

**Diocesan Response**  
**to**  
**Deanry 8**  
**Planning Recommendations**  
**for St. Mary**  
**September 18, 2007**

It appears that Deanery 8 came to a consensus on the recommendation that St. Theresa of Avila, Bridgeton, and St. Michael, Cedarville, merge with one pastor. The deanery also recommended that Immaculate Conception and St. Mary, Rosenhayn, merge with one pastor. These merged parishes would then cluster with one pastor and one other full time priest.

- Considering the numbers of active Catholics participating in the weekend liturgies of the parishes to be merged, and only one priest assigned to each merged parish, which of the churches in each merger is best suited to accommodate the merged community for the three weekend liturgies?  
*Give supporting data and rationale.*

- With only one priest available for ministry in each merged parish, have you considered recommending the hiring a full time pastoral associate to assist each pastor? *Provide data.*

- Which of the proposed ministerial positions are currently on staff in any of these parishes as paid employees? Full or part time? Are any of these bilingual? *Describe them.*

- Which ministries in these parishes could begin now to be shared with merger partners? Cluster partners?

- Was this recommendation for ministerial positions money driven or do you see the hiring of part time professionals as adequate to accomplish the six pastoral priorities necessary to make these parishes vibrant? *Please explain.*

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- Is there any coordinated effort in place to reach out to the many ethnic minorities of the area?

*Describe.*

- Does your plan remain viable “long term” [p.2@c.]
- Do these four parishes have the combined resources to make this merger-then-cluster work?

*Demonstrate fiscal viability.*

**The Diocesan Planning Commission affirms this “mergers, then cluster” configuration with cautions.**

[Home](#)