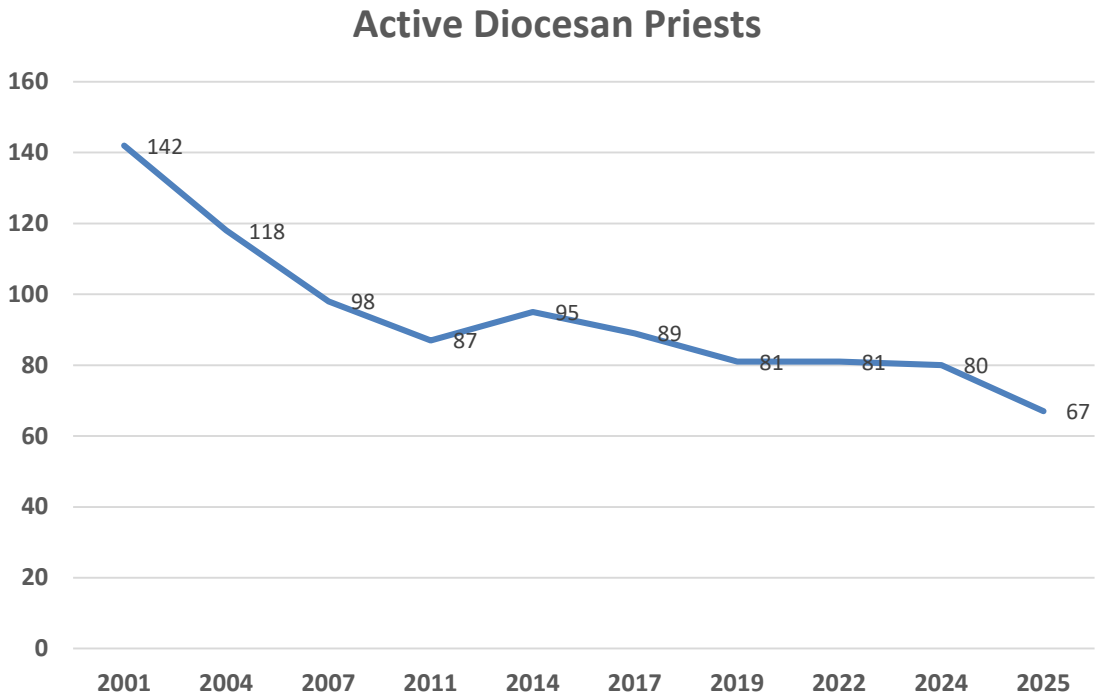
Realignment Objectives

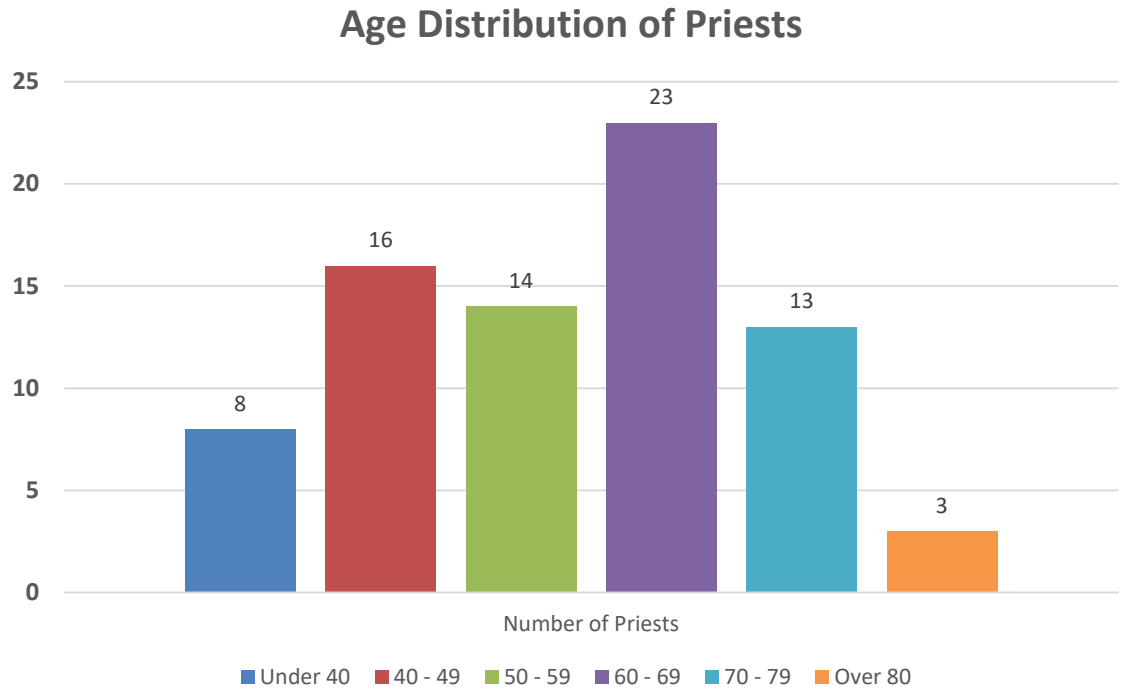
- **Vibrant Parishes:** Fostering a vibrant parish experience
- **Mission over Maintenance:** Working together to evangelize, catechize and engage others to grow in their relationship with Christ and strengthen our Church.
- **Sustainable Future:** Strategic Realignment

Criteria

- Financials
- Physical Proximity
- Age of priests and number of priests
- Facilities

Projected Priest Supply Will Not Meet Demand



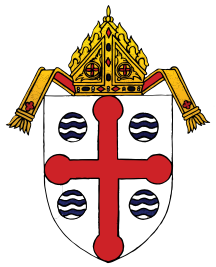


- 51% of the Diocese's priests are already eligible or will become eligible for retirement within the next 10 years.
- The pipeline of new priests is currently not sufficient to replace anticipated retirements. The Diocese currently has 5 seminarians, with just one priest ordained in the past five years.
- The Diocese must plan for fewer priests available for parish ministry, making it increasingly important to align parish structures and pastoral responsibilities with the number of priests realistically available to serve.

The Modeling Process

- Review the Regional Data
- Identify Key Opportunities and Challenges
- Develop Model 1
- Test Model 1 Against the Criteria
- Develop Model 2
- Compare the Two Models and Refine

Model Review by Region



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Notes About the Models

- Initial drafts – NOT FINAL
- Starting point for a conversation
- Anticipate change of 20% to 30%

Region VI model options

OPTION A

Community 1

Immaculate Heart of Mary (Granby); St. Theresa of Lisieux; St. Patrick (South Hadley)

Community 2

Blessed Sacrament; Our Lady of the Cross (Holyoke)

Community 3

St. Jerome / Immaculate Conception Mission (Holyoke)

OPTION B

Community 1

St. Jerome / Immaculate Conception Mission (Holyoke); St. Patrick (South Hadley)

Community 2

Blessed Sacrament; Our Lady of the Cross (Holyoke)

Possible regional move

Immaculate Heart of Mary (Granby) and St. Theresa of Lisieux (South Hadley) suggested with *St. Anne in Region VII.*

OPTION C

Community 1

St. Jerome / Immaculate Conception Mission; Blessed Sacrament; Our Lady of the Cross (Holyoke)

Community 2

St. Patrick; St. Theresa of Lisieux (South Hadley); Immaculate Heart of Mary (Granby); *St. Anne (Chicopee, Region VII)*

Priests Feedback – Region VI

- Preserve Holyoke's Hispanic ministry and consider existing parish and school relationships. Dedicate full-time priest to Hispanic community

- Reevaluate South Hadley groupings and the proposed placement of St. Anne’s.

- Alternative Grouping (mentioned by four separate groups):
  - I.C. Granby with St Francis Belchertown (possible merger)
  - All 3 Holyoke Parishes
  - St Anne with South Hadley

- Alternative Grouping:
  - St Anthony Chicopee
  - St Jerome/I.C.

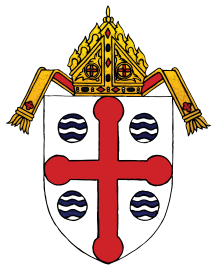
Questions

- Which is your Preferred Model & Why?
- Which is your LEAST Preferred Model & Why?
- Do you agree with the priest feedback and why/why not?
- Do you have an alternative model for this region? If so, what would the community be?



Q&A

Next Steps



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Next Steps

Nov 21st
Models Posted Online
& Survey Open

December - Janaury
Feedback Reviewed
Model Refinement

February - April
Bishop Byrne's
Discernment

May 16th (Pentecost)
New Parish Communities Announced



THANK YOU!