

***Saint Brigid Parish, Blessed Sacrament Parish,
and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish***

March 19, 2005

Dear Parishioners of Saint Brigid Parish, Blessed Sacrament Parish, and Assumption BVM Parish,

As we enter upon the week we call "Holy" and move ever closer to the great Easter Triduum, we wish you and your family God's continued blessings.

We continue planning efforts for the future and our Midland Catholic Cluster Project. We write to invite you to gather at Assumption Parish on Saturday, April 16th from 9 am to 12 noon. We believe this gathering is the next step and a very important one.

We began our Midland Catholic Cluster Project with two very successful gatherings last fall, with close to 600 of our parishioners participating. A tremendous amount of valuable input was received and recorded. (You can access the complete information at www.midlandcatholics.org or contact your parish office.) That input was analyzed by the process committee (the pastors and four parish staff members). Six theme areas appeared most frequently: 1) Liturgy and Sacramental Ministry, 2) Priest Shortage/Vocations, 3) Shared Resources, 4) Catholic Schools, 5) Youth Faith Formation, and 6) Adult Faith Formation. Other important topics were raised. We believe for now that it is important to focus on these six areas that were most frequently mentioned.

This past January, task forces were created for Liturgy and Sacramental Ministry, Priest Shortage/Vocations, and Shared Resources. (Please know that in the fall, other task forces will consider Catholic Schools, Youth Faith Formation, and Adult Faith Formation.) Listening sessions on each topic were held to which everyone was invited. Over 100 people came, gave their input, and had the opportunity to join the task forces in assisting to develop proposals. Last week, the task force co-chairs met with the process committee to refine and clarify those proposals.

On April 16th, you are invited to come and give your input on the proposals the task forces have created. These proposals include a revised Mass schedule should we have just 2 priests for the three parishes, combining administrative functions for the three parishes, and a number of other important issues. Each proposal will be reviewed, discussed, and you will be able to indicate your level of support for each proposal. You will not be "voting;" you will be serving to provide counsel to the three pastors. The pastors are the ones who, in consultation with the Bishop and in keeping with Church law, will ultimately make the decisions on each proposal.

To help plan, we need your **RSVP** for the event. Please complete the enclosed form and return it by April 12th.

As we look to Easter and the Easter Season, may we continue to pray for our parish communities and our diocese so that these days ahead may continue to be a time of resurrection and renewal for all of us.

Prayerfully, your pastors,

Fr. James W. Bessert
Saint Brigid Parish

Fr. Peter J. Gaspeny
Blessed Sacrament Parish

Fr. Richard M. Filary
Assumption BVM Parish