



OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL EPISCOPAL VICARS
DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

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January 17, 2024

To the Clergy, Staffs, and Faithful of Deanery Queens 5,

On Wednesday, November 29th, under the direction of Bishop Brennan, I met with the priests of your deanery to discuss the current pastoral situation in the parishes so we can begin to plan for the best way to continue to evangelize and proclaim the Gospel in your deanery while facing the reality of limited personnel and resources.

Earlier in the fall, there was a Convocation of Priests where Bishop Brennan opened the discussion of beginning a process of creating parish partnerships and parish mergers across the diocese. The priests of the deanery met together on that day and discussed the following:

- Priests expressed a concern of the reduced attendance at Masses in a number of parishes across the diocese.
- Some parishes in the deanery are still struggling with lower attendance after COVID, though overall pastors feel that the numbers are not bad.
- With the livestreaming of Masses, are people staying home? Will they come back to church if we stop livestreaming?
- Academies are like private schools.
- People are moving.
- There are various concerns about changing Mass schedules and providing Communion services, both during the year and during vacation periods.
- No priest is living alone in the deanery.
- Language issues:
 - With regard to Polish, some families choose to go to St. Hedwig or parishes in Greenpoint because they prefer a homily in Polish. Locally, some go to Sacred Heart for special needs. While some Polish families have moved away over the years, the congregation at St. Josaphat is also impacted by the type of Polish ministry provided.
 - Korean is holding its own – large overall population.
 - Indian is holding its own.
 - Spanish is not needed.