



Genesis Vicariate Pastoral Council

TO SHARE CHRIST IN AND THROUGH THE URBAN CHURCH

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MAY 9, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

Genesis Vicariate Pastoral Council
"Together In Faith" Phase II Meeting
6:30 p.m.
Blessed Sacrament Cathedral

AGENDA:

1. **Opening Prayer/Group Assembly/Meeting Overview**
2. **Young Adult Ministry**
3. **Questions/Comments**
4. **Parish Group Reflection/Discussion/Consensus**
5. **Discussion of Questions 9 & 10**
6. **Wrap up - Preparation for Next Meeting**
7. **Catholic School Committee Report**
8. **Document Download Links**

OPENING PRAYER - GROUP ASSEMBLY/MEETING OVERVIEW

Alton James opened the meeting at 6:30 pm with a prayer and peace was .

The council won't be split into groups; they will be discussing questions 5-8 and receive the information for questions 9 & 10. There will be a plan made for Polonia parishes and City parishes (2 separate plans).

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Joi Hunter, Young Adult Minister for the Central Region made an announcement. She informed us of the changes for the Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry office. Previously, there was a Young Adult and Youth Minister for each region. The diocese decided to no longer have a Young Adult minister. Rakhi McCormick There will be 4 evangelization coordinators; one for each region; Young Adult ministry will be folded into that. The Youth Ministry structure is still intact. Rakhi McCormick is now the liaison for Campus and Young Adult ministry and her phone number is (313) 237-4687. At this point they're transitional; some ongoing programs will continue, some will cease because no one is there to run them.

Joi was thanked by the council and applauded for her hard work over the years. She will be missed.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

We are going to break out and give feedback on questions 5-8. At 7:30 Alton will distribute the internal financial data for review and discussion. We will then do a wrap up. There is no more data to distribute after this evening.

A member asked about what is going into the final plan; Statistics, goals, etc.?

Alton replied it will be all of that and the final plan will begin to take shape tonite. He will give us direction and the final recommendation questions, which we will be working on during the next meetings.

PARISH GROUP REFLECTION/DISCUSSION/CONSENSUS

Question 5: "What Catholic properties are for sale or lease in your planning group and vicariate? Could they be used in a different way? What do you know about the condition of the buildings that are still in use in your planning groups and vicariate? Could they be used in a different way?"

Queen of Apostles: They are leasing the grade school to National Heritage Academy. No other properties are for sale or lease. All buildings; church, rectory, convent and school, are in good repair and condition but require maintenance.

St. Bart/St. Rita: They have a large convent that can be used for rehab, retreats, office space, etc. They rented it out three years ago to two different groups were and making \$3000-\$4000/month on this space. It contains a beautiful grounds, a chapel and recreation area.

OLGC: The facilities are for sale or lease; the church, garages and house. It has been leased out for office use and could be used again for that. Buildings have been kept up to code. The community has meetings there and it's open for other uses; AA also meets there. The merger with St. Raymond has been approved. To sell or lease buildings, the offer has to go before consultants. The rectory and church are available, but not the school. The church can be used for other things such as community programs.

St. Raymond: They have an old school building that's leased to a charter school. The old convent is used as a community center for many activities by the academy, neighborhood and parish. It's nearly at capacity, but has room for a few more things.

Queen of Heaven: All buildings are in use, the school is leased to Dove Academy and they're in the process of renewing their lease.

Madonna: Contrary to the report, the convent has been demolished. The school is leased (same school as St. Gregory).

St. Hyacinth: Properties include church, school, rectory, 2-family house and 2 garages. They would be interested in leasing the school which is in top shape but can be a burden to maintain. If leased, there must be a clause that they can continue to use the basement. All buildings except the activity center (parish house) are in use. All the roofs were recently repaired but the school windows are in need of caulk and paint. There are two boilers used to heat the church and school via an underground passage. The school's not currently leased and the church is utilized. The 2-family house is for lease (it was used previously used for activities, but is now empty) that's in top shape.

St. Lads: Has 2 buildings for sale; the rectory & school, both zoned residence. Zoning is restricted to current use, but could be rezoned for mixed use, which would allow commercial use if done. The Annex (located across the street from the church) will become the new parish office.

St Gregory: They lease their school (shared with Madonna). The older children are at St, Gregory; younger children are at Madonna. The priest is living in the house and the convent was demolished. The gym used for community outreach and is also leased by the school. The lease is up this year, they're in negotiations with the tenant.

St. Benedict: Their convent is for lease and they suggest it could be used for lodging ministers from other countries taking classes/continuing education at Sacred Heart Seminary or local colleges/universities. It could also become residential care for pregnant women 18 & older to provide case management, guidance, counseling for re-parenting, spiritual growth, future planning and transition to their own homes. They prefer the second option. It is the only building for lease. The gym needs a new roof; the convent needs a few minor repairs; the rectory has a small roofing problem and the chapel needs to be plastered and painted. The parking lot needs resurfacing.

Transfiguration-OLHC: The school is for sale. The nuns that serve the parish live in a house behind the church, it is not for sale. Currently, 2 rooms in the school are rented out. The gym is used for events, fundraisers and seniors group. The boiler that services the auditorium is housed in the school building. They may need a separate boiler in the future.

St. Louis the King: The rectory is occupied; they have a new roof on the church and rectory. The auditorium holds parish functions. There's no school, it was demolished about 15 years ago and the old convent was sold many years ago. It is still there but is in disrepair.

Blessed Sacrament: The activities center is in good repair and in use. They plan to do some repairs on the bathrooms. It's currently used by a wheelchair basketball and activities with the neighborhood. Part of the "Changing Lives Together" project.

Queen of Apostles: They may do an extension on the school, it's being negotiated as part of the contract. This would be similar to the contract where the school did restorations and received rent credits to pay for a portion of the cost.

Question 6: "Compare the total seating capacity for the planning group, and the number of registered households in 2010, by parish and vicariate? What are the implications, in light of increasing or decreasing population and available housing in the area?"

Queen of Apostles: Has a seating capacity of about 700 seats. Due to a reduction of parishioners there is extra seating at this time. The chart shows 800, but they removed 3 sections of pews. They have 4 weekend Masses; 4 pm on Saturday (English), Sunday at 8:30 am (English), 10 am (Polish) and 12 Noon (English); Confession is needed and available in Polish and English.

Alton noted that your church's capacity is determined by seating multiplied by Masses. For example, Q of A's capacity is 700 (seats) x 4 (Masses) = 2800. They're reaching an average of 20% of their current capacity. (If you only have one Mass, your capacity would be that number). Saturday they get about 100 people. The fact they're doing a Polish Mass weighs into that. It was noted that if you have a language issue; it needs to be an 'asterisk' issue.

As we discuss Hamtramck parishes, we need to consider the question; "do we need that many Masses said in Polish in Hamtramck?"

St. Bart/St. Rita – The church seats 600 and is 70% unoccupied. They have 179 registered individuals. There's 2 Masses each weekend; one Saturday at 4 pm and one Sunday at 9 am; a total seating capacity of 1200. One priest covers both Masses. They get about 120 at Mass because of school 2 times per month at their Wednesday Mass. About 70 people come on Saturday and the same on Sunday. Two Masses per weekend saves on utility costs. Housing moves fast in this area; they have foreign investment and housing is available.

St. Raymond/OLGC: St. Raymond has less than 800 listed – they estimate about 500 and recently removed pews. They're anticipating a lot of people coming from OLGC when they've merged. There's currently 2 Masses; encouraging them to try one more Mass on Sunday during the summer, the pastor is considering it but is wondering what's best for the transition. On an average Sunday they have 85-100 people at St. Raymond; 50 or so at Good Counsel.

Queen of Heaven: The church seats 400, so they have a capacity of 1200. There's 1 Mass on Saturday and 2 on Sunday; none of which are at capacity. In the past they've talked about eliminating a Mass; people didn't like it but the numbers are down. They get 50-55 people on Sunday, more when they have events.

Alton noted that parishes need to do a Mass count for a month straight. Don't do it on special days or when your parish has an event. This needs to be done once each season.

Madonna: They have a Wednesday Mass that's shared with the cluster and a 9 am Mass on Sunday; capacity is 500, but they can handle 600 due to their intercom. They take a count every week and it's published in the bulletin. The average is 110-125. Each church in the cluster has a Mass.

St. Hyacinth: They don't have same figure as listed in the stats. She counted 214 pews; each holds 6 people for one Mass: 3852 over 3 Masses, the stats stated 700. They can hold about 1200 people. The head count at 4 pm Mass was 75-80 - 30 at the Polish Mass. The 11 am Mass gets about 70-80 people. They have one priest and are willing to change the schedule to one Sunday Mass, but people wouldn't come if they don't have a Polish Mass.

St. Lads: Their capacity is 1100 over 2 Masses; one in Polish, one in English. They take issue with number of registered parishioners which is 325, they count 360. Attendance is 80 at the English Mass on Saturday and 125 on Sunday for the Polish Mass. Their capacity is 550 per Mass.

Transfiguration-OLHC: They have 2 liturgies, capacity is 1600. They have a Mass on Sunday at 9 am in Polish; 10:30 am in English.

St. Gregory: They have one Mass on Sunday at 11 am, there used to be two. Tuesday's 7:30 am Mass' attendance is unknown, but there's usually about a dozen people. Sunday has about 250 regular attendees. The church holds about 500 people. They took out pews when they built the baptismal area.

St. Benedict: They have a capacity of 1000; the average weekly attendance is 40-50. They have a Sunday Mass at 9:30 am and Thursday at 6 pm. Their priests are far from retiring. Active evangelization outside the boundaries is imperative and "Come Home" letters to the alumni and previous parishioners should be sent out.

St. Louis the King: The Pastor intends to have two Masses at each site (Trans-OLCH/STLK/St. Lads) They have a seating capacity of 800 per Mass, they're about same size as Trans-OLCH.

Blessed Sacrament: They have a capacity of 850 and average about 200 - 225 at the Sunday Mass;

St. Florian: They have four Masses; 2 in Polish - 2 in English. They have the only evening Mass in the City; possibly the vicariate. It's in Polish at 6:30 pm. Their capacity is 1700 per Mass and they get close to 100.

Assumption Grotto: Their stats show about 1200 and Alton said that's about right. They're not present, so a plan will be made for them by the council representatives that do show up. Msgr. LeFevre noted that some of their Masses are Tridentine and Latin.

Question 7: "Review the Mass schedules of the parishes – what are the implications in light of the population trends and seating capacity? In light of the age of priests assigned to your planning group and vicariate?"

This question was answered when discussing Question 6 about Mass schedules.

Question 8: "If there is a school within the planning group, how do these internal data affect plans for the school(s)? Do the parishes have development or fundraising plans in place to support the schools(s)? How do the parishes assist in marketing and recruiting?"

St. Bart School: They are the only Catholic school in the planning group. St. Bart's needs to become the sanctioned regional AOD school for the east side.

Alton asked if any parishes have fundraising activities to support St. Bart School. They have a daycare, preschool and grade school through 8th grade. They also have latchkey. For fundraising, they have an active marketing team for financial resources and recruiting that carries on activities. A monthly collection in the church for which school children make the envelopes. They have Annual Mailing campaigns of 20,000 flyers that are sent to 2 zip codes and circulated bulletin information to vicariate member parishes.

They have a special deal at Buddies Pizza on Conant where proceeds come to St. Bart. It's an all-day program where for \$10 you get all the pizza and salad you want. They do this yearly. They also have special programs for the children including a Christmas play and Easter Pageant which are great evangelization tools. They have a great children's choir. For Black History Month they have a living wax museum and all children participate; each child represents one historical figure and they give a history of the character. The school also has a march for MLK day. Other activities are Scouting and a Basketball programs for boys and girls. The parents are looking for a structured education, small class size, a religious structure and education as well as safety.

What we need to find out is what our parishes give outside the 15% if they have charter schools. Do you support St. Bart? If you don't have a charter school, does your parish support the school in some special way? Most do not. What can we do to assist them in marketing? St Hyacinth noted they have a flyer for the school in their parish.

Alton inquired from what we know about this planning group, what school model works well in this area? Parish-based? More regional? Funding coming from the Vicariate? Fundraising at every parish outside the 15%? A regional approach would probably be much better support for the school, but what is considered regional? We need start surveying to know what age school children are in the area, what grades children in Catholic school are in. Would we need to build a high school first, then K-8? Alton said "before you get to that point, the regional support you're speaking of, is it only this vicariate? Renaissance and our Vicariate? The entire Central Region? Diocesan-wide? You have to define what that is."

We need to look at what we have now. We don't believe we're going to come up with money to build or provide high schools on the east side of Detroit; it would probably need to be at the vicariate level. If you did a survey, you'd need to know what viable property is for a school and what it would take to convert it. How would you provide transportation; is there any public available or would it need to be provided?

The Central Region's school planning is being done. There's 7 total; 4 in Trinity and 2 in Southwest. All points being brought up are critical to analyze. If you put a school here, where are the kids coming from? It doesn't necessarily need to be an existing building. You need to tell them what you want to see and how you want it funded. We're going to get a high-level view of what the Central Region Education Committee is working on.

One person asked "would the school be associated with a church?" and Alton said you should always make sure it is; even if it's regionally supported. If you look at the schools, they're not big; they're small in structure. Most are 500-800 students and share their resources. Because of the cost of tuition (about \$10,000 at some), you need to look at the economy.

The St. Lad's rep stated that since we're in the planning stage; the future of churches in Hamtramck is Polish immigrants. If they can't find a school to trust, they'll move; just as they're doing now. If they'd be willing to send their kids to one of our schools, it would help the church.

St. Bart's rep asked if the AOD plans in the future to provide education for Catholic students, or Catholic education to anybody seeking it? Their diminishing numbers may make it missionary in nature. Most schools are in predominantly non-Catholic areas.

OLGC's rep noted that most Catholic schools are charter schools. If you take your children from charter school at your parish and send them to Catholic school; you're taking money away from your parish. A majority have opted to become charter schools and they're trying to run 2 systems out of one. If we start changing this, the money they're counting on goes to another church.

Alton said when we talk about charter and Catholic schools; we're not putting charter schools into Catholic school systems. The Catholic schools are not built on that premise and the funding portion is a critical piece. There are places in the country where Catholic schools are flourishing and children are going at no charge. They need to develop the plan to say what that mission needs to be. That's what the Archbishop is looking for; a quality education for every child.

DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS 9 & 10

Question 9: "Review the Loan Deposit Program debt and payables debt. Are the parishes in the planning group able to meet the current expenses? Are they attempting to pay down any debt? What is the debt in relation to savings and what are the implications of this? Could your parish assist another in paying down debt or outstanding payables?"

Question 10: "Compare the total regular income (offertory plus Christmas collection) to the total of all other income for each of the parishes in the planning group. Is the parish reliant on special income (rental income, diocesan grants) to meet regular expenses? In light of expenses, debts, payables, and savings, what are the financial implications for each parish, for the planning group and the vicariate?"

The council took a short break. When they reconvened, they reviewed the Financial Data Summary page, which included Loan Deposit Program (LDP) debt as of 2004; LDP debt in 2010; current payables (which represents benefit and salaries); Michigan Catholic Conference assessments (any staff member that's full time has benefits paid to MCC at the end of the year); total savings (money in the bank with the LDP); all other operating expenses; parish regular offering (including Christmas collection) and all other income (fundraising, charter income, etc.). All information comes from the detail in 5 year trends (on the back). It was noted that the Trans-OLHC numbers are since the merger, the information seen is them combined.

One rep asked if these numbers are from the budget and Alton stated that these are the actual numbers sent in at the end of the year on your parish's financial report, not budget numbers. If your numbers aren't correct, you need to talk to your pastor. The fiscal year runs from July 1st thru June 30th.

Parishes responded by group. Group 2; the LDP is going up for St. Florian only. Other parishes have paid off their LDP. According to the report; St. Florian's debt increased.

Looking at operating expenses vs. offertory income; if you have other income and it makes expenses, you have a concern. What happens if extra income goes away? You're in the hole. If you have charter income and it's helping to balance income – if it goes away, you're in the hole and it can be significant. A source of income can be internal fundraising.

A rep asked if charter schools reimburse for part of income, does that count. The school's reimbursement has to be included in rental income and has to include utilities; it's consistent throughout the Archdiocese.

Alton noted that **this information is proprietary and shall not be distributed. It is not given to be given to anyone outside this planning group.** Your pastor has this information. It is not to be shared with other parishioners. We are trying to be transparent, but not vulnerable.

The first draft of recommendations shall be prepared at the next meeting and we need to start coming up with plans at a group level. The next time we meet the seating should be situated as Groups 1 and 2 so they can have discussions together.

Msgr. LeFevre said that when we start to do plans we need to be aware of diocesan protocol. When you merge with a parish, you take on their debt. Keeping in mind the "Basic Assumptions" we need to be mindful of them, they're a guide to help you. Also, the "Expectations of a Priest" document should be a guiding factor. You will be submitting a plan for a merger or cluster. EVERY parish absolutely needs to identify a partner should something happen to their priest (death, retirement, reassignment, etc.). What would you do? You need to do this no matter their age, it could be a temporary and an interim plan.

We don't want a vacuum where there's no church and Catholic's can get communion. We don't want to leave a void of no outreach services in any area.

Some pastors may not be replaced when they are reassigned or retire and it is up to you to come up with an alternate plan in case of emergency. You need to do the research; possibly going outside your vicariate to come up with a creative solution. You need to look at parishes that have way more capacity than attendees.

Does it make sense to have 6 Masses when only a handful attends each? St. Lad's rep stated to the group that this is a rare instance where we, as parishioners, have the ability to give input to the archdiocese as to what we want to happen to our parishes. We need to make responsible suggestions or the Archbishop may toss them aside. If we have a good idea, the Archbishop will accept it.

A rep asked if "when a parish has an order that leaves the parish, does the provincial keep the debt or the parish?" Alton replied that the only "order" parish is St.'s Peter/Paul. As long as the order is in existence, the order will take care of the parish. The financial responsibility belongs to that order. If you leave a debt, that debt stays with you. Debts also follow parishes when they merge.

It was inquired whether all debts reported are approved by the Archdiocese or can a parish enter into a debt from other loan sources not approved by the AOD?" and Alton replied that it's "probably not feasible to do that and probably not approved by them".

St. Bart's rep asked "What do we do in an emergency? Would the Archdiocese allow business administration be run by a layman and have a visitor priest come into say Mass?". Alton said he doesn't know, it must be put in place as a viable plan. Each parish must have a pastor because of the canonical and financial responsibility, not just shepherding souls. Also, just because a parish near or around you is in a cluster situation, it doesn't mean you can't join. For example; Fr. Kotlarz is pastor of St. Raymond, OLG and Queen of Heaven; they're clustered parishes and he serves as pastor of all 3; the same as Msgr. LeFevre.

One pastor has numbered parishes, but their finances aren't combined; when you merge the finances are combined as one. You can also have 'associate' pastors. In response to an inquiry, deacons cannot be pastors, but can be administrators and make sure the day-to-day operations are handled. A pastor (or priest) is the only one that says Masses.

Alton stated that the Archbishop believes in this process and your most successful secular administrations use a 'bottom-up' approach instead from 'top-down'. Your broadest base is in a pyramid shape and the strongest is the bottom. We're late in getting to this point as organizations. The Japanese employ this way of thinking and that is why they're so successful.

WRAP UP – PREPERATION FOR NEXT MEETING

The council's homework is to look at the basic assumptions while formulating their plan; every part of your plan needs to meet these assumptions. Fr. Kotlarz said that there is a model for clustering. The pastor can delegate an administrator, deacons, etc., but the cluster still has to support this person.

If you put together a plan, you can send it to Alton or Msgr. LeFevre to look at to see if you're on the right track. You're not restricted to our vicariate as part of your plan. Horace noted that there are many countries with an abundance of priests, we may need some of these to come to America, but Alton pointed out that there are quite a few problems with that; immigration, insurance, benefits, etc. You get into the legality of the person at that point and it takes a long time for that to work itself out. You also need the Bishop of that country to approve it. It can be done, but it has a set of challenges in and of itself.

A rep asked "what does vocations for deacons look like?" and it's somewhat up. There's enough to service the needs of the AOD. You can have a deacon, but the parish has to support that deacon. A deacon is someone that is clergy; they're not like a priest in the sense there's a vocation spot for a priest. A deacon has no guarantee of compensation from a parish.

The parishes need to open up to final recommendations. You have all the data; if you have questions, call Alton or send him an email. That's the only way he can be of assistance. Our final plan has to be completed in a draft form on June 27th. We have meetings on May 23rd and June 13th to do this. We need to be developing our plans at the next two meetings and our final recommendations.

UPDATE: A rep from St. Hyacinth requested something relative to the discussion on the responsibility that is being put on the parishes in the event something should happen to their pastors be added to the minutes. He and at least two representatives from other parishes expressed concern with what was being said about the parishes needing to find replacements and believe it is important the general misunderstanding and apprehension that apparently exist on this matter is captured. They are still not sure what the expectation of the Archdiocese is in this matter, what is allowable or appropriate nor what type of homework can be done in this area and are hoping that future meetings will shed additional light on this vital matter.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

Kevin Byrnes of Gesu Parish gave the Catholic schools report. He's part of the Central Region's group of 6 City school parishes and they're working in conjunction with what we're doing. They're half-way through their process. They've had three meetings so far.

The schools being discussed are St. Bart's, Christ the King, Holy Redeemer, Gesu, Most Holy Trinity and St. Scholastica. His report included the following bullet points:

- We need to think of Catholic Schools in the City of Detroit as mission schools, with different challenges and fewer financial resources than a traditional Catholic School.
- We respectfully disagree with the assertion that average standardized test scores at the 60th percentile define a school as healthy.
- After reviewing testing data from the schools, in fact, we concluded they are doing an excellent job. Test scores are at or above grade level and far higher than surrounding public & charter schools.
- Economic factors are a HUGE issue. Retired consultants from Notre Dame worked with St. Bart's and concluded that additional \$150,000 in scholarship would enable them to increase their enrollment by 60 students.
- We need a unified marketing campaign highlighting our City Catholic schools and the fact that they are here to stay.
- One other fact we've discovered is that Catholic Schools serve less than 3% of Detroit's school-age population.

People whose children go to Catholic schools save the public schools money. They're getting the message out that Catholic schools are available. The schools are not looking to compete; the schools are coming together cohesively and trying to keep them open.

The question was raised as to who the target is; Detroit kids or suburbs? Kevin noted that Gesu has children from 30 different zip codes. Other schools have the same dynamic. They're trying to target the city given what's happening with charter schools and public schools.

The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD LINKS

APC PLANS & FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS (Questions 1-9)

The following are the reference files for the APC Plans & Final Recommendations:

APC YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY SUBCOMMITTEE

LEADERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

STEWARDSHIP & ADMINISTRATION SUBCOMMITTEE

CHRISTIAN SERVICE & OUTREACH

EVANGELIZATION & CATECHESIS

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Archibald
Genesis VPC Recording Secretary