

ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
CONNECTED IN THE SPIRIT
PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

REGION Tell City

COHORT 1

PARISHES

CITIES

Holy Cross

St. Croix

St. Augustine

Leopold

Appreciation

We appreciate the prayer, reflection and work which you have put into *Connected in the Spirit* to date. We also appreciate the time and effort given to evaluating your parishes and your Cohort based on the Criteria and for making a Suggestion for a model or models for your Cohort.

Commendations

We commend you for:

- The thoroughness of your evaluation and submitted report.
- Your commitment to expanding spiritual growth opportunities for adults and youth in your area.
- Your spirit of cooperation and willingness to collaborate.

Preliminary Recommendations

We acknowledge your desire to implement **Model One: Linked Parishes** and understand that your rationale is based on the following factors:

- Dynamic, youthful congregations
- Vibrant religious education programs
- Distinct communities with unique needs and challenges

However, based on our study of your parish and cohort reports, the challenges you identified on your Parish Summary Report Form, the goals of *Connected in the Spirit* and the needs of the archdiocese as a whole, **we respectfully disagree with your suggestion and recommend:**

Model Two: Merged Parishes

Holy Cross Parish, St. Croix and St. Augustine, Leopold will merge at the St. Augustine site.

There may be an additional worship site at Holy Cross. (Masses as needed per weekend with occasional funerals and weddings) which will be evaluated every two years after the merger, based on geography, attendance, fiscal realities and the availability of priests.)

The commission acknowledges the “missed opportunity” of the discussion of mergers with other parishes in the nearby area. We welcome further discussion and commentary in your response.

We further recommend that as a Cohort you:

1. Plan and implement an evangelization program.
2. Per your recommendation seek opportunities to collaborate with St. Meinrad Archabbey and the Sisters of St. Benedict to expand vocation awareness in the community.
3. Establish a common youth program.
4. Consider a parish ministry serving the Branchville Correctional Facility.

Rationale

We make these recommendations based on your own study and concepts found on your Cohort Evaluation and Suggestion Forms:

1. Your desire and ours to have a strong Catholic presence in your area now and in the future.
2. Your close geographic proximity.
3. The number of registered Catholic families at Holy Cross parish is low.
4. Minimal sacramental participation in baptisms, first communions, marriages, confirmations and RCIA, indicating lack of growth.
5. The fact that you are unnecessarily duplicating efforts by having stand-alone programs and trainings for catechists and liturgical ministers.
6. The opportunity for deeper and richer faith experiences through adult and youth enrichment initiatives.