



One In Faith ACC Communication

At our July Listening Sessions, though fewer than 5% of parishioners were in attendance, we truly valued the thoughtful sharing of those who joined us. Since some of the same questions came up in many of the sessions, we sought guidance from Diocesan staff, who, in consultation with Bishop Neary, provided us with clear and consistent answers. Last week we provided the response to the question regarding the use of live-stream Masses. Two more commonly asked questions along with the responses are below.

Question: Will Bishop Neary consider bringing in foreign priests to assist in the priest shortage?

Response: The diocese would be open, under very limited circumstances, to considering more assistance from foreign priests, but not as part of the All Things New planning process. It would need to be a situation in which Bishop Patrick knows an overseas bishop or religious superior well enough so we get quality priests that meet our needs. It can be difficult to bring in priests from other countries, as they face language barriers, the high cost and complexity of immigration paperwork, and the challenges of adjusting to a new culture. Given these challenges, bringing in priests from abroad is not part of the All Things New process. The priest shortage is only one piece of the reality we face as a diocese—we also have more buildings than we can reasonably sustain and fewer people to fill them. For our planning, we will rely on the priests we have now and place a strong focus on fostering vocations here at home, so that we can build a healthy and stable presbyterate for the future.

Question: Why can't we have priests from St. John's help us?

Response: St. John's and the Crosiers no longer have the numbers they once did to provide priests for parish assignments. In fact, it's anticipated that before long they may not be able to provide any priests at all. While they may still assist with ministry occasionally, we cannot rely on them as part of the All Things New process. Again, while the priest shortage is a significant concern, it is not the only factor affecting our diocese. We are also faced with maintaining more facilities than our current population can support.

Please do everything you can to keep yourself informed. We encourage you to visit the diocesan website at <https://stcdio.org/all-things-new/> where you can find detailed information about the current reality, ACC information, and many resources.

We continue to ask for your prayers for the parishioners of the One In Faith community, ACC All Things New planning committee, parish staff, diocesan All Things New planning team, and Bishop Neary as we move forward.

