

September 16, 2018

To the Parishioners of Cohort 8:

**St. John the Baptist, Starlight**  
**St. Mary of the Annunciation, Navilleton**  
**St. Mary of the Knobs**

## Connected in the Spirit Update

The Archbishop's overall goal for Connected in the Spirit is to enhance the vibrancy of parish life in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis so that parishes will be signs of faith, hope and love to all God's people. Due to demographic shifts, the diminishing number of priests, and the financial situation of many parishes, a process was needed to lessen stress and remove obstacles so all parishes could be strong ones.

Having worked together for well over two years now, the Cohort of our three Parishes have been directed to develop action plans that in the future will be implemented to "link" the Parishes of St. John the Baptist (Starlight) with St. Mary of the Annunciation (Navilleton). As the linking progresses, Starlight and Navilleton would also "partner" with St Mary of the Knobs (The Knobs)

As a quick review, the activities associated with linking two (2) Parishes will focus on the sharing of one (1) Pastor and further "jointly" leverage resources and administrative activities. This will include revised Mass schedules, potentially merging evangelization and outreach programs, reviewing current ministries and meetings to best optimize resources and other efforts.

Partnering however, will include many similar activities as noted with linking, where programs, ministries and administrative activities can be optimized across the three (3) parishes.

Our Cohort of three Parishes has been asked to develop an action plan related to a number of goals associated with the activities of Linking and the Partnering of our Parishes. While we were asked to initially tackle up to seven (7) goals, a review of these goals pointed to the more immediate need to address only three (3) goals at this time. They include:

1. Propose a schedule of three (3) weekend Masses to be celebrated by one (1) Priest. This impacts Starlight and Navilleton only. An implementation time line has not yet been established, but should be solidified in 2019.
2. Propose options to a recommendation encouraging joint pastoral councils to coordinate planning, outreach and evaluation. Each Parish will retain separate Finance Councils. This impacts Starlight and Navilleton only. Implementation of a proposal would likely occur in 2019.
3. Develop and implement a collaborative faith formation program within the Cohort for youth and Adults. We will also develop a detailed summary of all ministries/collaborative efforts within the Cohort. Activities may commence once a plan has been developed and approved. This impacts Starlight, Navilleton and The Knobs.

Our action plan is due December 15, 2018. We anticipate learning of the approval of this plan in early 2019.

Respectfully,

Your Connected in the Spirit Team:

Fr. Wilfred E. Day, Merle Kruer, David Miller, Ryan Kruer, Jim Book

Fr. Pius Poff, Jim Koeppel, Gayle Schrank, Steve Atherton, Elizabeth Galligan

Fr. Mike Hilderbrand, Marilyn Faulkenburg, Pat Byrne, Greg Ernstberger, Suzie Didat