PARAPHRASE, QUESTION, INFER, SUMMARIZE (MODEL)

Brooklyn Diocese Moves to Shut 14 Schools

The Diocese of Brooklyn has proposed closing 14 elementary schools at the end of the current academic year, a plan that would mean that one of the nation's largest Catholic dioceses would have shuttered nearly 40 percent of its grade schools in the past seven years.

[handwritten margin note: TREND]

The proposed closings and mergers, announced on Monday, are the latest retrenchment for a school system that was once a bedrock of neighborhood stability, and a magnet for families of many creeds and homelands seeking safe, reliable education at a relatively modest cost.

[handwritten annotations: RETREAT (moving the trench back); metaphor: foundation; different; affordable; metaphor: attraction]

SOURCE:

NY Times, page 1.
By Paul Vitello and Winnie Hu
Published: January 12, 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/13/nyregion/13close.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper

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PARAPHRASE:

Following a trend that has worsened over the past seven years, the Brooklyn Diocese will close 14 more elementary schools at the end of this year. For a long time, these Catholic schools have provided a safe, affordable educational option for many different families.

QUESTIONS THAT COME TO MIND:

Why are they planning to close these schools?
Are fewer people choosing these schools, and if so, why?
Is the economic downturn affecting whether parents can pay?
Are parents choosing charter schools instead?
Are the allegations against priests affecting the membership of the church and/or whether people choose to send their children to Catholic schools?

INFERENCES, SPECULATIONS, PREDICTIONS:

I suspect that the schools are losing students and thus funding, so they probably cannot afford to stay open. I predict that these school closures will lead more parents to look for other educational options, such as charter schools.

SUMMARY OR MAIN IDEA/ARGUMENT:

The Brooklyn Diocese will close 14 elementary schools by the end of this year, no doubt with serious consequences for teachers, parents, and students.