



# Genesis Vicariate Pastoral Council

TO SHARE CHRIST IN AND THROUGH THE URBAN CHURCH

MSGR. MICHAEL LEFEVRE, VICAR  
9844 WOODWARD AVENUE  
DETROIT, MI 48202  
(313) 865-6300  
WWW.GENESISVPC.ORG

## OCTOBER 24, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

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

### AGENDA:

1. **Opening Prayer – Meeting Introduction**
2. **Planning Group 1 Discussion of Questions 4 & 5**
3. **Meeting Wrap-up**

### OPENING PRAYER – MEETING INTRODUCTION

Alton James, Archdiocesan representative, opened the meeting at 6:30 pm with a prayer led by Msgr. LeFevre, then peace was shared among the members.

Alton distributed an updated summary sheet of parish finances. These were compiled as of October 2011. The things that have changed are in columns 8 - 14; If you look at Blessed Sacrament's numbers, you'll see that it says "B- 11-12"; The "B" means Budget year, the numbers of the last columns are reflective of the budget submitted 2011 -2012. Where you see an "F", it means "Financial Report" –the actual numbers submitted by the end of the year. We wanted to update the ones by the financial report; those are hard numbers. This would be the most current financial information we have since most are "B" (based on the parish's budget).

Everyone received the information about the schools and a copy of what the final plan should look like, we only have this meeting and the next to complete this process.

The Mass for the Vicariates is on October 27<sup>th</sup> at Sacred Heart and all of the planning groups are welcome to attend – they just need to know who is coming. Bishop Hanchon will be the Main Celebrant. This is a way to give praise and thanks; Mass begins at 7 pm and no meeting for our vicariate will follow. The meeting that will be following the Mass is for the Renaissance vicariate. There was a Mass proposed for the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, but the Trinity moved their meeting due to the Holy day, so the October 27<sup>th</sup> will be the only Mass at this point due to the Bishop's busy schedule; maybe after the holidays when we start to meet again we'll have another opportunity.

The purpose of this meeting, to give a good visual, is that we've been on a journey - say we're on a plane; we're coming in for a landing, dumping the excess fuel and are in our final descent. We're getting ready to land; the landing & takeoff are most critical part of the flight. We're going to bring the plane in and the final plan to be distributed is like the pilot's checklist. We have one more meeting to put the final plan together. Alton stated he hopes that Group 2 (the "Polonia" group) may be able to finish their plan this evening. There is a possibility we can do it but we have to move quickly. Alton noted that if he "pushes back" tonight it's because we have to 'get the plane down', it can't keep circling. In that respect we need to start getting to work.

Alton attended yesterday's Unity Mass at Transfiguration-OLCH for the new Trans~OLHC/St. Ladislaus-St. Louis the King merged parish (which will probably be name "Blessed John Paul II Parish"). He said it was a great celebration that was well attended and very inspirational.

### PLANNING GROUP 1 DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS 4 & 5:

At our last meeting, we went through Questions 4 and had some discussion on Question 5. Alton noted that we need to "put stakes down" for Question 4 so we can move forward to Question 5.

Going through the Summary sheet, the only things that are really important are the LDP debt is accurate as of June 30, 2011, as are the current payables owed to the AOD & MCC and the total savings. The financial information in columns 11 through 14 are based on either financial reports or budgets. Msgr. LeFevre noted that the Cathedral info doesn't show the

grant money from the Archdiocese; and Alton said we can put this back in and that's one of those asterisks that has to be explained. They wanted to do it like this so everyone was looked at in exactly the same light and it's one of those caveats we need to throw in there.

It was asked if we're still updating counts and Alton stated that it's not really that important at this point. The percent of households outside the boundaries is based on the CSA Census. It was asked if the incline/decline is accurate? Roughly, yes, it is.

**Question 4: *What recommendations can be made about future clusters, mergers, or different parish configurations? Which ones and when? How would these increase or grow the activities identified through the initial reflection process?***

Alton asked if anyone had recommendations to bring to the table as **every** parish needs to identify a cluster partner in case of the retirement, death, reassignment, etc. of a pastor. That's also part of Question 4 – to recommend further mergers/clusters

### **Blessed Sacrament, Madonna, St. Benedict, St. Gregory**

It was recommended that Blessed Sacrament, St. Benedict, Madonna and St. Gregory cannot stay the way they are. We need to look at making those 3 a merged parish where Blessed Sacrament stands alone; the current cluster doesn't need to remain aligned the way it is. It doesn't make sense, looking at the numbers, for 3 parishes with as few families as they have, it can't be afforded. We need to take a hard look at which of the 3 parishes or worship sites will stay open.

St. Benedict has only 51 families in a church that seats 1500; you can't keep that open for 51 families – so where will those people be merged to? That question needs to be answered first in order to move on.

A representative voiced that it makes sense due to the numbers. Another stated that it's time to talk mergers, not clusters. Msgr. LeFevre noted that in 1988, the Archdiocese didn't close St. Benedict because it's the last Catholic parish in Highland Park. Most of the Cathedral's boundaries go north into Highland Park. The Archdiocese is asking what it means that we're closing the last in church in Highland Park.

Can we keep it as a mission church? You don't have to celebrate Mass at an outreach facility. It doesn't make sense to keep the church open for 51 families - with the amount it costs to run and heat a church of that size; we cannot afford to keep it open with the dollars coming in versus dollars going out.

We're all Christians and we want to do what's right which includes making some very hard decisions. We have to make hard choices; if we don't make them the APC will do it for us. We have to do something.

At the last meeting they made a proposal to go down after a year to 2 parishes then a merger after that. That was a discussion, not a plan. We started these meetings in 2003 and we're still dancing around the same questions and nobody wants to make any decisions. We need to move on these issues.

Alton added the caveat that what we also have to be concerned with is whether we are being good stewards with our people's money by putting it into these types of situations?. Could we put the resources entrusted to us to better use?

A rep stated maybe we're hesitant about taking that away from the people who can't afford to travel to a parish. We can't save everyone, but we have to think about the people. Alton noted the figure that in our planning group, 73% live outside parish boundaries – they're already traveling/driving in. He suggested that you could take the savings from a merged parish and buy a vehicle and work to transport the people to Masses. Many of the representatives liked that idea.

A rep confirmed that there's no one at the meetings to represent St. Benedict; when suggesting our plans, we have to be careful about excluding the people not here. We spoke at past meetings about about evangelization and bringing people in; she thinks this can be a stepping stone where we can take people out of the church because some will accepting of this and some will not. Without a voice from them too, that gives them ammunition to work against it.

Alton stated that the bottom line is that each of us have attended the meetings, they've had the same opportunity to attend these meetings, but have chosen not to take part in this planning process. They're not here and we have got to move forward. There's people saying we're moving too fast, but the Archbishop promised the people that he'd come out with a pastoral plan for our Archdiocese. When people make the choice to not be here, we cannot hold up the process.

From the beginning of the TIF II Planning meetings, which started back in February, everyone was told "if there's a group not taking part, you will need to make a plan for them". Every pastor was given the same information; some have chosen to engage, some have chosen not to. There will be unhappy people. But, what's better for the people? To close the doors when they run out of money? Do you want someone to make decision for you do you want to have some control over it?

Msgr. LeFevre said there are 2 pieces, and he's being neutral; but has heard some people say they want out of the cluster so he made the recommendation to remove Blessed Sacrament from the cluster: which means St. Benedict, Madonna and St. Gregory, the remaining parishes would stand alone as the new cluster. If St. Benedict fades away, the new cluster would be St. Gregory & Madonna (which was the original cluster), but neither of them can afford to stand alone.

There was a question going back to closing the only church in Highland Park (St. Benedict). Msgr. noted that the Archdiocese sets the boundaries, most of the boundaries of the Cathedral parish are in Highland Park; so technically Blessed Sacrament is in Highland Park. Madonna is also a church in Highland Park.

When asked how St. Benedict is paying their bills is because of their charter school. Msgr also stated that, in fact, the only reason a lot of our parishes exist is because of the charter schools and if any one of his parishes lost their charter school, they'd be gone. Politically we'll "take a hit" if we close St. Benedict. One pastor feels we have another option and that we shouldn't be pressured to make the decision for them since they're not participating in the process– we could let the APC or Archdiocese do it.

Msgr. LeFevre offered a recommendation that St. Benedict could sell off everything and maintain themselves in the original building (the church), which would be the perfect size for today's community as it was in the beginning. Part of a proposal could be that they sell off the other buildings and keep the original church. But that doesn't address another issue; Msgr. will still have to be going over there to say Masses (see the ["Reasonable Expectations of a Priest"](#) guidelines). If you want to maintain a Catholic presence there, he suggests taking it down to the one building but doesn't think they can survive without the school.

It was asked that if the other 3 parishes in present cluster either clustering or merging, what does that mean for a pastor? They'll need to appoint someone other than Msgr. LeFevre, so that would have to be part of the proposal and Msgr. stated that they couldn't afford it. Alton noted that you have to pay a priest's salary & benefits – you're looking easily at \$80K.

Another option was brought to the table that Madonna, St. Benedict, St. Gregory stay in the cluster with Blessed Sacrament with Msgr. LeFevre as the priest at both places, but with only 2 locations. From what they've heard, the people put who have put the most work in is Madonna; they came up with a group to put together a plan with a mission behind the plan – the Urban Ministry program. So you have 2 locations you have Blessed Sacrament, Madonna or wherever they choose to merge & locate at. There would be one priest for both locations, but you'd only have 2 locations instead of 4.

One rep thought if we go that way, Madonna doesn't have the space. Alton asked "why not?"; the rep said she's speaking of the number of people that attend Mass at Madonna, St. Gregory and St. Benedict. How many seats are at Madonna and the answer is they claimed they can seat 500 people. There are 51 at St. Benedict; Madonna has 250 and St. Gregory the same; a rep noted that there would also be the option of having 2 Masses.

Other than when there's a 'specialty' Mass when the church is absolutely full, the weekly Masses don't fill the pews. You can put 500 people in Madonna and still have plenty of room if everyone were to show up at one time. Madonna also video tapes and shows the Mass downstairs for those that want to sit down there. The rep said that there may be enough for members, but don't look for a huge amount of new members.

Alton, playing 'devil's advocate', asked what would happen if the ministry developed in some sort of way at some point of time in the future that they were bursting at the seams and they said "we've got enough money, enough resources, time and energy to develop this to build something new; even if we had to come and grab other parishes and pull them together and we collectively decide build something new; that also could come about. That doesn't preclude that from happening, but right now this is what we have to look at. With this group, you've got 4 parishes right now; if you broke it down to 2, you could almost have reduced your expenses in half.

The group was also reminded that you take on the debt of the parish you're merging with. When you have parishes merging and becoming one; the people are still accountable for the amount of debt of the parish. You have to make it clear, even pastorally, that you've come together as one; this is OUR debt; you have to stop saying that it's "your" debt. That's how you have to catechize the plan.

One rep said people are people and if you have \$2 here that you owe and another person has \$50 they owe, you have a time making the people with the \$2 helping the people pay for their \$50. But, maybe something can happen where things will be different. But this is like what she's heard at St. Gregory; the reason why they suggested at the council to give them 5 years of the way things are going now because when you look at the parishes they've clustered with, they've worked so hard and diligently to cut down on that debt so they could they could have a reason to stay whole..

Alton noted that as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, St. Gregory had \$10K in their savings account and they owed \$27K in current MCC payables. That means that if they have a secretary at the parish (and this information is common); she's been on payroll and part of the \$27K is part of her benefits (like her health insurance and pension). The decision was made that the MCC, who takes care of these things, will be contacting parishes who currently owe money and tell them they have 30 days to pay up or they're going to have to drop them. This means that secretary's going to be getting a letter telling her the same thing; you no longer have health insurance, your pension will be in question, and if that happens, that person has to go out and find their own.

We, as good stewards as being Catholics, part of what we all are faced with that we have to do, is we have to give fair and equitable, and part of that are benefits. If you can't afford to give an employee benefits, you're not paying a fair and equitable wage. It's against what we stand for and against our principals that we operate under. If you can't do that, you have to understand the secretary then has the right to say "If you're not going to pay my benefits, I quit". When that happens, what are you going to do? Are you going to find someone to come in that's willing to work for nothing?

A rep said that we talk about debt – years ago, when all the money from Detroit went to the suburbs, no one said anything. What about all the money that built the churches in the suburbs? Alton replied that was a time and place when the Archdiocese was in an entirely different financial situation. It's the nature of times in which we live. The truth is the financial situation is far different than it was 10-15-20 years ago. The Archdiocese made loans to churches they knew they wouldn't be able to get the money back from; they knew the loan wouldn't be repaid; but at the time our finances were such that they could afford to do it and the bishops & archbishops felt it was the right thing to do. We're not in the same financial place and time. All the investments we have are performing the same way they are for the private industry; we're in the same financial market our finances aren't what they used to be and we can no longer afford to do that; it's history. We can't change anything in the past, we can only look forward.

We have to move on and make a decision and we have to put a plan together. One rep went back to the suggestion to give them 5 YEARS, but it's not realistic. We don't have 5 years.

Each site has its own operations; these sites need to come together to look at what they can do. Looking at the operations of facilities, heating, etc. sometimes the picture isn't getting through to the parishioners. The information is not being fully communicated.

It was said that we have to move past this and merge in a year; you need to do your site evaluations and find the best facility – the best boiler, roof, least amount of facility upkeep, etc. We need to make the decision and give the timeline – give them the information and the date. You have the 3 facilities, you've got people who are organized. Blessed Sacrament is the seat of the Archdiocese of Detroit; it's not going anywhere – as for the other places, you need to make a choice. You've got 3 facilities and you only need 2, but you need an east and west side.

The following are the motions put forth by the various council representatives:

1st MOTION: Blessed Sacrament; St. Benedict, Madonna and St. Gregory having 2 worship sites

2<sup>nd</sup> MOTION: 2 parishes going forward

3<sup>rd</sup> MOTION: To current cluster staying 'as-is- for 5 years (thought to be unrealistic)

4<sup>th</sup> MOTION: Close the with the largest debt

5<sup>th</sup> MOTION: MERGE the 3 parishes into a single worship site at St. Gregory; not including Blessed Sacrament

6<sup>th</sup> MOTION: Keep Benedict down to one building and sell the rest of the buildings on the property

Each motion was gone through and it was asked how many representatives think we should accept one of these plans: the first motion received 12 consensus votes (a majority); a vast majority was also in favor of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion. The other motions were not officially 'voted' upon; at this point we were looking for a group consensus. In order to satisfy, we did take a vote on a couple of motions. When there is a vote, there are 'winners' and 'losers'; we're looking for group consensus' on motions – if you don't have a concensus, you don't move forward.

There was much heated discussion on these issues and the council was advised to keep emotions out of the discussion. We need to look at these motions from a business point of view and cannot be emotionally involved with the decision-making process.

It was asked if it is legal to sell the buildings at St. Benedict. Is it okay to do that? Would we be wrong to close the parish and the answer is "no". It was asked if the 4 clustered have updated site evaluations; Msgr. stated that they all do.

The debt was brought up; Alton said the debt cannot be spoken about; the AOD cannot forgive the debt, it's not on table from the Archbishop. Another rep asked if the decision was made to go down from 4 parishes to 2, he sees that one of the parishes (St. Benedict) has a debt of over a \$1 Million, the debt would be assumed by the new parish and Alton stated that was correct, so the rep asked what would happen if the 50+ families from St. Benedict said that they would voluntarily start coming to Mass at the Cathedral; who 'eats' the debt? Alton said it would be the Archdiocese.

Donna asked when coming up with these motions; don't we have to take into consideration the other parts of question 4, such as: *"How would these increase or grow the activities identified through the initial reflection process? How would this would increase or grow the mission of the Church?"* Going forward, we need to keep this in mind.

After much heated discussion, it was suggested the group take a break, which they did. They took a 5 minute break and came back and when they reconvened, Alton led a prayer for God come back into our midst and provide us with guidance and unity in our discussions and decision making.

The St. Bart-St. Rita rep had a suggestion to go along with the proposal to take the 4 parishes down to 2. He had the experience when they were in similar position w St. Dominic; they were in debt, had little savings; so they sent a rep from the AOD Finance Office & Office of Parish Life. They gave them the data including debt, maintenance needs, shrinking membership, etc. They were given 2 choices; they could run out of money and get evicted or go down with dignity. His suggestion is that if the end result is closure that the congregation be engaged so their dignity's involved.

Fr. Bob went through the same kind of thing at OLG as they decided to merge. They debated the questions, the pros and cons, prayed about it, listened to each other and believe it came to a spirit-filled decision. He believes they tried their best to do the right thing and agrees that what Paul is suggesting for the parishioners of the parish that may be closed should be engaged in the process as well. For us to speak for them wouldn't be Christian or be the charitable thing to do. He believes the diocese should make a special effort to have a one-on-one with the leadership and help to face those realities as they did at Good Counsel and St. Dominic. He was hoping to stay on for a year with what they had left in the bank because they planted' some seeds with the outreach they started. He shared it on the table; the people responded and felt they would be stronger if they merged. It's better to go out with dignity and use the resources they have to shore up the community with outreach which did evolve. Paul, the St. Bart rep, feels that you should let the people affected be part of the process.

Alton noted we're still trying to get through the remaining APC responses to our plans and still have to craft our final plans; which needs address pastoral mission & strategic perspectives. a lot of what we're talking about now goes into that final part which is the strategic perspective we need to address and by answering this will help us to craft this final plan. It was reiterated that we only have one more meeting before we need to put together our final plan.

The Plan we craft will be presented back to the APC and, hopefully, it will be complete; if not they'll probably say "this is what we got from the group" and go forward with it. They are the advisory board and consultative body to the Archbishop and based on the info we have they're going to tell the AB "this is what we have and based on what we see and based what they've gotten from the planning group they'll present a plan and put the plan forward. If not, they'll say they didn't get one; his strong feeling is if that happens, as his advisory group they'll make the recommendations to the AB for us..

Fr. Kotlarz asked "of the 3 parishes, since the Cathedral is so unique; of the 3 that are there with the debt, the sizes of parishes, environmental, etc., could we agree to say there is a consensus there will be 2 parishes of the 3? Or area we saying one?? Which would be the best route to go? Maybe we should let the APC then decide in that fashion.

One rep then replied that's what he's just described is exactly what we have been asked to do since we were invited to these meetings, since they've started, and what we have been working on for these past months, but we keep getting taken back to the beginning. We have to move forward.

Going through the proposals again; One Proposal is the 4 parishes become 2. Another Proposal is that the 3 become 1. Out of the 3 we use their evaluations and pick one site; take the numbers to the parishioners and give them the information (facilities, cost, demographics, mission, etc.), give them a deadline and let them make the decision. Anyone can choose to be part of the parish at the Cathedral – but they will have to pick 2 parishes.

There was much more discussion on the subject and review of the previous 6 motions. From this comes our Final Recommendation in regards to the BSC/St. Gregory/St. Benedict/Madonna cluster;

**OUR FINAL RECOMMENDATION for the BLESSED SACRAMENT/ST. GREGORY/ST. BENEDICT/MADONNA CLUSTER – "Of the 4 parishes in the cluster (Blessed Sacrament, St. Benedict, Madonna and St. Gregory), we will go down to having 2 parishes (after a review of the parish financials, etc.; the AOD can help facilitate that process), and the Cathedral will be one of them. A reasonable time frame for the parishes to have their review and the decision to be made would be by June 30, 2013.**

### **Assumption Grotto**

Alton stated that Assumption Grotto is our next toughest challenge. They haven't attended or had any representation at the planning meetings and we have to give the APC a plan for them, so what is the group's recommendation?" Do we say we give them no plan or have them merge with someone else? The closest places are St. Raymond-Good Counsel, St. Jude, St. Matthew, Sweetest Heart, etc. Msgr. LeFevre suggested because of their spirituality, why don't we have htm cluster with St. Cyril and Methodius in Sterling Heights. They're miles away, but they're theologically they're the same and may be open to this. Alton said they are the closest linked in their spirituality. There were questions about the distance between the two churches and Msg. LeFevre noted that most of our parishioners drive in to come to church. St. Josaphat was also mentioned, but after discussion among the group they agreed and came up with the following recommendation:

**OUR FINAL RECOMMENDATION for ASSUMPTION GROTTA: Their cluster partner will immediately be St. Cyril and Methodius at 19 & Deguindre, as they are the closest linked pastorally and in their spirituality.**

### **St. Bart-St. Rita & St. Raymond-Good Counsel and Queen of Heaven**

Msgr. LeFevre noted that he had heard that Fr. St. Bart–St. Rita was considering joining the Trans-OLCH/St. Ladislaus/St. Louis the King Cluster cluster and the St. Bart rep said they had a special council meeting to discuss the issue of a possible cluster with them. Nothing was determined and no further plans came from that meeting. A suggestion was made that Queen of Heaven, Good Counsel and St. Raymond could be the St. Bart-St. Rita cluster partner.

The St. Bart rep said the only cluster he had heard the pastor talk about was possibly with St. Mark who currently has no pastor, but an administrator. He also said that at the last VPC meeting, he and a St. Raymond rep were talking and he asked the St. Raymond rep if he thought that the two parishes would ever cluster. He didn't get any feedback, so he asked Fr. Kotlarz directly. Fr. Kotlarz didn't think the current cluster of St. Raymond-OLCG and Queen of Heaven would be a good match because they're just have started to begin their outreach; they haven't done a lot of evangelization outreach and their charter school is keeping them going. They have challenges just keeping parish afloat and they've lost a lot of parishioners. Their charter school (Dove Academy) has renewed their charter for 1 year; it is currently unknown if it will be renewed beyond that. In the spirit of evangelization, they're trying to keep their outreach locally and have their hands full; he feels St. Bart-St. Rita should do the same thing. He suggested they should consider clustering with St. Mark parish in Warren, as they have a good outreach program already established.

Alton asked St. Bart-St Rita what they see going forward for their parish, based on the expenses, number of Mass attendees etc., and they see a cluster or merger, they just don't know with whom. If they stand alone they'll continue to decline. Alton said he feels that the clustering with Queen of Heaven could work. Fr. Kotlarz's opinion is that it wouldn't

work, but Alton disagreed. The St. Bart rep stated that when asked the pastor, Fr. Borg, he said St. Mark would be a potential partner, but told another rep they should be looking at the Trans-OLCH cluster.

When Alton asked the St. Bart-St. Rita reps how they felt as parishioners, one said she wanted to extend a hand of friendship to the Hamtramck parishes, but doesn't feel it would be appreciated or wanted. Alton asked if they have a date in mind they think they'll need to reach a decision to cluster or merge. The rep said based on their finances, they could probably survive about another 2 years. Based on his discussions with Fr. Borg, they're in fairly good shape. In looking at the financial data, they show operating expenses of \$206K, and based on their income of around \$168K, they run short by about \$14K.

After some discussion, they came up with the following recommendation:

**RECOMMENDATION: St. Bart-St. Rita will cluster or merge with a parish (to be named after discussion & discernment) in the June 2013.**

This means they will begin to have discussions with other parishes; Queen of Heaven, St. Mark, the Trans-OLCH cluster, etc. They will need to bring all of the parties together to see what happens. Alton noted that they will need to name a cluster partner right away in the event of the death, retirement, reassignment etc. of their pastor and suggests it be within the planning group.

**Question 5: "Could parishes within the planning group combine financial and administrative activities to result in a merged parish with possibly one or more worship sites? Which ones? How would this increase the activities identified through the initial reflection process?"**

Alton stated he feels we handled that with our work on Question 4 and everyone in the group was in agreement.

**Question 6: Could a parish or worship site in its current form close and solely operate as an outreach center or to serve some other ministerial activity? How would that increase the activities identified through the initial reflection process? What resources will be needed, including people, time, talent and treasure?**

Alton said that From APC questions we may not have to answer that, he thinks we have already covered that with what we've discussed.

**Question 7: If there are no Catholic Schools within the planning group, how will the parishes ensure that Catholic School Education is available to students within their parishes? How will the parishes support Catholic School Education?**

We reviewed our original recommendations and the APC's response. Alton said if you look at our total resources, we have \$1.2 million which is not enough seed money to start a school, so that precludes us starting a new school on the east side. Fr. Kotlarz says the financing suggested that it suggested the "creation of funding of an endowment adequate to guarantee financing and stability for a Catholic school; at least that's what they're proposing. Alton responded that the school's plan is not what we're going to discuss. Our input needs to come back in a final form in the 2 questions on the cover letter that came with the School Plan which is:

"Does your parish currently financially subsidize one or more Catholic Schools? If yes, will the parish commit to continuing to subsidize at the current or at a higher level for the next five years? If no, would the parish consider a subsidy for Catholic Schools, at what level, for how long, and for which school(s)?"

"Does your parish currently assist with Marketing and Recruitment of Catholic Schools in your vicariate, and how?"

The St. Bart rep noted that the plan that the school group put together last June is being revised and they're having a special meeting this Wednesday. They had talked to the head of office of schools, Dr. Crooks, and he has visited schools in Memphis, TN, and brought back a lot of information. They're going to take a look at the characteristics of that plan in to integrate it with the plan they had in June and then come up with a plan that calls for setting up and endowment fund. They have to start to look outside the parishes for funding, such as approaching the business community, and educating them on the need for Detroit to support schools turning out the type of students that will become the leaders of the city. He said he'd take everything you've read about the schools to this point and set it aside.

Alton said that the questions we're going to be posed with that we need to put into our plan asks us "Does your parish currently financially subsidize one or more catholic schools?" At this point there's only one that does; St. Bart. "If yes, the question is "Will your parish continue to support subsidize them at the current level or higher level for 5 years". The answer for that from St. Bart's is "no". It was already said this year they would do it for this year only. Part B of the question is "If no, would your parish consider a subsidy for Catholic Schools, at what level, for how long, and for which school(s)". The answer to that is "none". The percentage you give from your Charter school income is not considered a 'subsidy' because it does not come from your parish money. St. Bart financially is the only parish that supports school as a budget item. The answer to the questions is "No". The rest cannot afford it.

The second question is, "Does your parish currently assist with Marketing and Recruitment of Catholic Schools in your vicariate, and how?" Only St. Bart-St. Rita does with their marketing group. They send out mailers, and more; the other parishes do not. The St. Bart rep noted that the others could hypothetically do marketing without spending finances by having volunteers from parishes join their marketing group.

**Question 8: "Does the condition of the current buildings and facilities meet the needs and projected needs of each of the parishes in your planning group? Of the schools, if any? Could a parish better serve its population and mission in a different location and where?" and Question 9: How does the data, maps and statistics provided support these recommendations?**

Both Questions talked about building audits; the APC's response asks what the purpose is of an audit and what happens with its results. Alton noted that audits are about \$1500. The 4 parishes in the Blessed Sacrament cluster have had audits done and the information will be used to evaluate the sites and in considerations for future mergers.

**Evangelization and Catechesis** - One rep remembered that we were discussing talking to other parishes that have a strong evangelization program. Alton asked if we talked about forming an evangelization team, and the group agree we did.

**Our plan for current and future collaboration efforts is to meet with other parishes that have a strong evangelization program and will begin the process of forming a Planning Group Evangelization Team by July 1, 2012 with an annual budget.**

This will give us a chance to get the information out to the parishes so they can plan on doing this and that they need to put money in their budget to do this. It gives you something to talk start about with your planning groups; whether you go back to your parishes and tell them you need a volunteer, etc. Another example is using "Welcome Home" or expanding program and expanding existing evangelization programs.

Fr. Kotlarz said Sr. Rosemarie (a Home Visitor of Mary) may be interested in doing that as well as My Xiong, a vicariate rep, who is a DRE coordinator. No one has a certified DRE; most have one, but they're not certified. Blessed Sacrament has a volunteer. Alton suggested that for those parishes with a DRE's working as volunteers or those serving as coordinators; to have them start the education process and so they can become certified with the parishes' support by July 2012. Alton suggested asking Yvonne to be resource by beginning to help coordinate them to begin with this process. Donna noted many vicariate reps they have been getting together and having Catachetically meetings monthly Alton encouraged them to continue doing that.

## **CHRISTIAN SERVICE**

Donna stated that when we previously talked about Christian Service, all the parishes talked about how they've been doing food pantries & outreach and that we have the vicariate summary of outreach; what type we have, where we can refer someone if we can't help, etc.

Vicariate collaboration of outreach; will establish a planning group team to discuss those issues and can become a future development; even quart rly meeting would be a start. Alton suggested we can say we already have vicariate collaboration of outreach. Alton asked if we can strengthen that by saying we will establish Christian Service coordinators at every parish? The parishes don't have Christian Service coordinators, just volunteers and Msgr. LeFevre noted their service people don't meet and Donna added that Vicariate Christian Coordinators don't meet regularly because we don't have coordinators.

Alton inquired if we can get the volunteers to establish themselves as a planning group team to begin to meet to discuss those issues and that can be a further future development; even forming would be a start, a collaborative effort.

Donna asked if there's any way we can do more than outreach; can we do anything with social justice, apathy, etc. Alton said "absolutely" and Msgr. LeFevre noted that some people in the Vicariate already do this, but it's not coordinated. There are inter-faith dialogues, but mostly this is happening in Hamtramck. Alton asked if we can join in. Msgr. said Fr. Wesley is already working on this and Fr. Bogan is quite active in it.

**RECOMMENDATION: Vicariate-wide interfaith ecumenical conversations particular to Hamtramck; is already ongoing ; suggest make it a vicariate-wide by March 2012.**

It was also noted that the Vicariate Outreach Database needs to be updated.

**YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS**

We will discuss this area next week as well as the rest of the questions. We can formulate a team; get them started meeting and talking collaboration in our planning groups.

**MEETING WRAP-UP**

Our next meeting will be November 14<sup>th</sup>. The meeting closed at 9:10 pm with a prayer.

We took a count of those in the group who will be attending on the 27<sup>th</sup>. 5 people will attending mass at Sacred Heart.

Fri Nov 4<sup>th</sup>; we're going to convene the City Pastoral Planning Committee – they will be giving an update where we are with the 4 vicariates in the city. The Central Region Clergy is being asked to meet on November 10<sup>th</sup> to do the same thing. Just so everyone is aware, the clergy will be asked to give an input, ancillary or anecdotal-type info to the plan, but they will not be making any changes to the plan. They will be asked to add any information to the plans and will add any comments they feel the APC needs to be made aware of. There will be a briefing for the clergy on that date as to where we're at. It will be at Sacred Heart Seminary, Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 – 4 pm. This meeting is for the clergy.

The next meeting that's where our focus will be is to put the finishing touches on the plan. When we submit our plan, notes, anecdotal information, anything we want to add, should be presented in a summary-type form. The 3 areas we still need to complete the plan is for Youth & Young Adults, Stewardship & Administration and Vocations.

One other point Alton made is under "Stewardship & Administration"; at the recent convocation, the Archbishop agreed to give some leeway on having Parish Finance Councils in place by Spring 2012 - the original mandate was January. If you can get it in place now, please do so. It's a lot easier to get it in place and if you have questions and need to have Alton or the Finance people come out to help then you've got time to get it established. But for when the budgets are do for 2012-2013, which are coming out May 15<sup>th</sup>; that's when the Parish Finance Council's Chairperson's signature needs to be on them.

Alton thanked the group for all they've given; he tries to absorb the energy we bring – he doesn't want us to be disheartened, but wants us to be encouraged. Other groups aren't getting as far as we have with the difficult questions and discussions we've been having, and he said that we make it easier to do.

A closing prayer was said and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Archibald  
Genesis VPC Recording Secretary

**DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD LINKS**

**[ALL APC TIF II PLANNING FILES](#)**

**[APC PLANS & FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS \(Questions 1-9\)](#)**

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

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS OF A PRIEST

APC YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY SUBCOMMITTEE

LEADERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

STEWARDSHIP & ADMINISTRATION SUBCOMMITTEE

CHRISTIAN SERVICE & OUTREACH

EVANGELIZATION & CATECHESIS