

St. Jeremiah

“The Family Parish”



Introduction

- Information/Data Relied Upon is New
 - Not considered by Cluster or by Archdiocese
- Present Reconfiguration Plan:
 - Three Parishes merge into One at St. George
 - St. Jeremiah (100%) and St. Anselm (90%)
- Plan Results in Insurmountable Obstacles
 - Serious Issues: Traffic, Parking & Facilities
 - Issues We Can't Mitigate: Traffic Intersections, Wetlands & Building Moratorium
 - Leaves Catholic Community in North Framingham without necessary resources to serve our community

Requests/Proposal

- Request for Action:
 - Delay May 15th Closing of St. Jeremiah
 - Issues too serious
 - No adequate plan for transition
 - Transition team only beginning to discuss issues: meetings begin on March 6th!
- Revise Reconfiguration Plan:
 - Merge Three Parishes into Two
 - Do Not Merge Three Parishes into One!

Framingham: The Largest Town in Massachusetts

- Population: 66,910 per 2000 Census
 - does not include an estimated undocumented (unregistered immigrant) population of 14,000;
- Town planners use a 2% annual growth rate
 - Same rate used by Massachusetts Executive Office for Environmental Affairs
 - growth rate (conservative)
 - an evaluation of new housing growth indicates a faster population growth in North Framingham can reasonably be expected
- By 2014 projected population of 100,000
 - Additional undocumented population also expected

St. Jeremiah: Still Growing

- Present population 13,000 “official” residents
- Expected population growth by 2014: 20,000+
- St. Jeremiah Parish territory includes **25%** of North Framingham
- St. Jeremiah Parish territory includes **50%** of *all* undeveloped land in Framingham
- Approximately **70** new single family homes presently under construction within **1.5** miles
- St. Jeremiah serves this growing community of young, old and the “boomers” in between

St. Jeremiah's Neighborhood

- Assisted Living Residences within one mile
 - Heritage House residence
 - Residents travel in handicapped van to 4:30 p.m. Mass
 - A second residence planned in the Nobscot section of the parish
 - 300 units (60% Jewish/40% other)
- Two Section 40B (affordable) housing proposed
 - with 200 additional units
 - will serve both elders and young families
- Over 2000 single family homes with residents older than 65
 - Significant turnover from elders downsizing and young growing families purchasing “starter” homes

Short History of St. Jeremiah Parish

- Established by Richard Cardinal Cushing on July 18, 1958
 - Formed from St. Bridget and St. George's parishes during the housing and population boom in the 1950's
 - Land and Church gifted to Archdiocese
- Home to Astronaut Christa Corrigan McAuliffe
 - "Christa's Bells" donated in her memory
 - Donated to be used for worship only
- St. Anselm's
 - Formed from St. Jeremiah and St. George during the housing boom in 1960's

St. Jeremiah Facilities

- Located in residential neighborhood in **Nobscot** area
 - on 3+ acres of land
 - With no build-out restrictions
- All buildings in excellent condition:
- **Church:** (building occupancy 500+ w/ choir loft)
 - New heating system, roof, air conditioning, carpeting and kneelers; new altar and pulpit; recent speaker system
- **Parish Hall:** (building occupancy 250)
 - fully renovated industrial kitchen; new classrooms with movable walls;
- **Rectory:**
 - Fully renovated office and living quarters
 - New kitchen last year
 - Suites for three priests

St. Jeremiah Facilities (continued)

- **Office space:**
 - In Rectory for staff; conference rooms for meetings
 - Plans for additional offices fully approved and funds available
 - includes conference room, Religious Ed offices, Parish Nurse office, handicap restroom and elevator
- **Parking Lot:**
 - Large, open, directly adjacent to Church & Hall
 - Direct and level handicap access -- 25 feet from parking to pew
 - Access: Town recently repaved Brook Street and added sidewalks
- **Handicap Access to Church**
 - Level; reserved handicapped pew within 25 feet of designated handicapped parking spaces
 - Elevator and office plans approved by Town; funds are on deposit with Archdiocese for renovations as described above

St. Jeremiah's Finances & History of Giving

- Fully Supported by Parishioners
- Total Liquid Assets as of October 31, 2004:
\$425,585.43
- Plans approved and fully funded for:
 - Handicap Elevator to Parish Hall
 - Expanded offices for staff, conference room & handicapped restroom
- Promise for Tomorrow: exceeded goal during midst of sex-abuse crisis
- Parishioners have continued to give after announcement that we were closing

Christa's Bells

- A carillon was donated in memory of parishioner and Challenger astronaut, Christa Corrigan McAuliffe
- The bells are required to be used for the purposes of worship.
- The bells location at St. Jeremiah make them audible by Christa's family and the parish neighborhood.
- The Corrigan family are founding members of St. Jeremiah parish.

Population Characteristics by Parish

per Cluster Reports 3/2004

Parish	St. George	St. Jeremiah	St. Anselm
Recorded Families	1068 35.4%	1597 53.0%	350 11.6%
Recorded Individuals	4310 40.6%	4791 45.2%	1500 14.2%
Mass Count per October 2003	671 38.8%	680 39.4%	377 21.8%
Religious Education Student Count	179 24.3%	325 44.2%	231 31.4%

Facts: St. George Parish territory

- Present population is 11,000
- One large multi-unit housing development planned: Danforth Farms
 - 525 single family, multi-family and townhouses within one mile of St. George church
 - 25% reserved for residents 55 or older
 - Families with children will add to our present numbers
- There are over 1500 single family homes with residents older than 65
 - housing turnover will be significant.

St. George Facilities

- Located in **Saxonville** area of Framingham
 - Area under a building moratorium
 - Area is zoned residential and commercial
- Located in a **heavy traffic area at a hazardous and “failed intersection”** (Hamilton & School Streets)
- **Wetlands restrict build-out possibilities**
 - Property abuts Cochituate Brook, tributary to Sudbury River
- **Major improvements needed to accommodate larger parish**
 - Cost estimates per Fr. Calhoun and facilities review: \$900,000
- **Church** (building occupancy 600+ chapel (50))
 - Recently installed new heating system
 - Needs elevator for handicapped access (plans in place w/ some funds)
 - Needs renovation of roof to eliminate icing at entrances due to slope

St. George Facilities (continued)

- **Rectory**
 - Living Quarters for three priests
 - virtually uninhabitable in present state
 - Limited office space for staff
- **Parish Hall (under Church)(occupancy 200)**
 - Requires handicapped lift for classrooms (see note above)
 - No kitchen
- **Parish Hall (next to Rectory)(building occupancy 250)**
 - Serious work noted for hall windows (per Cluster Report)
 - Small outdated kitchen
 - Needs handicapped access; plans now in formulation; funding not complete
- **Parking**
 - Adjacent to Church
 - Lot across School Street

Facts: St. Anselm

- Formed from St. Jeremiah & St. George during housing boom in 1963
- Located on 6 acres in South Sudbury/North Framingham border
- 50% of parishioners live in Framingham
- 50% of parishioners live in Sudbury
- 90% of parishioners would move to the Framingham “Welcoming Parish,” presently St. George
- Sudbury growth rate has been 15% over the past 10 years; expected to continue

St. Anselm Facilities

- Located in residential neighborhood
- Facilities are in excellent condition
- No deferred maintenance required
- Recently renovated hall for Religious Education
- Rectory has 6 suites available for priests
- 6 acres with no build-out restrictions
- Church parking is level and directly adjacent to building

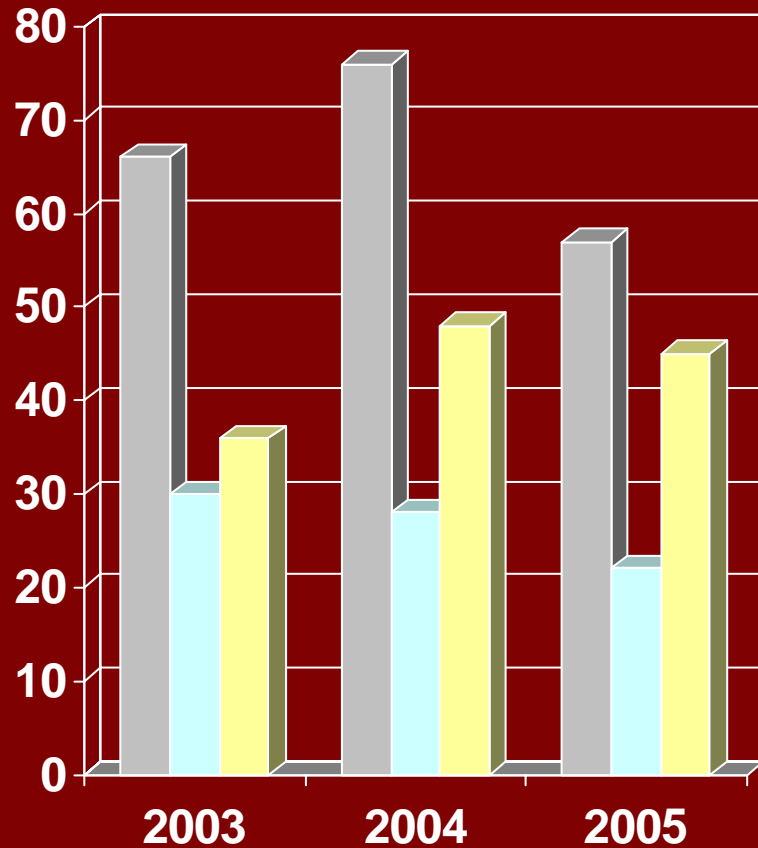
Serious Issues If **3** Parishes Combined into **1** at St. George

- Creation of 1 Parish will make it the largest parish in Framingham
- New Parish Will Have Insufficient Facilities
 - Space will not support religious education needs
 - Space will not support parish-wide activities
- Traffic and safety concerns
 - In large part due to its location at a dangerous intersection (Hamilton & School Streets)
 - Church parking lot empties directly into intersection
 - Traffic backup at Water & Central Street intersection

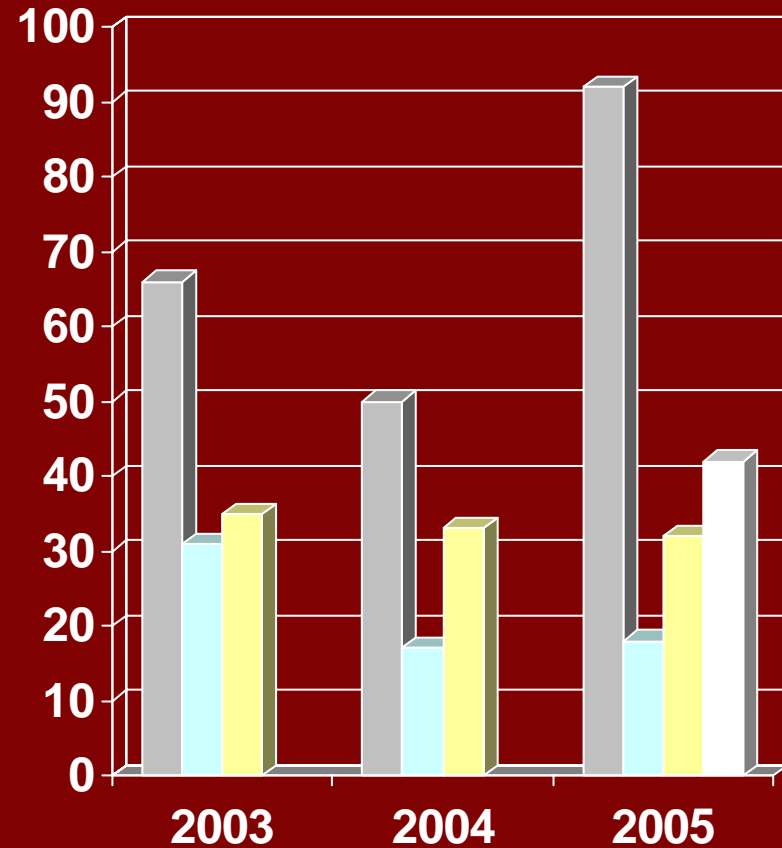
Serious Issues If 3 into 1 at St. George (continued)

- Parking insufficient for needs of larger parish
- Improvements needed for handicapped accessibility
- No room for growth:
 - at present: wetlands and building moratorium
 - in the short term: rectory, parking and parish hall(s)
 - In the long term: new Church likely needed

Religious Education Sacrament Years



First Communion



Confirmation

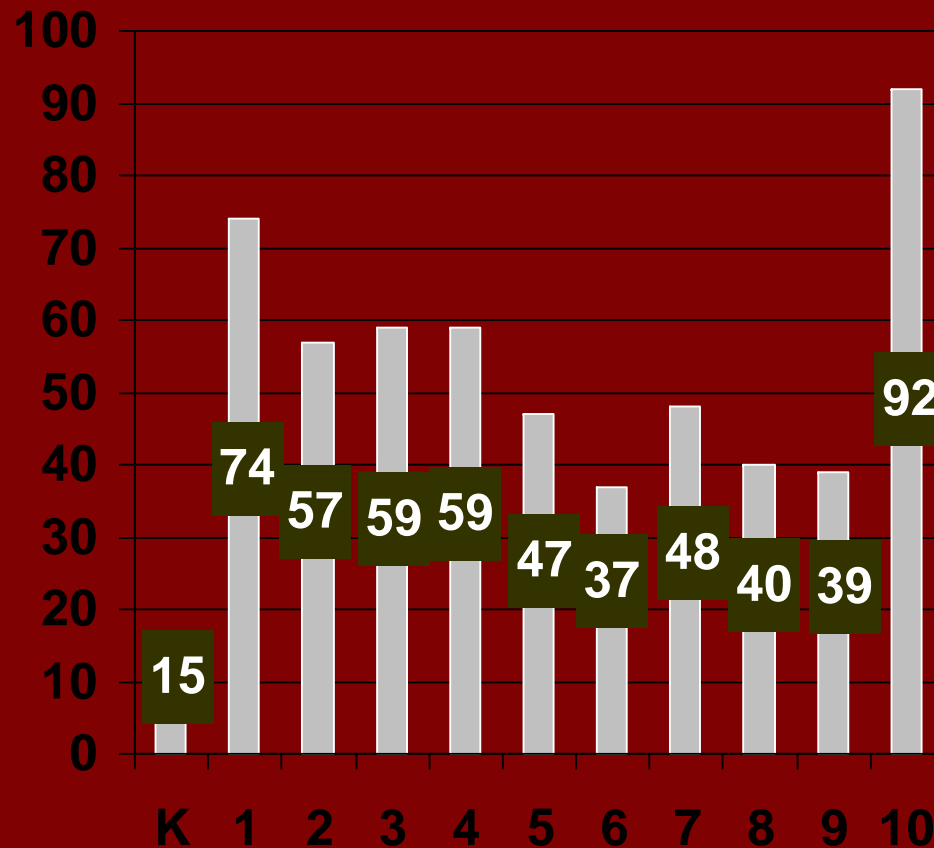
Total
 St. George
 St. Jeremiah
 St. Anselm/Bridget/Stephen

Sources:
 2003 rcab.org
 2004 Cluster Report
 2005 DRE actual

Religious Education Program

Merged: St. Jeremiah, St. George & St. Anselm

Students Enrolled: 567



St. Anselm included only in Grade 10; 25 additional St. Anselm students in Grade 2 are not enrolled; Kindergarten program primarily St. George students.

Source: Director of Religious Education, 1/2005

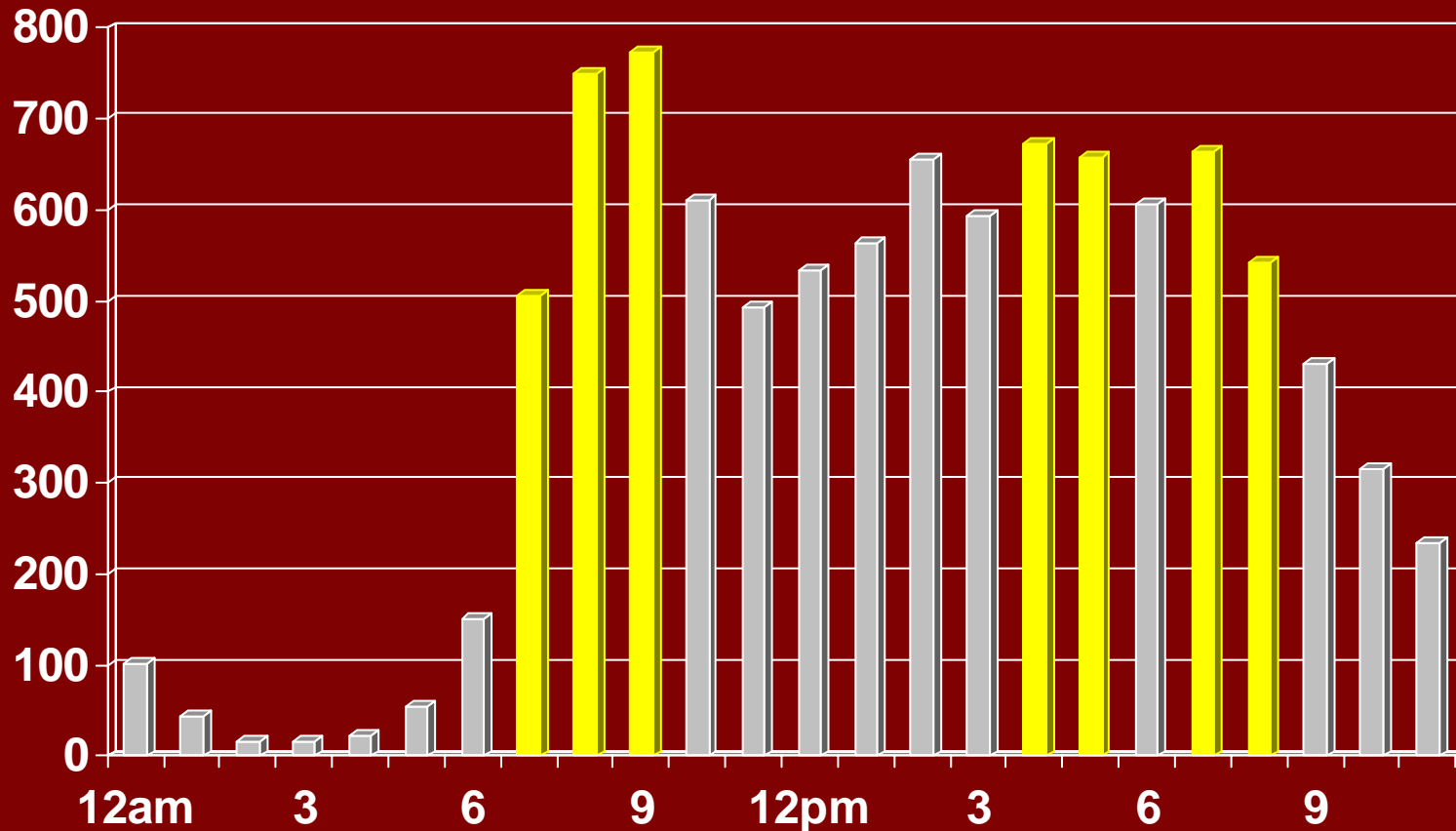
Issues with Merged Religious Education Program

- Too many students; too few classrooms
 - 567 Students – 10 classrooms
 - Majority of students from St. Jeremiah
 - Most St. Anselm's students have not yet enrolled
- Classes held:
 - Sunday morning 9am, 11:30am and 6pm
 - Monday and Tuesday 4:15pm and 7pm
 - Traffic issues: access via dangerous intersections
 - Parking insufficient for needs of merged program
 - Children are at increased danger due to traffic and parking issues

Serious Traffic Issues affecting St. George Location

- **Three Intersections between St. Jeremiah parishioners and St. George Church:**
 - Water Street and Central Street (15,200 cars per day in 2002)
 - Concord Street and School Street (no traffic count)
 - School Street and Hamilton Street (18,000 cars per day in 2004)
- **Intersection at School and Hamilton Street:**
 - Town has found this a “failed” intersection
 - St. George located directly at this intersection
 - Access/Egress of both St. George parking lots directly into intersection
 - Dangers due to traffic demand and design
 - No ability to expand
 - Will be further adversely affected by Danforth development

Traffic Volume Hamilton and School Street April 28-29, 2003



Total number of vehicles on this day is 10,008

Framingham Police Safety Department 2004 estimates 18,000 cars/day.

Data provided by Framingham Traffic Study, Engineering Dept

Traffic Issues (continued)

– Each Intersection Heavily Traveled at Key Times:

- Sunday Morning Masses coincide with Religious Ed classes (two sessions)
- Weekday Religious Ed classes release during rush hour
- **Already one serious Religious Ed related accident**
 - St. Anselm student involved in accident at Hamilton & School Streets

Serious Parking Issues at St. George Location

- **Poorly Designed Parking at St. George**
 - Parking lot ingress and egress is directly adjacent to failed and dangerous intersection; egress is directly into intersection
 - Parking lot is poorly designed and “wraps” around Church building;
 - Handicapped parking limited and @ 200 feet from spaces to pew
 - Lighting is presently inadequate and will need to be improved for safety
 - Parking lot across the street presents dangers for parishioners crossing street
 - Accidents and “near misses” have already occurred
- **Cannot Redesign or Expand**
 - Parking lots cannot be expanded due to wetlands
 - Redesign/striping/signing and lighting must be done
 - Town recommends no parking in front of church to improve visibility in crosswalk and egress from parking lot

Proposed Plan for Reconfiguration Hinders Accessibility

- **Restricted access presently to St. George**
 - Planned elevator in Church not sufficient
 - Only a few handicapped parking spaces near planned elevator
 - Too far from parking lot to accommodate elderly and disabled
 - Pathways to Church in vicinity of elevator are not level
 - Not enough handicapped parking spaces to meet parish needs
 - Presently no handicap access to Parish Halls
 - \$10,000 Community block grant; \$40,000 more needed
 - Funding from block grant is not guaranteed
- **St. Jeremiah Church is handicapped accessible**
 - Access to Church is level and 25 feet from lot to seat
 - Planned Elevator for Parish Hall is approved and funds on hand for project

Comparison of Facilities

St. Jeremiah Parish

- Located in residential neighborhood on 3+ acres
- Not at intersection
- Build-out possible
- **Church**
 - In excellent condition
 - New heating system, air conditioning, kneelers, recent speaker system
 - Roof in good repair; Christa's Bells
 - Handicapped accessible
 - Smaller seating capacity (500)
- **Parish Hall (under Church)**
 - Plans approved & on deposit for elevator to parish hall
 - No building restrictions
 - Has professional kitchen
 - 15 Religious Education classrooms

St. George Parish

- Located in heavily traveled commercial and/or residential zone
- At dangerous intersection
- Build-out not possible
- **Church**
 - In good condition
 - New heating system; no air conditioning
 - Needs roof and steeple work
 - Not presently handicapped accessible
 - Larger seating capacity (600)
- **Parish Hall (under Church)**
 - Needs elevator access (not fully funded)
 - Building restriction due to wetlands
 - No kitchen facilities
 - 10 Religious Education classrooms

Comparison of Facilities (continued)

St. Jeremiah Parish

- **Office Space**
 - In Rectory for administration, Religious Ed. & pastor
 - Plans approved and funds on hand to add new Religious Ed. Offices & space;
 - Not subject to any building moratorium, historical or wetlands issues
- **Rectory**
 - Suites for 3 priests
 - Newly renovated living space
 - New kitchen installed last year

St. George Parish

- **Office Space**
 - In Rectory NOT sufficient
 - Plans to add new offices in Rectory garage;
 - No money on hand or plans approved
 - Subject to wetlands, building moratorium and possibly historical limitations
- **Rectory**
 - Suites for 3 priests, but not presently suitable for residence
 - Requires renovation for living and office space

Summary of Facility Analysis

- No one church can accommodate Mass attendance without adding more than one Mass
- St. Jeremiah and St. Anselm can expand; St. George cannot expand
- St. Jeremiah and St. Anselm require very little maintenance and no cash from Archdiocese to cover expansion; St. George will require funds for improvements to accommodate larger parish
- St. George has fewest classrooms
- St. George is the only church located in a residential/commercial zone at a heavy traffic intersection

Request for Action & Reasons Supporting Request

- **Immediately Suspend/Delay St. Jeremiah's Closing Date of May 15th**
 - Issues are serious and will place parishioners in danger—notably elders and children
 - Issues have not been seriously discussed by the Archdiocese or Parishioners of affected parishes
 - Pastors' recognize these issues exist and are serious
 - There is no present plan to mitigate each of these issues; no plan could avoid serious adverse impacts
 - If St. Jeremiah closes without resolving these issues, it will cost much more in time and money
 - 500 Parishioners of all three parishes are very concerned!

Proposed Solutions

- **Three possible solutions:**
 - **Best of All Worlds: All Three Parishes remain open**
 - Unlikely and we recognize this would not support the needs of Reconfiguration
 - **Worst of All Worlds: Three parishes to One**
 - **Create One Large Parish at St. George**
 - Simply not workable for reasons detailed above
 - **Create One Large Parish at St. Anselm**
 - Has largest and best facilities
 - Would leave North Framingham without a parish
 - Complications of parish already suppressed
 - **Create One Large Parish at St. Jeremiah**
 - Would avoid some (not all) of the problems detailed above
 - Presently could not accommodate parish-wide events
 - Would require some build-out

Real World Proposed Solution

- Leave St. Jeremiah & St. George Open
 - Would mitigate (not eliminate) the traffic and parking issues at St. George
 - Would mitigate the overcrowding and facility issues at St. George
 - Many St. Anselm parishioners would come to St. Jeremiah; fewer to St. George
 - Would cost less in the short and long term
 - Would accommodate future growth in North Framingham

Conclusion

- North Framingham needs two parishes to adequately serve this growing Catholic community
- The current plan for Reconfiguration is unworkable
 - Would require many improvements and repairs with estimated cost to Archdiocese of @ \$900,000
 - Would not solve all the short and long term problems
- St. Jeremiah facilities are in excellent condition
 - can accommodate some expansion;
 - parish has the financial ability to support growth;
 - Would still need to expand to accommodate the new and largest parish in Framingham
- We need both St. Jeremiah & St. George!