

IMPLEMENTATION COMMISSION REPORT 2005-06

GROWTH IN HOLINESS ✧ STRENGTHEN PARISHES ✧ FOSTER VOCATIONS ✧ STRENGTHEN EDUCATION ✧ JUSTICE & CHARITY ✧ STEWARDSHIP

Introduction

“...Access to the Eucharist in its fullness for all the faithful.”

This Vision to be a Eucharistic Church, supported by the six archdiocesan pastoral priorities, has been and continues to be the focus of all our archdiocesan planning.

On April 1, 2006 representatives of all the parishes/clusters and districts throughout the archdiocese gathered with you, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and us to share their accomplishments and concerns for fulfilling this vision.

What We Heard

1. Collaboration works!

The accomplishments enumerated were many and varied and largely due to quality inter-parish partnerships. “Collaboration” has become a natural and valued option as parishes strive to be wise stewards of temporal and human resources, especially those who share the ministry of a pastor.

“Collaboration is in the drinking water.”

Parishes and clusters told us they recognize the power of working together to strengthen Catholic education in schools, catechetical programs and adult formation opportunities. More and more they report their confidence in the talented and trained lay ministers who lead them in their efforts to embody Christ in our world today.

2. There is a sense of impending loss of Sunday Eucharist and concern for pastors.

- Three interrelated concerns were echoed district by district:
- ✧ The continued downward trend in Sunday Mass attendance in 13 of 16 districts
 - ✧ The potential for loss of regular Sunday Eucharist due to shortage of clergy
 - ✧ Over-burdening our already stretched and aging pastors.

Parishioners in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee cannot imagine themselves without priests as sacramental ministers, leaders of their faith communities, spiritual guides and friends.

“Don’t let us become a people starved for the Eucharist.”

Linked to this they recognize the stress on their priests, especially those who serve in multiple parishes or parish and other ministries. The faithful want their pastors to live balanced lives where body and soul are nurtured and supported. They also encourage pastors to find ways to use the expertise of the members in meaningful ways.

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3. From Ripon to Racine, Sharon to Sheboygan, Lake Geneva to Elkhart Lake active, involved parishioners want to help pastors with the areas of the apostolate that are open to them. Recognizing their need for formation and training they continue to ask for action on your part, Archbishop, and on our central office staff to provide regional training for lay ministries.

“ Bring us leadership training opportunities! Please. ”

“ Bilingual, por favor. ”

4. Help us deepen our knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching so that we can do our part of the mission of justice and charity.

“ We don’t know what ‘advocacy’ involves. ”

About the Directives

These directives are our recommendations to you, Archbishop. There are three sets:

1. General Directives for all Districts
2. District Directives with specific action by the district, and
3. Special Recommendation to Archdiocesan Leadership

We seek your approval of these recommendations and urge you to call for their study and action by all the faithful at the leadership Conference October 21, 2006.

General Directives

We have selected three areas for work by all clusters/districts in the coming year. These directives place special emphasis on the common concerns and priorities:

- ✧ Growth in holiness, increasing Mass attendance
- ✧ Strengthening Catholic Education and
- ✧ Our mission of justice and charity.

Given the interconnection of all our priorities, the other three priorities will also benefit through this work:

- ✧ Strengthen parishes
- ✧ Foster a sense of Vocation and
- ✧ Stewardship.

Particular Directives to Districts/Clusters are included in each district section.

A Special Recommendation to Archdiocesan Leadership

We add our voices to those of the faithful urging Archdiocesan Leadership to develop a plan in consultation with district leadership, to offer a variety of lay ministry trainings at locations within the archdiocese at some distance from Milwaukee, during the 2007-08 fiscal year.

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General Directives, 2006–07 for all Districts

John 6: 48-51

I am the bread of life. ...I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

We recommend three particular areas for action this year in all parishes.

1. Grow in Holiness: Improving Sunday Mass Attendance

In this report we include Mass Attendance data comparing the number of attendees to the number of registered members. Graphs illustrate mass attendance trends for the past six years. Three districts, 9, 13 and 14 are beginning to show positive trends in attendance. ***We challenge every parish, cluster and district to explore ways to increase attendance of registered members by 20% this year.***

2. Strengthening Catholic School Education

We ask each parish to tell us what Catholic school(s) they support and how.

3. Upholding Our Mission of Charity and Justice

We urge each district or cluster to discern an area(s) to study, educate the faithful and work as advocates for justice and charity. Some timely topics and resources we recommend are:

Wisconsin Catholic Conference: Election 2006

[Faithful Citizenship - Elections 2006](#)

National Committee for a Human Life Amendment

[National Committee for Human Life Amendment](#)

Catholic Relief Services

[Giving Hope to a World of Need](#)

Justice for Immigrants

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

Or, contact:

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District: 13
 Location by County: Milwaukee County – Near north and lower eastside
 Dean: Very Rev. Timothy L. Kitzke
 APC Member: Adriana Herrera Mier, S. Michael Parish

Cluster	Parishes	Registered Members		Average Mass attendance 2005 (% of reg)	Church seating /# weekend Masses	Elementary School Enrollment
A	Cathedral of St. John	1,718		941 (55%)	800/4	Catholic East Elementary
	Old S. Mary	1,174		1,032 (88%)	330/5	
	Our Lady of Divine Providence	548		242 (44%)	1,000/3	
	Ss. Peter and Paul	2,120		606 (29%)	340/4	
	Three Holy Women	2,247		1,043 (46%)	850/3	
B	All Saints	1,103		441 (40%)	500/3	Catholic Urban Academies
	Blessed Trinity	502		231 (46%)	600/2	
	S. Martin de Porres	351		195 (56%)	250/2	
C	S. Michael	1,612		608 (38%)	750/3	352
	S. Rose	525		199 (38%)	350/2	
D	Church of the Gesu	3,151		1,834 (58%)	900/6	
	S. Benedict the Moor	247		127 (51%)	200/1	
E	S. Francis of Assisi	687		293 (43%)	400/3	
Totals	District Parishes	13	15,985	7,792 (43%)	41 Weekend Masses	498
Number of Archdiocesan Parish Priests					9	
Number of Religious Order Parish Priests					8	
Parish Directors					0	
Permanent Deacons					7	
Ratio: Parish Priest to Registered Parishioners					1 : 940	
Ratio: Parish Priest to Mass Attendees					1 : 458	
Catholic Schools & Other Catholic Institutions						
Messmer Preparatory Grade School					475	
Messmer High School					572	
Marquette University HS					1,056	
S. Joan Antida HS					332	
Archdiocesan AIDS Ministry					1 priest chaplain	
Columbia S. Mary's Hospital					1 priest chaplain	
Marquette University					2 priest faculty	
Milwaukee Catholic Home					1 priest chaplain	

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District Commendations for:

- We commend your district for all you have done and continue to do to adapt to the changes occurring around you, assessing and meeting the needs of a diverse population and supporting one another through partnerships in mission.
- We further commend the parishes and leaders who are working with the African American Commission and delegates for next year's African American Congress X in the creation of a renewed lay formation program building on the gifts of African American spirituality. We are pleased that the program will be named in honor of Br. Booker Ashe, whose ministry of service and empowerment of the poor still bears fruit today.

District Directives for 2006-07:

We strongly urge the leadership in your district, namely, the district dean, all clergy and parish representatives to the APC district assemblies to meet together twice a year, fall and late winter, to give special attention to the following recommendations, setting reasonable goals (fall) and measuring your progress (spring) on the following:

1. **Grow in Holiness**

- Study the Mass attendance of your district. We ask you to work together as a district to increase overall regular Mass attendance by 20% in every parish. Urge your Prayer and Worship Committees to develop common strategies, present them to the district pastors and implement them. We look forward to hearing of your success.
- Watch for and plan to send a parish representative to one of the information sessions provided by the Director of Evangelization to learn about an archdiocesan-wide small group study to be initiated in 2007-08 called: *Why Catholic?* If feasible, plan your 2007-08 budget to include participation in the program and identify leaders to be trained as parish program facilitators. This program is available in Spanish as well.

2. **Strengthen Parishes**

- Engage more parishioners in the work of the parish/cluster. Train them, mentor them and utilize their skills. The strength of each parish will more and more depend on the partnerships of pastoral staffs with the people of the parish. This lightens the burden of pastors and enables the laity to play their rightful roles and assume their particular responsibility in the work of being church.

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3. **Foster a Culture of Vocation**

- Continue to encourage prayer for, education about and invitation to Holy Orders and vowed religious life.
- Help singles find meaningful ways to encourage one another in Christian living and participate in parish life and outreach.
- Lift up marriage as a unique expression and witness of God's love for the church. Renew and strengthen parish efforts in marriage preparation and support for young married couples.

4. **Strengthen Catholic Education/Promote Lifelong Faith Formation**

- Support and encourage all teachers of religious education in your schools and catechetical programs to work toward catechetical certification and recognize those who receive their certificates.

5. **Uphold Our Mission of Justice & Charity**

- We urge you to find ways to work as a district with police and city leaders to focus your advocacy efforts on safety and peace in our homes and neighborhoods.
- Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our sister relationship with Sagrada Familia parish in the Dominican Republic.

6. **Be Wise Stewards**

- Continue to be prudent and grateful stewards of all we have received.
- One message we hear from parishioners willing to offer their time and talent with parish events and activities, is the failure of parish staff/committees to take them up on their offers. As a district, develop a list of best practices you employ to activate the willing parishioner volunteers.

