

UNIVERSE BULLETIN

THE FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR EVERYONE

May 18, 2007—Part I

Changing population means a changing church

By Dennis Sadowski, Editor

Frank Germano knew a bargain when he saw one. With lots going at auction for \$25 in South Euclid, he wasn't about to let this one pass by.

With lot in hand, the door to the American dream in the years following World War II was open. Now he could build his own home.

Working two jobs—a machinist by day and running his own construction company by night—Germano was able to provide a comfortable life for his family in a duplex in the South Collinwood neighborhood near Holy Redeemer Church, his son Mike, 68, recalls today.

"It was an Italian neighborhood. It was a great place to grow up. I enjoyed the whole area because of the closeness of the people," Mike Germano said.

But moving a few miles to South Euclid promised more. Arriving in the U.S. from Italy in 1920 while much of Europe continued to recover from World War I, the elder Germano wanted to make an even better life for his wife and three children. A three-bedroom bungalow on Ardmore Road would do just that.

In 1948, with the house complete, the Germanos made the move, leaving the city of Cleveland as residents for good.

The Germanos weren't the only ones from Holy Redeemer who moved "up the hill." Relatives, friends and people whom young Mike knew from the neighborhood were leaving South Collinwood not just for South Euclid, but Euclid, Lyndhurst and Mayfield Heights as well. Elsewhere in the city thousands more were following. Bedford, Maple Heights, Garfield Heights, Parma, Fairview Park and Brooklyn were the places where Clevelanders wanted to live.

These new communities promised good schools, reasonable taxes, larger lots and a bit more security. It was the suburbanization of Cuyahoga County.

Cleveland's population, peaking at 914,000 in the early 1950s, has been declining since as the city's residents seek what they perceive to be a little better life outside the urban core. Cleveland's population in 2005 was estimated at about 452,000 by the U.S. Census Bureau.

It's not just Cleveland where this has happened, but Akron and Lorain



MARIBETH JOERIGHT

Mike and Martha Germano have been parishioners at Divine Word Church, Kirtland, for many years. Both lived elsewhere in the diocese—Mike in Cleveland and South Euclid and Martha in Euclid—before relocating in growing Lake County.

as well.

The Germanos didn't stay very long in South Euclid. In 1953, Germano's father, Frank, with a sharp eye for business, made an on-the-spot offer for a restaurant/delicatessen in Kirtland during one of their regular Sunday excursions. The offer was accepted and before long the family moved to the farming community in Lake County.

At the time, the family joined Immaculate Conception Church in Willoughby. Years later Mike and his wife of nearly 50 years, Martha, would be active parishioners at Divine Word Church in Kirtland, which didn't even exist in 1953. Opened in 1977, the parish now has 1,050 households.

Today, Mike Germano continues to work in the family construction business although it's his son who runs the firm known as Landco Developers. They're as busy as ever as Kirtland and the surrounding area see a gradual growth in population.

Planning for the future

The Germano family's path is similar to thousands of other Catholic families in the diocese. While by and large people overall and Catholics in particular have not left the area, they are leaving the urban cores of Cleveland, Akron and Lorain.

To illustrate this reality, diocesan officials have developed a comprehensive hour-long presentation that looks at population and demographic shifts that have occurred across the diocese since 1960 and that today are impacting the work of the church of the Cleveland Diocese.

The presentation not only looks at where Catholics live today, but also offers information on Mass attendance, parish and diocesan finances as well as statistics on the diocesan and religious order priests and their availability for parish ministry.

The information has been shared throughout the diocese as part of the

Vibrant Parish Life process since the announcement of the 69 parish clusters in February.

Bishop Richard G. Lennon, Rick Krivanka, director of the diocesan Pastoral Planning Office, John Maimone, the diocese's chief financial officer, and Father Lawrence Jurcak, secretary and vicar for clergy and religious, have made the presentation or parts of it at nearly 20 venues in recent weeks.

The information is meant to help the clusters as they begin to plan for their future over the next 18 months, Bishop Lennon said.

"The real story is carrying out the mission of our Lord," the bishop told a gathering of the Summit North and Summit South clusters May 7 at Archbishop Hoban High School.

"I do look forward that after all is said and done the church will be strengthened," Bishop Lennon said. "It's using all of our resources in as wise and prudent manner as possible ... to carry out the mission of the Lord."

Letters confirming the cluster arrangements of the diocese's 230 parishes were to be sent to pastors this week. Bishop Lennon declined to say what changes were being made in the original cluster assignments until after the letters are received, although he added that any changes are "very minor."

Letters also will be sent by the end of the month identifying key areas for collaboration among parishes and the challenges each cluster must address, Bishop Lennon said.

Clusters will have from 15 to 18 months to develop a plan addressing the issues raised by the bishop. Deadlines for submitting cluster plans will range from September through December 2008.

Once approved by the bishop, clusters will have two years to implement its specific plan.

Bishop Lennon expects some parishes will close as the planning process moves forward. At the same time, because of population changes, it's possible the diocese will open new parishes in high growth areas, he said.

"Realistically we also have to look at where we have parishes that are too large or too far apart," Bishop Lennon told the Akron meeting. "This is not about downsizing, but I think the right way to describe it is right-sizing."

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May 18, 2007—Part II

Movement of people puts pressure on local parishes

By Dennis Sadowski, Editor

It's no secret that over the last five decades, the urban cores of Cleveland, Akron and Lorain have shrunk considerably as people, Catholics included, relocate to suburban and rural communities in the eight counties of the diocese.

Overall, the population of the eight-county area remained stable, slightly increasing since 1960. People just aren't living where they once lived.

At the same time, the diocese is seeing far fewer people at Sunday Mass today than in 1970.

Weekly Mass attendance in 2006 stood at 29 percent of all registered Catholics, or about 231,000 people, according to statistics compiled by Rick Krivanka, director of the diocesan Pastoral Planning Office. That number has declined since 2000 when 34 percent of registered Catholics attended Mass weekly.

The number of Mass-goers had held steady between 1995 and 2000 before beginning its latest decline.

In contrast, 56 percent of registered Catholics attended weekly Mass in 1970. That breaks down to about 500,000 individuals based on a Catholic population of 900,000 Catholics at the time.

What this means is that fewer than half of the people who were attending Sunday Mass in 1970 are attending weekly Mass today, Krivanka said.

The movement of Catholics from central cities to outlying areas and declining Mass attendance presents the diocese with many questions. The most pressing: How to maintain a presence in areas where the number of Catholics is declining without overwhelming the diocese financially and without taking clergy away from areas where the Catholic population is booming.

That's where the 69 parish clusters are supposed to help. The clusters, which were to be confirmed in letters to pastors from Bishop Richard G. Lennon this week, will undergo an 18-month period of planning for the future starting in June. Once each cluster plan is approved by Bishop Lennon late next year, two years of implementation will follow.

The goal, Bishop Lennon acknowledges, is to strengthen the church in all areas of the diocese.

It's likely that by 2011 the church in the Cleveland Diocese will see changes in the number of its parishes and the way ministry is carried out in many areas.

U.S. Census data, as compiled by the Pastoral Planning Office, shows the overall population of the eight counties of the diocese has remained stable since 1960 but has shifted widely.

Based on 2005 estimates, the U.S. Census shows:

- 2.84 million people in the diocese compared with 2.75 million people in 1960.

- Cuyahoga County is the only county to show a decline in population with nearly one-fifth fewer residents than 45 years ago--1.33 million in 2005 versus 1.65 million in 1960.

- Population growth in the remaining seven counties ranged from 6.3 percent in Summit County to 155.3 percent in Medina County and 99.8 percent in Geauga County.

- Cleveland today has about 34 percent of the residents of Cuyahoga County compared with 53 percent in 1960.

- Projections through 2011 continue to show significant declining population in the four districts of the diocese that encompass the city of Cleveland. Declines are also projected in the Suburban Southwest and Suburban East districts of the diocese in Cuyahoga County.

Analyzing these statistics, Krivanka points to the fact that Cuyahoga County is providing the growth for neighboring counties. "The demographic realities are not going to stop," Krivanka said.

Looking at the Catholic population in the diocese, about 28 percent, or 797,898 people are Catholic, according to the 2005 Status Animarum of registered persons and households as compiled by Krivanka's office. In Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties, one-third of the population is Catholic.

What's notable, data from the Pastoral Planning Office shows, is that the average parish has 1,300 registered households or 3,300 individuals. The amount of households per parish ranges

PARISH POPULATION BY DIOCESAN DISTRICT

	NUMBER OF PARISHES	REGISTERED HOUSEHOLDS PER PARISH
Cleveland Central East	18	426
Cleveland Central West	18 + 1 Pastoral Center	596
Cleveland Northwest	14	1,158
Cleveland Southeast	15	406
Cuyahoga Suburban East	18	1,451
Cuyahoga Suburban Southeast	16	1,750
Cuyahoga Suburban West	19	1,953
Cuyahoga Suburban Southwest	16	2,911
Lake-Geauga	19 + 1 Mission	1,875
Lorain	32	864
Summit North	13	1,398
Summit South	21	973
Wayne-Ashland-Medina	12	1,066
Diocesan Average	231 Parishes 1 Pastoral Center 1 Mission	1,300

Source: Status Animarum, October Count, Claritas / Prepared by Pastoral Planning Office

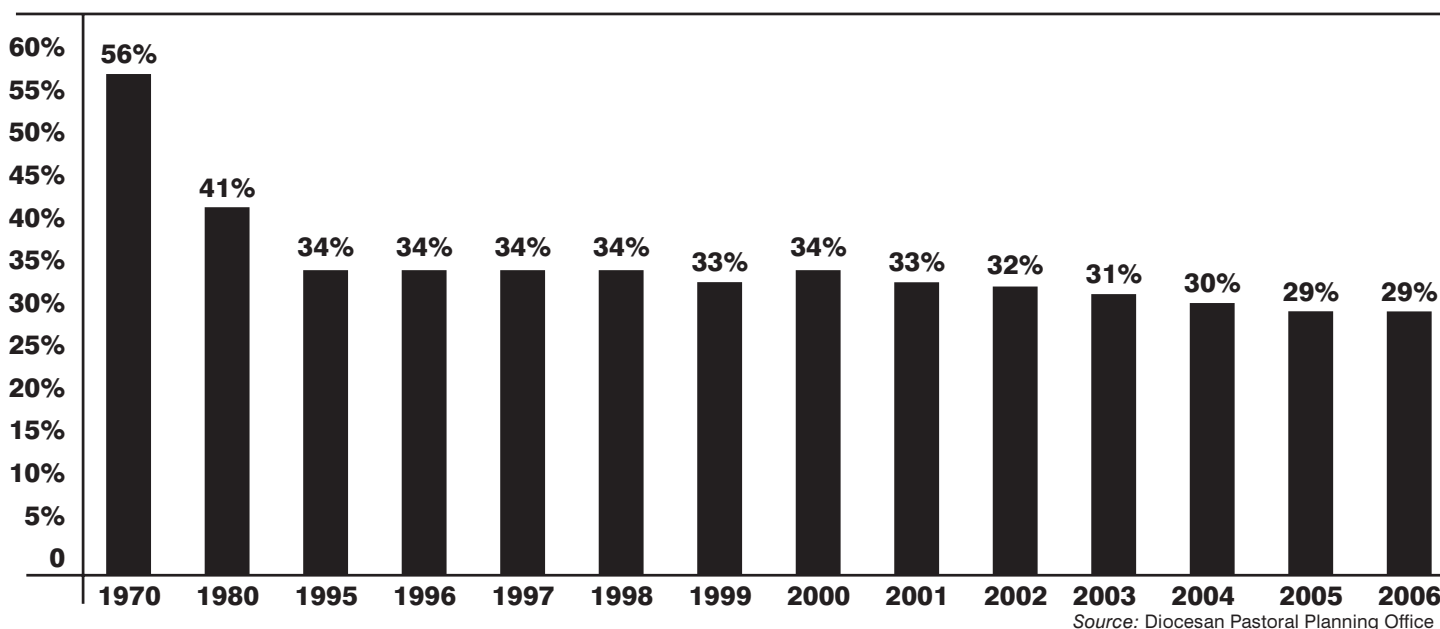
widely, however, from a low of 406 households and 724 individuals in the Cleveland Southeast District to 2,911 households and 7,666 individuals in the Suburban Southwest District.

With the realities of shifting popula-

tion, declining Mass attendance, and fewer priests, a key question the clusters will face as they enter the planning process is how to be the best stewards of time, talent and finances in a time of great change, Krivanka said.

AVERAGE MASS ATTENDANCE

AS A PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED CATHOLICS IN THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND



Source: Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office

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May 18, 2007—Part III

Finances are just as challenging as shifting population

By Dennis Sadowski, Editor

The changing demographics throughout the church of Cleveland also is placing financial burdens on many parishes across the diocese, said John Maimone, chief financial officer of the diocese.

Despite offertory collections rising slightly to \$106.1 million in fiscal year 2006, 104 parishes—45 percent of the diocese's 231 parishes—operated at a deficit last year.

That compares with 37 percent—86 parishes—in 2005.

The reason for the rising deficits in Maimone's view: Offertory collections are not keeping up with increasing parish expenses.

He offered two reasons for flat offertory collections. "One is the drop in Mass attendance, so we've lost supporters in that regard," Maimone said. "The other most significant issue is the economy of our area because that has an impact on the household budgets. We have many households whose incomes have been severely diminished over the last five or six years. They have not been able to find an equivalent job."

Add to that rising fuel, utility, and health care costs and something has to give.

The same holds true at parish elementary schools. Overall, Maimone explained, parish schools spent \$25.9 million more than they took in during fiscal year 2006. The difference was made up largely by parishes dipping into savings to keep the schools from going under, he said.

But parishes can continue to go to the well only for so long because parish savings are limited.

In addition, it's not just the routine operation of a parish or the added expense of a school that has diocesan officials such as Maimone concerned. Eighty parishes are having difficulty in paying their diocesan assessments.

The assessment-funds sent to the diocese for ministries and programs that are more efficiently run at the diocesan level such as ethnic ministries, the Vocation Office and the Legal Office--is based on parish income. Parishes without schools are assessed 16.5 percent of offertory collections. Parishes with schools send 11.5 percent of offertory collections to the diocese.

Bishop Richard G. Lennon is committed to maintaining the assessment at current levels and urging parishes having difficulty making those payments to come up with a plan to get back on schedule.

He told a May 7 gathering of parish representatives from the Summit North and Summit South districts at Archbishop Hoban High School that parishes un-

able to meet their assessment obligations may be considered financially unviable and could face closing.

Maimone offered a breakdown of the 80 parishes:

- 18 parishes are not currently paying any of the assessment.
- 23 parishes make sporadic and/or partial payments.
- 30 parishes carry assessment debt but have returned to making at least the current payment. "That's a sign of hope," he said.
- 9 parishes were three or more months past due.

Bishop Lennon and Maimone have met with pastors to help them formulate a plan for covering the debt.

"The approach is to recognize the assessment is an ordinary operating expense for a parish," Maimone said. "Our approach is meant to be as reasonable as we possibly can in understanding the financial condition of a number of our parishes."

While Maimone offered that parishes had combined accounts in checking, savings and investments totaling \$154.9 million, he said the outlook is not as bright as it seems. Those same 231 parishes had liabilities of \$58.2 million in 2006. That leaves \$96.7 million or an average \$419,000 per parish.

However, 60 parishes in 2006 had negative net savings where liabilities exceeded savings. Even by taking away the 33 parishes with high liabilities because of mortgage debt with payments being made regularly, Maimone said that leaves 27 parishes where liabilities exceed savings.

Then Maimone mentioned 17 additional parishes which have less than \$60,000 in savings, meaning they have low reserves. That means 44 parishes—19 percent—would have trouble handling an emergency.

"We have 44 parishes that are on the financial edge and are very close to not having enough money to operate," he said.

Despite having \$4.4 million in investments in the Bishop's General Purpose Fund as a source of emergency funds, Maimone said it would be difficult for the diocese to tap the fund for parish and schools crises too often.

"The emergency reserves are limited and the diocese does not have the ability to respond to an extended string of parish and school emergencies," he said.

Given that, Maimone explained, finances will be a crucial issue in 20 to 30 clusters as cluster planning gets underway next month.

"From a financial perspective, the clusters are best positioned to best figure out what needs to be

OFFERTORY & ASSESSMENT TRENDS

YEAR	PARISH OFFERTORY	ASSESSMENTS
1999	\$ 96.1	\$10.7
2000	\$100.1	\$11.3
2001	\$103.1	\$11.0
2002	\$105.9	\$11.4
2003	\$103.4	\$11.1
2004	\$104.3	\$11.1
2005	\$104.5	\$11.3
2006	\$106.1	\$12.3*

Years ended June 30. Amounts in millions.

*Collection efforts boosted 2006 assessments; some of the increase represents a one-time event; 2007 budget is \$11.6 million.

Note: Diocese pays assessments of almost \$600,000 to the Holy See and the state and national bishops' conferences in addition to other special assessments, periodically needed by the conferences.

Source: Diocesan Finance Office

done in the neighborhoods and the communities," Maimone said. Financing is one piece, but the ministry to those communities is more important than finances.

"If we do nothing and we have an area where all four parishes go out of business, we're not well served. But if financially and pastorally, they can come together and have one strong parish and last for decades, then the church is better served.

"It's been refreshing to have the major concern at these district meetings be on the ministries because that allows us the opportunity to say, 'That's why you're doing the cluster planning. That's why this isn't a planning exercise on East 9th Street.' We need the people at the clusters, the people who are on the spot, in the communities, doing the work, (they) are best positioned to figure out how we can be stronger and more vibrant and continue to provide the services we've been providing ministry by ministry by ministry. ... We could make all those decision on East 9th Street, but it wouldn't be the best decisions."

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May 18, 2007—Part IV

264 diocesan priests projected for ministry by 2011

By Dennis Sadowski, Editor

In 2011, the diocese is projecting there will be 264 diocesan priests in active ministry.

That compares with 306 diocesan priests in active ministry as of January of this year. That is 42 fewer priests available for service to the diocese in four years.

The figures will be key components to consider as parish clusters enter the planning phase next month, said Father Lawrence Jurcak, diocesan secretary and vicar for clergy and religious.

The data are based on a study of the local priesthood by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University and diocesan clergy personnel records. The diocese contracted CARA for the work in 2005.

The number of priests include those assigned to parishes as well as those serving in special ministries, such as the Cleveland Latin American Mission in El Salvador, diocesan administration, hospital and military chaplaincy, seminary faculty, graduate studies and those released from diocesan assignment.

In addition to diocesan priests, the diocese is aided by religious order priests. In January, 31 religious order priests were serving at 16 parishes throughout the diocese.

However, Father Jurcak cautioned, the presence of religious order priests is not automatically guaranteed in the future. Like the number of diocesan priests, the number of religious order priests is declining as well, he said.

A closer look at the number of priests in active ministry reveals some key information that the clusters must consider.

As of last January, 27 priests in active ministry are over age 70 and could seek retirement at any time. Father Jurcak said he is not expecting a mass exodus of these senior priests any time soon.

"We could not do what we do in the parishes of the diocese without the ministry of the senior priests," he said.

A breakdown shows that 19 of the senior priests are in five of the 13 diocesan districts: Lorain (five), Wayne-Ashland-Medina (four), Summit South (four), Summit North (three), and Cuyahoga Suburban Southwest (three).

Meanwhile, another 37 priests are between 65 and 69 years old and could seek retirement at age 70, he said. More than half of these near-retirement age priests are in four districts: Summit South (seven), Lake-Geauga (five), Cuyahoga Suburban West and Cuyahoga

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIESTS JANUARY 2007						
DISTRICT:	TOTAL # DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS ORDER PRIESTS	RELIGIOUS ORDER PRIESTS	DIOCESAN PRIESTS OVER 70 IN ACTIVE MINISTRY	DIOCESAN PRIESTS UNDER 70 IN ACTIVE MINISTRY	TOTAL # DIOCESAN PRIESTS BETWEEN 65 & 69	PROJECTED # OF DIOCESAN PRIESTS IN ACTIVE MINISTRY UNDER 70 IN 2011
Cleveland Central East	17	6	1	10	0	11
Cleveland Central West	21	7	1	13	2	11
Cleveland Northwest	20	5	1	14	1	13
Cleveland Southeast	12	3	1	8	0	7
Cuyahoga Suburban East	25	5	1	19	1	19
Cuyahoga Suburban Southeast	24	0	1	23	2	18
Cuyahoga Suburban West	24	0	2	22	4	19
Cuyahoga Suburban Southwest	40	2	3	35	4	36
Lake-Geauga	30	0	0	30	5	29
Lorain	31	3	5	23	3	22
Summit North	17	0	3	14	3	15
Summit South	22	0	4	18	7	19
Wayne-Ashland-Medina	16	0	4	12	1	13
Special Ministry**	38			38	4	32
Total	337	31	27	279	37	264

11 diocesan priests under 70 on administrative leave as of January 2007
231 parishes with 16 staffed by religious communities
**Serving in El Salvador, military and hospital chaplains, seminary faculty, diocesan administration, graduate studies, and released from a diocesan assignment

Source: Diocesan Secretary and Vicar for Clergy and Religious

Suburban Southwest (four each).

With fewer diocesan priests available for ministry, it's possible the criteria for a parish to have a resident pastor and for the assignment of parochial vicars—formerly called associate pastors—will change in the years ahead, Father Jurcak said.

Currently, diocesan policy calls for a parish to have at least 500 registered households for a resident pastor. The threshold for a parochial vicar is 2,800 registered households.

Father Jurcak said the statistics regarding clergy have deep implications as the clusters begin their planning going into the next four years.

"If we're really serious about what we say we're doing in Vibrant Parish Life—reconfiguring parishes—that in my estimation says that we are looking at situations where a parish needs to be closed, a group of parishes that need to merge, and areas of the diocese where we need to look at establishing new parishes," he said.

"We still have a local presence that was necessary in the '60s, in some areas, that's no longer necessary today," he continued. "Those are going to be hard decisions. But I think if we're talking about equitable distribution (of priests) we need to, for lack of a better word, we need to 'right-size' parish life."

The key across the diocese, in Father Jurcak's mind, is putting parishes and priests in the best position to evangelize as well as to re-evangelize Catholics who no longer are a regular participant at Sunday Mass or a parish community.

"And the third piece is to really look at, as we look at some of the demographics, the declining number of people attending Sunday Eucharist, how do we really work at having a sacred Sunday worship ... an experience of Sunday worship that really is invigorating for the people, that gives them a reason to want to come and be nurtured there and allow that nurturing to impact what they do the rest of the week," he added.