



## The Cluster Concept and How It Affects You

**What is a Cluster?** It is a grouping of Catholic parishes that join together to share a mutual pastoral relationship. Parishes partnering together in a cluster arrangement share resources, plans and personnel to provide quality pastoral care to the people of God in a local community. This arrangement has been used to help support the Church's ministry in an environment where fewer priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers are available to serve.

The graphic above shows the five parishes in our cluster. The formal name for our cluster is Catholic Community of Northern Anne Arundel County (CCNAAC). The cluster pastors first began to meet together in 2003. The cluster's development continued over the next 5 years with an extended series of meetings, discussion and planning that included participants of each parish – staff members, pastoral council members, committee heads and lay leaders. In May 2008 a proposal was presented to, and accepted by, Bishop Mitchell Rozanski (Auxiliary Bishop for the Eastern Vicariate) for a staffing model and a series of pastoral goals that would support and guide the cluster's ministry efforts into the future. The cluster's activity is led by the pastoral leaders of each parish (pastors, associate pastor and pastoral life director) together with a Coordinating Council composed of three parishioners from each parish.

**Why a Cluster?** In 2002, Cardinal William H. Keeler accepted the report and recommendations (known as "The Hope That Lies Before Us") of an ad hoc committee of clergy, religious and lay leaders which recognized that the number of priests available for service would continue to diminish within the archdiocese for at least the next 15 years. The report identified a series of Vocation Recruitment Strategies and a series of Pastoral Strategies, one of which was the encouragement that parishes begin to work together in cluster arrangements. In light of this report, our cluster recognized that a likely scenario would be that 3 full-time priests would be available to staff the 5 parishes by the year 2009. Due to a variety of circumstances, that scenario was realized by the summer of 2007.

**Benefits of a Cluster** It provides for continuing quality pastoral care in each of the five parishes by sharing the resources and talents available among our parish communities. It means that:

- Daily Mass will be available in at least one of the parishes each day, allowing parishioners from any of the parishes to participate in Mass daily
- Weekend Masses will be coordinated at each parish through the combined cooperation of each parish
- Contribution envelopes are forwarded to the contributor's proper parish from whichever cluster parish originally receives it
- At least one Service of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be scheduled in the cluster during the seasons of Lent and Advent
- Sacramental celebrations and ministry in times of special need for parishioners will continue to be available, i.e. baptisms, weddings, funerals, anointing of the sick, etc.
- Holy Day services will always be available at one or more parishes in the cluster at several time choices.

**Mass Times in Our “Catholic Community”**

<b>Weekend</b> - Saturday	Church of the Crucifixion	– 4:30 PM
	Church of the Good Shepherd	– 5:00 PM, 7:00 PM
	Holy Trinity	– 5:00 PM, 7:00 PM
	St. Bernadette	– 5:30 PM
	St. Philip Neri	– 5:00 PM
Sunday	Church of the Crucifixion	– 8:30 AM, 11:00 AM
	Church of the Good Shepherd	– 9:00 AM, 10:15 AM, 11:30 AM
	Holy Trinity	– 7:00 AM, 8:30 AM, 9:00 AM <sup>(1)</sup> , 10:00 AM, 11:30AM <sup>(1)</sup> , 12:00 PM, 6:00 PM <sup>(2)</sup>
	St. Bernadette	– 9:00 AM, 10:45 AM, 12:15 PM
	St. Philip Neri	– 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM

(1) – Mass held in Monsignor Slade Catholic School Auditorium

(2) – Mass is in Spanish

<b>Daily</b> -	Church of the Crucifixion	– None
	Church of the Good Shepherd	– 9:00 AM (Mon-Sat)
	Holy Trinity	– 6:30 AM (Mon-Fri), 9:00 AM (Mon-Sat), 7:00 PM (Tue), 7:00 PM (Wed –Spanish)
	St. Bernadette	– 8:45 AM (Mon-Fri {Communion Services Only})
	St. Philip Neri	– 9:00 AM (Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat), 6:30 PM (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri), 9:00 AM (Wed. {Communion Service})

**Upcoming Special Event for the CCNAAC**

**May 30 – Joint Pentecost Mass & Social** - 5:00 PM – St. Philip Neri

Want More Information? Visit the CCNAAC web site at [ccnaac.goodshepherdgb.org](http://ccnaac.goodshepherdgb.org). You can see who your parish representatives are for the CCNAAC Coordinating Council. You may contact them to share your thoughts.