



Genesis Vicariate Pastoral Council

TO SHARE CHRIST IN AND THROUGH THE URBAN CHURCH

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SEPTEMBER 12, 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/ Group Discussion**
2. **Group Discussion & Reporting of Recommendations for Questions 1 – 6**
3. **Wrap up**

OPENING PRAYER - GROUP ASSEMBLY/GROUP DISCUSSION

The meeting opened at 6:37 pm with a prayer. This is our first meeting after the summer break. The APC has reviewed our recommendations and has asked us to come together to discuss their recommendations. They would like us to specifically answer Question 3 again regarding evangelization.

Msgr. LeFevre welcomed the group and led the prayer and stated that it's been a journey all summer; Thank you for participating in the 1st part of the process – the 2nd part is a celebration and fine tuning of what we've done already. We need to keep our eyes focused on Christ during this process. Our task for the next 4 meetings is to clarify what we said. We sent off the recommendations to the APC and they sent it back to us. We will send it back with an awareness of what the APC has said.

Alton addressed the group and welcomed us back.

The hope was the recommendation would be out to us by last week, they will go out first thing tomorrow morning.

Tonight coverage will basically be focused on us revisiting the pastoral plans created by the APC – the Archbishop's consultative body. In their review they wanted to send back hearty congratulations for the hard work and dedication that everyone put into the plans. They could see that everyone took this seriously, and that they were involved and dedicated in the process. One essential caveat in ALL the planning groups was they felt the majority didn't really focus on the Pastoral plans of the APC. There are 7 areas.

They would like us to refocus on those, make sure we understand them and spruce up what we've done. We can put the final recommendations together along with the comments from the APC.

Alton passed out the Basic Assumptions to each table. The one thing you want to review at your individual tables is to understand what these are saying and asking because they create the foundation. They give us the background information where the recommendations should be based in. For example, each parish will have a priest as a pastor – that's a basic assumption.

Alton handed the APC planning questions out to the group. This is to acquaint you with the 6 questions. These questions are all dovetailed and impact the APC plans and Pastoral recommendation (stewardship, evangelization, youth and young adult, vocations, etc.)

All information in those plans leads you into those 6 questions. They then lead you into question 3 in the final recommendation. There is where the APC felt we needed to revisit to make sure we all understand.

It's not that they didn't like the plan; we just need to pay more attention to what they're asking.

Question 3: Evangelization: We need to take a look at what is recommended, such as what a parish or school will do. This is a goal of that pastoral plan. Each parish will establish an evangelization committee to reflect whatever model is going to exist once you complete that plan. It can be for a planning group, a parish or a region. You can formulate one by using the model of a parish with a good evangelization plan.

This is part of being mission-driven so you have all aspects of the church's mission and evangelization in just one piece.

All the information is in the documents – APC questions, Basic assumptions, etc.

They need to see how we meet the pastoral plans and basic assumptions. They want us to go back and integrate the pastoral plans that layout the mission of the church. A lot of parishes felt they had to fit this into a "box". In a lot of instances you've already done a lot of this underlying detail work, and that's what they want to see is more detail.

We will be tweaking the plan already submitted. They didn't initially ask for this level of detail. The expectation wasn't very clearly laid out. Our approach to addressing this now is to address this in our planning groups. If the whole group does it, then everyone's on the same page.

Donna noted, when formulating this information to put into the boxes, keep in mind that it's for a whole group and not individual parishes. Details are needed to support the recommendations.

In the new guidelines for the parish council the evangelization committee is part of the parish council. Parishes strong in one area should help the group and parishes that may not have expertise in a particular area, for example an evangelization committee. If a parish has a strong one, help the parishes in the group set up theirs.

For example; if your parish only has outreach, and that's your only mission driven function, then you need to come up with a plan to make other missions possible. You may have the model of another parish or group. Whatever entity exists must have the full function of the church, if not you're not a mission driven church. For example; it could very well be a one-person committee – it doesn't have to be a large committee.

We are expected to put some notes together and can take details from those notes made at past meetings. A lot of the homework tonight will be to go back, make sure we have a good understanding how each of the pastoral plans fits into the questions and then how do they fit into question 3. When it came to filling in the plan, we were succinct and didn't include enough details.

We don't have to redo question 3. We need to look at it and understand it in light of the basic assumptions and the APC questions. We will get back all of the comments on the entire plan tomorrow. In some instances they want more details and we may already have that information from past meetings. The APC didn't make it clear that's how it should be done. They are saying it now and the goals are right up front. These are only the minimums and we can do a lot more than what they're calling for.

Work as a planning group. The call has always been that we would do some work prior to the meetings in a parish setting or with your parish group. We really need to do that so we don't have to do the individual pieces. It's not just our vicariate, it's throughout the diocese. The time to do a lot of this discussion is outside prior to the meeting.

Msgr. LeFevre tried to do the 5 questions (vocations are a late addition); he will share his insights with each group.

Alton also said there was nothing mentioned about schools. The school advisory board hasn't put forth yet, however we will get a copy of what the school planning group came up with for the central region. Alton will send it out to us to and we can come to our own conclusions about their plan. Parishes that have schools, or are thinking about having one, are going to have to keep in the back of their mind as to how they are going to do it. The last we heard was that the plan is still being developed. Before we look at our groups' school's plans, we need to look at what the school planning group is suggesting because it impacts what we do at the planning group level and the parish level.

One issue that's come up is the suggestion that the parishes are going to continue funding the schools at the current level; parishes are saying that they can't do that. The school's office is saying they're not going to continue at the current level. This directly impacts what the parishes are doing. The school's part is to figure out what they're going to do. If the parishes have to cut their portion, then the school is going to have to accept that. This is happening downriver. We have to wait to get the school's planning group report. This will have to be tabled until they come up with a plan.

Paul from St. Bart School said the school's planning group is asking the Archdiocese to regionalize the school; in other words, if each parish cannot support their schools, they're going to need, at a minimum, to keep receiving the same amount of funding from the Archdiocese. We're appealing them to look at the archdiocese to get financial support from a larger geographical area. St. Bart's school had our marketing team put together their own transition plan which we

shared with the Msgr. We will be presenting it to the school planning group at the next meeting. We sense that there was some level of support in expanding on their marketing efforts and getting funding to make up for what we anticipate may be a decrease in the SOF grants. The plan will be for the marketing team to get representatives from parishes such as the Cathedral parish, St. Benedict's, Madonna and St. Gregory's and try to get some of these representatives to join our marketing team to come up with a plan to fund St. Bart's school as a regional school for the east side of Detroit.

They selected to approach those named parishes because they felt they were more prone to get support from them. If that transition plan can be worked into the other school's plans, it could become a model for them. They felt the deliberations lacked receiving information, feedback, minutes, etc. Therefore we decided they would do our own thing in hopes that this would be constructive to the overall planning process.

They want to make sure we walk away with: Do we have a good understanding of what these pastoral plans are, do we have the details somewhere, and to break down question 3.

At 7:23 the members broke into their parish planning groups to discuss their recollections and notes for the recommendations.

DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1 - 6

The groups reported out what they are taking away from the meeting. We will be meeting the 2nd and 4th Mondays thru October. The City group didn't meet as a whole.

Father Wesley can send a check to the English program as possible, as well as Q & A subsidizes their main costs to the program. St Hyacinth will advertise the program and have finalized a formal youth group. Information will be provided on how it will be funded and further details. Instructors will be trained and certified. How much and when to be further discussed.

The "City" group reported out the following:

Question 1 – Recommendation to have a cluster evangelization committee. They will continue to work on outreach programs such as the revivals, St. Joseph day, coats for kids, meals on wheels and homelessness.

2nd question – Regarding youth and young adults they will support local youth activities that already exist, such as SW Detroit/Sacred Heart. They will formulate a youth advisory team to work with the programs they have found. Two of the parishes have busses so they will provide a centralized location for drop-off and pick-up.

3rd question – Regarding Christian Service Outreach – Collectively they have programs throughout year such as a food pantry, holiday food baskets, Christmas program, holiday meals on wheels. They will join central Detroit which will allow youth and parishioners to share their skills and work with them.

4th question – Regarding lay leadership. They have readers, ministers, finance committee and a parish council committee, but they need to offer training classes to recruit new volunteers to get into a rotation. The programs would be supported by the Mother church.

5th question – Regarding stewardship and administration. They do have training. They will keep the finance committee cluster and bid out the services to get better prices for the contracts to keep up and running. Some do a town hall meeting to report out the financial status and others do a written report. We would like to do a combination of both because some things have to be in writing, such as anonymous donations. It could be put in the bulletin. The financial report should be done at least annually or possibly more frequently than annually. Most have loans that need to be paid down and this should be frequently updated to the parishioners publicly. They also have to help the Father develop an "A-list" of contractors vicariate-wide that are "friendly" to the Detroit area.

6th – Regarding the Catholic school advisory board plan. Develop a voucher system that provides a discount to parents with students that are not affiliated with the church and to create a vicariate scholarship fund. Alton asked them to address how it will be funded? Their suggestion would be to have a vicariate fundraiser and then possibly have a concert.

Msgr. LeFevre would like to have program for vocation training and we should also have a program to announce the various training programs in September so people have time to have a dialogue with him or Donna about the various

positions. It needs to be a validation process from the time they announce that training is available and what it consists of so they will have time to chat.

Alton suggested reaching out to young men and women to go into the priesthood. The old convention that you'll live a life of poverty as a priest is not a realistic portrayal, even though monetarily you won't get rich. The representative suggested talking to the altar boys to begin the training process and mentioned that they don't have the schools anymore as a resource.

The Polonia group recorder followed with these updates to their recommendations:

Question 3: The Polonia group recommended youth and religious education programs. They already have one offered in a Polish language in at St. Florian and an English program of Q of A. This is supported by the cost of tuition per child. Alton recommended to "think big and out of the box" regarding the funding issue.

The program's supported by cost of tuition (per child), Fr. Wesley of Trans-OLHC-StLK also sends a check to the English program, Q of A also subsidizes the program. St. Hyacinth will advertise the program and the resources for funding by St. Hyacinth will be provided next week.

By Feb 1, 2012, each parish will identify at least one representative for their Christian service group. Where it will be held is to be determined. They'll be discussing planning and strategies as a group and the costs will be absorbed by parish each parish for advertising, etc.

By Sept 1, 2012 they will initiate the formal group within the planning group. Each parish will designate at least one representative. Each pastoral council will adopt a plan to identify and personally invite by Jan 2013. By Jan 1, 2012, each parish will identify and form functioning stewardship and finance councils.

The St. Bart Christian Service Outreach took an inventory; there is a yearly collection of proceeds that goes to the St. Gregory's pantry. Parishioners bring in non-perishable food on a weekly basis that goes to St. Dominic's outreach center on a monthly basis. One of the Christian women's groups does a yearly Christmas giving tree to profit one charitable organization. There are also a few fellowships for the neighborhood seniors such as the Golden Ager's gatherings on Mondays that include Bingo with a served lunch and also a Bingo game on Thursdays. They also have a handful of individuals that minister to the neighborhood and take food or the Eucharist to shut-ins.

Under Evangelization there is a little bit of a weak spot since the parish council just recently formed and they still need to formulate an active evangelization committee. This groups plan would be to propose to the parish council to collaborate with parishes with a strong committee to help them get a program started. The evangelization that does happen on a small scale is the school children have annual plays that brings in parents, grandparents and other visitors, and gives a little bit of insight of what goes on at the church. They also have a monthly Mass for children.

Youth and young adult activities have same problem as other parishes, there are no youth. There are such things through the school such as boy scouts and basketball but these are student-centered activities. One thing that was not discussed with the table was to consider would be for parishes without a youth program to find a way to support an existing established youth program either financially, by donating youth computer equipment or sponsor a sports team.

The "vocations" proposal would be to have a vicariate wide program such as a yearly collection to support a needy seminarian's tuition. We can help vocations by getting them through the seminary financially which is a fairly expensive process.

MEETING WRAP-UP

Alton – The next meeting will have the APC's comments back on our plans. It is very important that these are looked at prior to the next meeting! Have an understanding of what they said and decide how to address it. Formulate your answers to the comments and include detailed information of the accommodations that will be provided and come prepared to lay them out. We will have an easel set up like our last meeting to get agreement and get consensus on each point. Address the comments from the APC by group.

In regards to the Christian Service Outreach, parishes and schools need to review the 'needs' list and determine if what you are doing now is a current need or an ongoing one; for example, a need may be for literacy training.

Use the documents and the Church's mission to guide your answers.

The APC comments will be sent by email to the members of the planning groups and to the pastors. Please make sure the responses are in a Word document only, not PDF, so that they have a common format.

Msgr. LeFevre closed the meeting with a prayer at 9:05 pm. Our next meeting is September 26th

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Archibald
Genesis VPC Recording Secretary

DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD LINKS

[FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS \(SUBMITTED JUNE 2011\)](#)

[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](#)