



Tier 4
53 dioceses
>100,000 Catholic Population

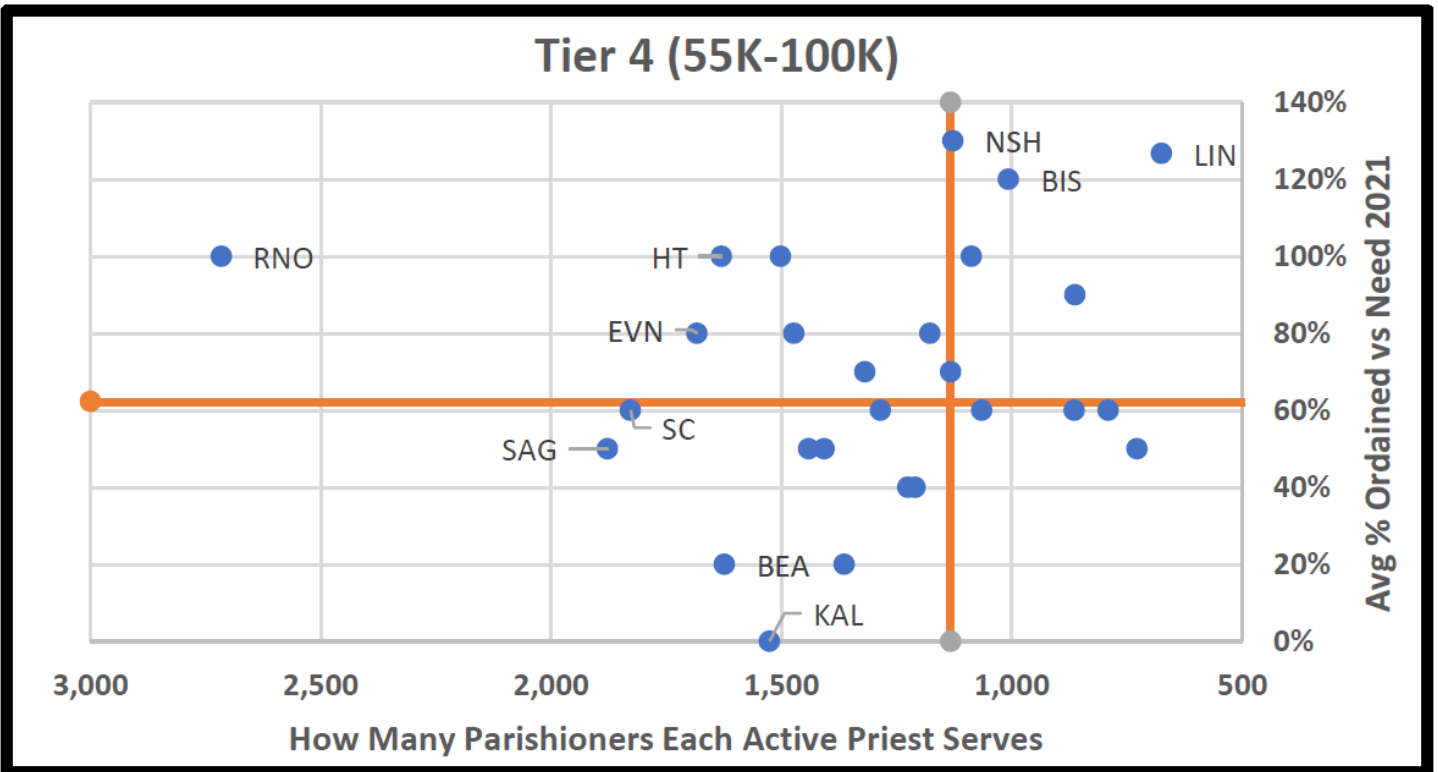
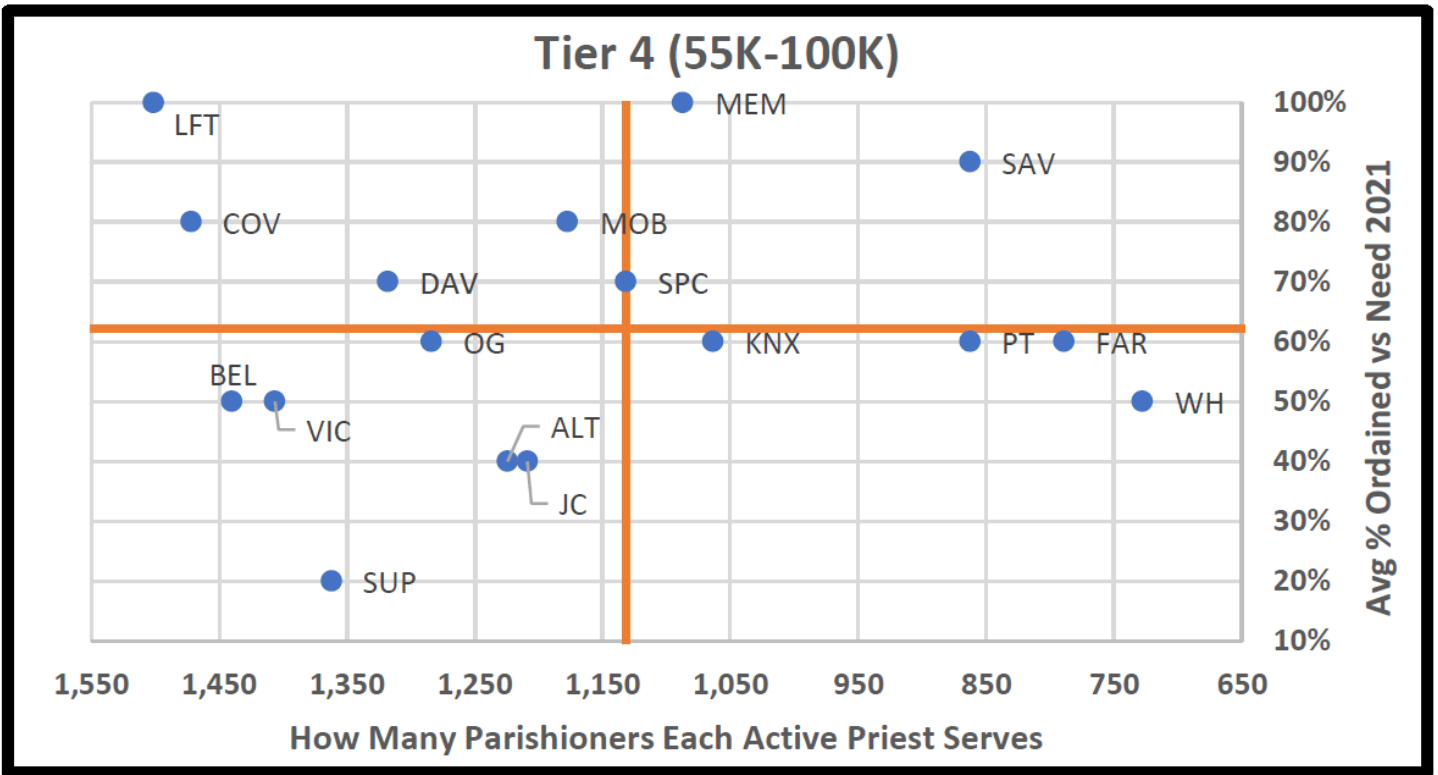
DIOCESE	Diocese Abbrev.	Total Catholics in Diocese 2021	Priestly Ordinations 2021	Priestly Ordination Avg 2017-2021	Priestly Ordinations Needed 2021*	On Avg % Ordained vs. Need 2021	Total Seminarians 2021	Seminarian Avg 2017-2021	Seminarians Needed 2021**	% of Total Seminarians 2021 vs # Needed	How Many Parishioners Does Each Active Priest Serve in the Diocese in 2021
Lafayette, Indiana	LFT	99,064	2	2.0	2	100%	9	12	14	66%	1,501
Lincoln, Nebraska	LIN	94,985	2	3.8	3	127%	25	35	23	110%	674
Covington, Kentucky	COV	92,736	1	1.6	2	80%	7	12	14	51%	1,472
Reno, Nevada	RNO	89,622	0	1.0	1	100%	3	4	9	33%	2,716
Sioux City, Iowa	SC	87,699	0	1.2	2	60%	8	8	14	59%	1,827
Saginaw, Michigan	SAG	86,333	1	1.0	2	50%	6	6	14	44%	1,877
Mobile, Alabama	MOB	85,940	1	1.6	2	80%	10	17	14	73%	1,177
Davenport, Iowa	DAV	85,648	1	1.4	2	70%	7	10	14	51%	1,318
Nashville, Tennessee	NSH	83,416	0	2.6	2	130%	20	24	14	147%	1,127
Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana	HT	81,512	1	2.0	2	100%	10	13	14	73%	1,630
Kalamazoo, Michigan	KAL	77,819	0	0.0	2	0%	7	6	14	51%	1,526
Belleville, Illinois	BEL	77,744	0	1.0	2	50%	7	6	14	51%	1,440
Savannah, Georgia	SAV	75,000	1	1.8	2	90%	12	17	18	66%	862
Jefferson City, Missouri	JC	74,954	1	0.8	2	40%	8	8	14	59%	1,209
Ogdensburg, New York	OG	71,905	3	1.2	2	60%	9	10	14	66%	1,284
Beaumont, Texas	BEA	71,423	0	0.4	2	20%	8	5	14	59%	1,623
Evansville, Indiana	EVN	70,651	0	1.6	2	80%	11	11	14	81%	1,682
Victoria, Texas	VIC	70,318	0	1.0	2	50%	9	11	14	66%	1,406
Altoona-Johnston, Pennsylvania	ALT	69,792	2	0.8	2	40%	0	4	14	0%	1,224
Knoxville, Tennessee	KNX	68,075	1	1.2	2	60%	13	13	14	95%	1,064
Fargo, North Dakota	FAR	67,871	1	1.2	2	60%	16	16	18	88%	789
Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia	WH	66,925	1	1.0	2	50%	5	8	18	27%	727
Springfield- Cape Girardeau, MO	SPC	65,632	1	1.4	2	70%	7	11	14	51%	1,132
Pensacola-Tallahassee, Florida	PT	63,834	2	1.2	2	60%	16	12	14	117%	863
Memphis, Tennessee	MEM	63,060	2	2.0	2	100%	10	16	14	73%	1,087
Bismarck North Dakota	BIS	60,365	4	2.4	2	120%	18	23	14	132%	1,006
Superior, Wisconsin	SUP	55,845	0	0.4	2	20%	6	4	14	44%	1,362
Dodge City, Kansas	DOD	55,000	0	0.4	1	40%	5	6	9	55%	2,292
Marquette, Michigan	MAR	54,486	1	1.2	2	60%	8	10	14	59%	908
Biloxi, Mississippi	BLX	53,666	0	0.8	2	40%	10	7	14	73%	1,032
Tulsa, Oklahoma	TLS	53,516	4	2.6	2	130%	13	16	18	71%	630
Lake Charles, Louisiana	LKC	51,629	1	1.6	2	80%	8	10	14	59%	1,054
Owensboro, Kentucky	OWN	51,043	1	0.6	2	30%	6	7	14	44%	751
Grand Island, Nebraska	GI	50,158	0	0.4	1	40%	6	6	9	66%	1,393
Cheyenne, Wyoming	CHY	48,553	2	1.2	2	60%	3	4	14	22%	1,079
New Ulm, Minnesota	NU	48,201	0	0.4	1	40%	9	9	9	99%	1,339
Pueblo, Colorado	PBL	45,484	1	0.4	2	20%	6	4	14	44%	858
Gaylord, Michigan	GLD	44,075	1	1.4	2	70%	3	8	14	22%	723
Duluth, Minnesota	DUL	43,182	1	2.6	2	130%	10	10	14	73%	960
Jackson, Mississippi	JKS	42,850	0	1.6	2	80%	6	7	14	44%	808
Lexington, Kentucky	LEX	40,589	1	1.8	2	90%	4	7	14	29%	882
Amarillo, Texas	AMA	39,431	0	0.6	2	30%	2	3	14	15%	1,038
Shreveport, Louisiana	SHP	38,031	1	0.8	1	80%	5	6	9	55%	1,268
Salina, Kansas	SAL	36,955	1	1.2	2	60%	6	10	14	44%	684
Alexandria, Louisiana	ALX	36,804	2	1.2	2	60%	7	10	14	51%	657
Helena, Montana	HEL	36,077	0	0.8	1	80%	14	8	9	154%	975
Crookston, Minnesota	CR	35,472	0	0.6	1	60%	6	5	9	66%	985
Steubenville, Ohio	STU	29,624	1	1.4	2	70%	2	6	14	15%	760
Great Falls-Billings, Montana	GF	29,607	1	0.2	2	10%	2	2	14	15%	673
Baker, Oregon	BAK	28,150	0	0.6	2	30%	1	3	14	7%	640
Anchorage-Juneau, Alaska	AJ	26,093	1	0.6	1	60%	1	4	9	11%	870
Rapid City, South Dakota	RC	21,329	0	0.2	1	20%	7	7	9	77%	688
Fairbanks, Alaska	FBK	11,876	0	0.0	1	0%	3	4	9	33%	792

*Priestly Ordinations Needed 2021 = The Average of 2 factors:

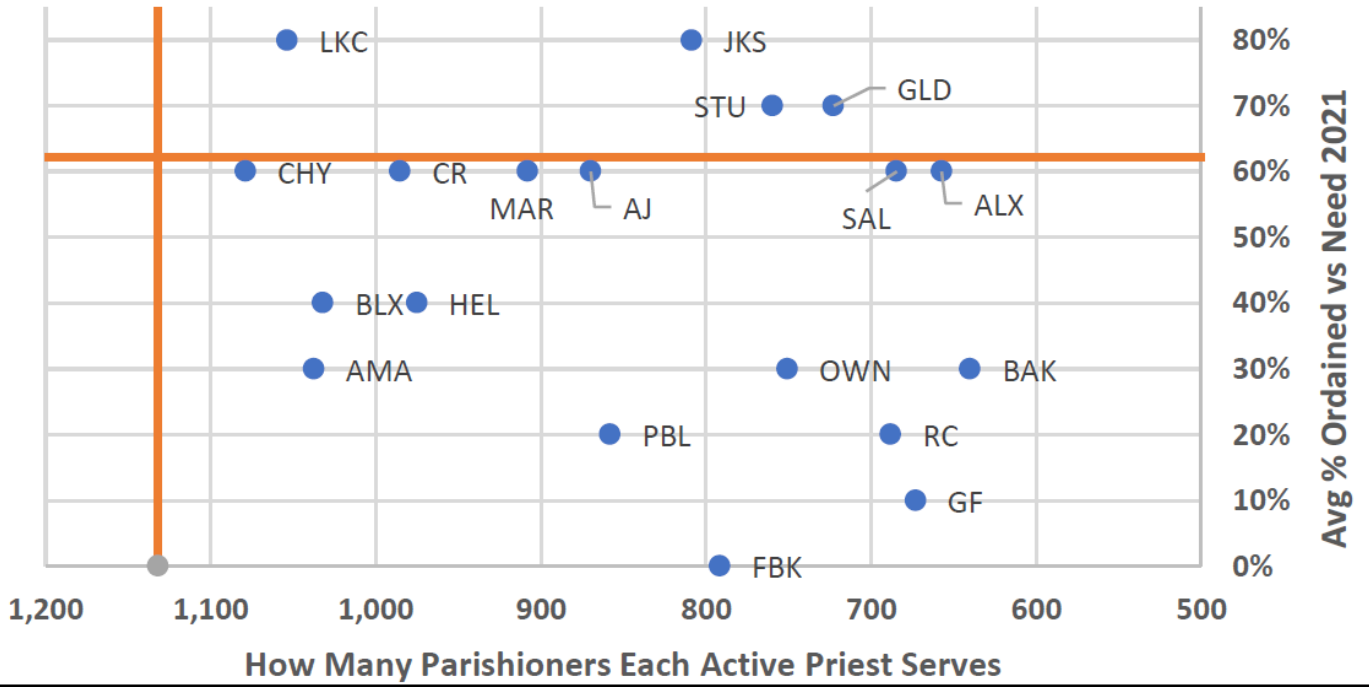
- 1) A Population Factor of one ordination per 120,000 Catholics in a diocese
- 2) The Replacement Rate of Priests. Replacement Rate = 2.7%.

**Seminarians Needed 2021 = ((Priestly Ords Needed 2021 * 7) + 30% discern out rate)

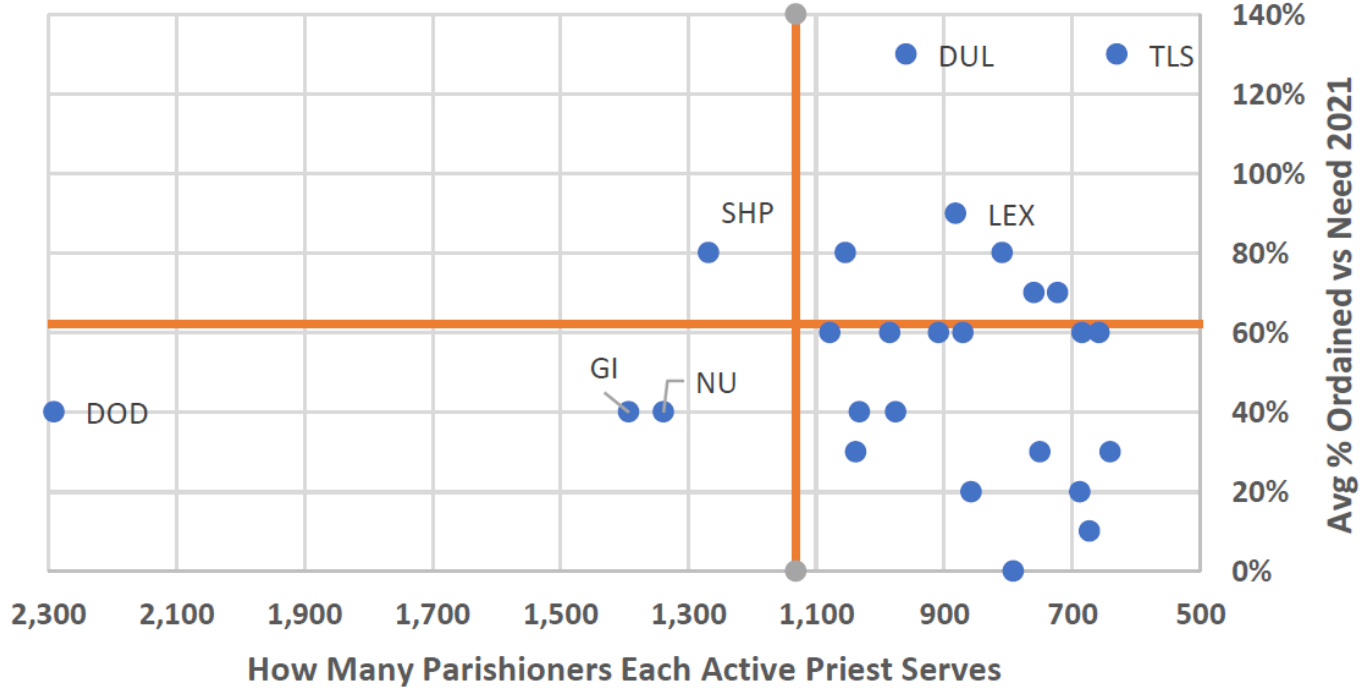
Tier 4 – Quadrants



Tier 4 (10K-55K)



Tier 4 (10K-55K)





Tier 4 – Quadrant Analysis

These Quadrant Charts are graphs of “How Many Parishioners Each Active Priest Serves” compared to “Average Ordination Rate vs. Need”. Each dot on these charts represents the data for a diocese. The vertical and horizontal orange lines provide the overall averages for all the dioceses in their group. Let’s define what each quadrant represents:

Upper Right Quadrant-

Current Situation: The dioceses in this quadrant generally have good numbers of active priests and smaller numbers of parishioners that each priest serves. Ordinations are relatively high compared to the other dioceses in the demographic group. Since each priest serves smaller numbers, access to priests is greater and relationship potential, which has been shown to be necessary for the development of vocations, is more possible.

Future Situation: The dioceses in this quadrant, even though it may not be ordaining as many as it would like, is in the best situation of all the quadrants heading forward. Since ordination rates are higher, and the replacement of existing priests is ongoing, as we approach the high retirement rates of baby boomer priests, this group will most likely handle this situation the best of the 4 quadrants.

Upper Left Quadrant-

Current Situation: The dioceses in this quadrant generally have smaller numbers of active priests and large numbers of parishioners that each priest serves. This reason can be different in the tiers. Some dioceses are Catholic population dense in a smaller geographic area; others may simply have a small number of priests serving very large numbers of parishioners. Either way, the result is that access to priests is reduced. We generally see very few dioceses in the quadrant, which means it is almost impossible to develop a strong, nurturing vocational environment. This doesn’t mean that individual parishes are not able to do this successfully, but dioceses that average high parishioner numbers have found it almost impossible to generate more than 60% of the ordinations needed in this quadrant.

Future Situation: Since there are very few dioceses in this quadrant with a high number of parishioners that each priest serves and a high ordination rate, it’s hard to see a model that shows us what success looks like.

Bottom Right Quadrant-

Current Situation: The dioceses in this quadrant generally have good numbers of active priests and smaller numbers of parishioners that each priest serves. Ordinations are relatively low compared to the other dioceses in the demographic group. Since each priest serves smaller numbers, access to priests is greater and relationship potential, which has been shown to be necessary for the development of vocations, is more possible.

Future Situation: If the addressable steps are taken, it will take time to see positive change in these dioceses because of the number of years needed for priestly formation. But this group has all the tools and inputs necessary for revival at hand.

Bottom Left Quadrant-

Current Situation: Dioceses in this quadrant are struggling in many cases with a lack of existing priests and each existing priest is serving large numbers of parishioners. Ordination rates are very low, compared to the other dioceses in their demographic group. With all the demands of handling these large parishes, priests are finding it very challenging to create a vocational environment to develop sustaining numbers of vocations to the priesthood. Therefore, very few ordinations are fostered in these dioceses.

Future Situation: The question is what changes can be made to make it possible to create a more vocational environment. The first step is awareness. Changes of some priorities from administrative to vocational are possible. Defining roles where religious priests, lay people, and retired religious can fill gaps to alleviate the situation outlined can help create a vocational environment.



Tier 4- Correlations

Vocation Ministry was interested to know if any of the diocesan information collected from the Official Catholic Directory publications of 2015 to 2022 could be contributing factors affecting vocations to the priesthood, and, if so, how important the effects may be. Understanding these trends may be useful to help all understand what creates a more favorable environment to foster vocations.

Pearson correlations are a way to measure the direction and strength of the relationship between two variables. The direction of the effect is indicated by a “+” or “-” sign in front of the reported number. For instance, a “-” sign would indicate the two variables move in different directions, i.e., as one increases, the other decreases. A “+” indicates the two variables move together in the same direction, either higher or lower.

The reported number indicates the strength of how perfect the relationship is. All reported numbers are between “0” and “1.0”. A perfect relationship would be 1.0, which rarely occurs, and no relationship at all would be “0”. To understand the range of reported numbers and what they indicate, see the table below for a description of relationship strengths. While no individual trait should be expected to represent all the variations, those that are significant can be taken as direct contributing factors.

> -0.8	Very High Negative Correlation		> +0.8	Very High Positive Correlation
-0.6 to -0.8	High Negative Correlation		+0.6 to +0.8	High Positive Correlation
-0.4 to -0.6	Moderate Negative Correlation		+0.4 to +0.6	Moderate Positive Correlation
-0.2 to -0.4	Low Negative Correlation		+0.2 to +0.4	Low Positive Correlation
0 to -0.2	No Correlation		0 to +0.2	No Correlation

Tests of significance using *p values (probability values)* of .05, .01, and .001 were applied and are designated as *, **, ***, respectively. To understand statistical significance, a *p value* of .05 would indicate a 1 in 20 chance of this outcome being exceeded by chance alone, .01 would indicate 1 chance in 100, and .001 would indicate 1 chance in 1000. Thus, confidence in results increase as reported correlations are strong (in either direction) and *p values* get smaller.

Tier 4 – Correlation Findings

53 Dioceses

Tier 4	Priests to Parishioners per Parish	How Many Parishioners Does Each Active Priest Serve	Total Active Priests per Total Parishes
Priestly Ords Avg 2017-2021	0.37**	-0.14	0.33*
Avg # of Seminarians 2017-2021	0.47***	-0.16	0.29*
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$			

- The number of parishioners that each priest serves is much lower in Tier 4 dioceses (1,139). This tier is the only one that does not display a strong relationship between higher ordination rate and priests serving smaller number of parishioners.
- Overall, there are 8 parishes for every 7 priests in the dioceses in this tier. Multiple priests serve at larger parishes in the cities, and the rural priest may cover 3 in his travels.
- In general, these dioceses strike a critical balance using their resources to cover and serve their many smaller parishes. The dioceses that have enough priests to strike this balance results are more successful in producing vocations.
- Due to their lower number of parishioners each priest serves, Tier 4 dioceses, in general, can withstand either some parish closures or potential impending retirements.
- Most likely there are other effects (cultural, political, etc.) in play that are not documented in the Official Catholic Directory that are influential for vocations, specifically for the dioceses in this tier. We hope that others who read this report will be forthcoming to help us look at information in new and different ways and give greater insight.