Parish Preservation Alliance

WRITING YOUR PASTORAL-IMPACT STATEMENT

A GUIDE FOR PARISHIONERS

Your experience matters. If you are concerned about losing an established relationship with your priest during parish restructuring, describe what that relationship has meant to you and how a change would **personally affect you or your family**. You do not need legal knowledge or polished writing—just an **honest account in your own words**.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Please note that impact statements are permitted to those who have signed the mandate. If you have not signed the mandate, please include that with your impact statement.

Aim for **½ to 1 page**. Write as "I" or "we" when describing your own family's experience. Choose one or two specific examples rather than trying to describe every concern. Feelings are welcome; connect them to actual experiences and needs.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

1. Introduce yourself. Give your name, parish and city, how long you have belonged, and any relevant parish involvement.

2. Describe the pastoral relationship. How has this priest cared for you or your family? If relevant, describe sacramental preparation, support during illness or bereavement, caregiving, spiritual guidance, or long-standing parish involvement. Explain what happened and why it mattered.

3. Explain why continuity matters. What ongoing need, trusted understanding, or support would be lost if this relationship ended? Go beyond saying that you like the priest or would miss him.

4. Describe the effect of simultaneous changes, if relevant. Explain why changes to parish life and priestly leadership at approximately the same time would be especially difficult in your particular circumstances.

5. Identify concrete care needs, if relevant. Explain any personal concern about continuing sacramental or essential pastoral care. Distinguish what you know from what you fear; do not assume care will be interrupted.

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KEEP YOUR STATEMENT PERSONAL AND FACTUAL

Speak only from your own knowledge. Avoid rumors, attacks on Church leadership, claims to speak for the entire parish, or unsupported predictions about closures, Mass schedules, finances, attendance, or sacramental availability. You do not need to argue canon law or claim a right to keep a particular pastor.

Share only the personal details needed to explain the impact. You may describe sensitive circumstances in general terms; avoid unnecessary medical details or private information about other people.

PROMPTS TO HELP YOU START

My name is _____, and I have belonged to _____ parish in _____ for _____. Father _____ has supported me/my family by _____. One specific experience that shows the importance of this care is _____. Continuing this relationship during restructuring matters because _____. If that continuity is lost, the particular effect on me/my family would be _____.

Use these prompts as a starting point, not a form letter. Include only what is true for you. If it reflects your wishes, you may close with: *"I am not asking that priests never be reassigned; I am asking that my particular pastoral circumstances be considered before an assignment is finalized."*

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

- ❑ I have written in my own words and included a specific personal experience.
- ❑ I have explained the concrete impact of losing continuity, not only my disappointment.
- ❑ I have separated known facts from concerns and avoided rumors or legal conclusions.
- ❑ I have included my **full name, parish and city, signature, and date**.
- ❑ I have checked my **mandate status** with the collection team. If you are unsure whether you signed an individual authorization for the person representing you, ask the team to confirm; do not guess.

Returning your statement: Impact statements are for those who have a valid mandate on file. If you have not signed the mandate, please include the mandate with your impact statement and mail to:

Parish Preservation
PO Box 192
Washington Township. MI 48094-0192