

Consolidation plan should apply to rectories

One's relationship with a school evokes visceral emotions and memories of our youth that others do not. I can only imagine the response of those families immediately involved in this (consolidations) decision (CR, March 4). However, I do appreciate the circumstance that prompted the months-long study of the feasibility of maintaining the archdiocesan schools and the gravity with which the ultimate decisions were made.

I propose that this same process be applied to other properties within the archdiocese. I do not propose the closing of parishes, but consider the plethora of "unused square feet and empty beds" in our rectory buildings. As the archdiocese becomes more efficient, we should likewise study the use of these buildings that now house only one priest. Instead of heating, cooling and maintaining separate buildings with their own housekeeper and cook, these roles could now serve a community of brother priests. As with the personnel of the 13 schools slated to close, I am sure that the archdiocese would place those personnel from closing rectories in other areas of the archdiocesan system. All of this would be justified not only on an administrative sense, but also spiritually as the priests could provide mutual support and guidance to their housemates, all the while adhering to Canon Law that recommends that the clergy have some practice of a common life of simplicity.

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