

Diocese of Western New York 2019 Budget Overview and Frequently Asked Questions October 2018

In 2019, both the Diocese of Western New York and the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania will adopt budgets that will account for the expenses of our dioceses as in any given year. But 2019 might not be any given year.

To ensure that we in the Diocese of Western New York have a budget that will accommodate either the proposed partnership with Northwestern Pennsylvania or a search for a new bishop, our 2019 proposed budget accounts for a time of overlap in some staff positions and for some projected transition costs that we will incur in launching either the proposed partnership or a bishop search.

Because of these contingencies, the proposed diocesan budget for 2019 is 5.4% larger than the 2018 budget. The increase includes some costs we will sustain regardless of the partnership vote, like cost of living increases for staff and other ordinary expenses that rise from year to year. Other projected cost increases will vary depending on the outcome of the vote at convention.

The budget coming before convention will guide us during the first quarter, as Bishop Franklin's tenure concludes. It represents the most we would spend in 2019, and the diocesan council will review it mid-year and, if appropriate, adjust it downward to accommodate any cost savings we realize between January and June.

As Bishop Sean [outlined in this video](#), if the partnership with Northwestern Pennsylvania is approved, during 2019 the two dioceses will establish ways of working together that we project will sustain our diocesan operations with the income from congregational assessments in both dioceses. The dioceses' 2020 budgets will reflect these new, more sustainable operational costs and reserve investment income for mission and ministry in communities across the region.

Questions and Answers

Why are we voting on an independent budget for all of 2019 if the proposed partnership would take effect in April?

Because we do not know what the outcome of the vote at convention will be, we need a 2019 budget that will accommodate either the proposed partnership with Northwestern Pennsylvania or a search for a new bishop. This budget will guide us during the first quarter, as Bishop Franklin concludes his time as our bishop. The diocesan council will review it mid-year and make appropriate adjustments.

Are we going to develop a new budget in April if the partnership is approved at convention? Is so, who will do it and who will approve it?

The budget we pass at convention will be our budget for 2019, but diocesan council will review it mid-year and make appropriate adjustments that, if the partnership is approved, will likely reduce overall expenses.

I thought the proposed partnership was supposed to save us money, but this budget is much bigger than last year's. Why?

The increase includes some costs we will sustain regardless of the vote, like cost of living increases for staff and other ordinary expenses that rise from year to year. Other projected cost increases will vary depending on the outcome of the vote at convention.

If the diocese votes to proceed with the partnership, during 2019 we will establish ways of working together that will result in more sustainable operational costs for the 2020 budgets of both dioceses.

Since the vote on the budget will take place after the vote on the partnership, why don't we just have a version of the budget that shows what we would spend if the partnership is approved?

If the partnership is approved, the people of both dioceses will make decisions during 2019 about how our work together will unfold. Any budget prepared for the partnership before that happens would take choices away from lay leaders and clergy. This way of budgeting, although more complicated, promotes collaboration and shared leadership.