



April 20, 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee Planning Commission, appointed by Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan in February 2003 designed and facilitated Cycle III of Archdiocesan planning from February 2003 to March 2004.

In his pastoral on planning, Archbishop Dolan said: "The Lord is inviting us to work together to assess needs, trends, and movements in our community, and to steward carefully the use of our priests, deacons, ministers, buildings, resources, parishes and schools, so that we can continue to be faithful to the mandate Jesus gave us to continue His saving mission in and through His Church.

So, building on work completed in Archdiocesan Planning Cycles I and II, the Commission consulted leaders of the Catholic community to develop plans to insure

- Access to the Eucharist in its totality, namely Word, Sacrament, Service and Community for all the faithful
- Opportunities to live Eucharistic lives through practice of spiritual and corporal works of mercy
- Wise stewardship of our human and temporal resources and dialogue at the parish, cluster, district and archdiocesan levels.

Working with leaders who know and share in the Mission of the Church in southeastern Wisconsin, the commission's process incorporated prayer, education and wide consultation with priests, parish core teams, staffs and councils, and leaders of other Catholic associations, agencies and institutions. The scope of this cycle of planning included parishes, schools and other institutions serving and served by the Catholic community throughout the ten counties.



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Common Issues & Concerns

A number of issues were raised in every district, cluster and/or parish. These bigger questions must be acknowledged and some need to be addressed by the whole Church.

1. **Realistic Solutions for the Priest Shortage**

Acknowledging that we are a "priestly people," a sacramental church with theological and canonical limitations about who may and may not be ordained, we heard the deep concerns of the faithful. We recognized the general recommendation that the whole Church engage in a meaningful dialogue around all the aspects of ordination and its impact on Eucharist, community and ministry.

2. **Mega Churches**

We have witnessed recent successes in merging smaller parishes into larger ones. However, we recognize that bigger is not always better. We are committed to supporting and maintaining vibrant parishes no matter what their size.

3. **Long-range Planning**

Developing a plan allows us to shape our future and to anticipate the possibilities, rather than reacting to whatever comes along. The current process is designed to be on going. Planning must be a continual process whereby each year builds on the previous and opens doors to the future.

4. **Bringing God's Dream for Us to Life!**

As planners we participate in the on-going work of creation. We participate in Jesus' mission and ministry. Prayer that seeks to know God's will and begs the Spirit's help and guidance must be at the heart of all these efforts if they are to be successful. So, **we recommend that**

- The Archbishop set up an appropriate means (person, team, process or Office) to assist parishes, clusters and districts continue the planning process, with authority to hold them accountable for the archbishop's directives. We ask that this be in place not later than December 2004.
- Clusters set up representative groups (Collaboration Committees, Cluster Councils, or Cluster Planning Teams) who will meet regularly to plan and develop initiatives to carry out these and other plans that develop over time.
- Priests/parish directors, staff members meet with their ministry peers (e.g. all Youth Ministers), and that parish councils and staffs meet at least annually to plan collaboratively.



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5. Cultivating a Pastoral Staff

As the number of priests changes, parishes and clusters will have to review their pastoral staffing needs and make sure that individually or collaboratively they have adequate professional staff and trained volunteers to meet the mission and ministry needs and goals of their parish/cluster.

6. On-going Professional Education of Priests and Others

Because seminary study has not included training for parish administration in times like these, the Archdiocese must provide on-going education and training to help retool priests, educate seminarians, deacons, pastoral staffs, and parish leadership. This will enable us to deal more effectively and confidently with changing roles and responsibilities, changing delivery systems and forms of service in our parishes and clusters. This new "school" for "seasoned students" should be in place by or before September 2005. It should be accessible for distance learners.

7. District Boundary Changes

As plans develop, it may be in a cluster's best interest to adjust their district membership and reconfigure district boundaries. If that is so, a proposal for these changes must be submitted to the Archbishop so that he can consult with appropriate groups before make any district boundary change official. Guidelines for changing district membership are currently available through the Delegate for Parishes at (414) 769-3450.

8. Regional Archdiocesan Services

Throughout the Archdiocese core teams and staff members expressed their gratitude for archdiocesan services and begged for easier access to them without having to travel to Milwaukee. We strongly recommend that archdiocesan staff continue to explore ways to regionalize the delivery of their programs and services, especially in the area of ministerial formation.

9. A New Staff Position

We ask the Department for Human Resources to work with parish business managers and pastoral associates to develop a new position in parish ministry, that of an Administrator of Pastoral Services who could relieve priests of many of their administrative duties.



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TO THE PARISHES OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

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RACE TO YOU AND PEACE FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE LOVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD ALWAYS BECAUSE OF YOU AND FOR THE GRACES GOD BESTOWED ON YOU IN JESUS CHRIST. IN HIM YOU ARE ENRICHED IN EVERY WAY. AND IN HIS GRACE, YOU IN TURN ENRICH ALL THE PEOPLE OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY.

PHILIPPIANS 1:2-3

WE COMMEND YOU FOR THE EXCELLENT WORK YOU HAVE DONE SINCE THE 1997 PARISH DIRECTIVES. YOU HAVE COURAGEOUSLY MERGED NINE OF YOUR PARISHES, CREATING THREE NEW FAITH COMMUNITIES: ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, ELKHART LAKE, AND OUR LADY OF THE LAKES, RANDOM LAKE AND BLESSED TRINITY, SHEBOYGAN FALLS. YOU HAVE GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTED A PARISH DIRECTOR AT ST. PETER CLAVER SHEBOYGAN. FURTHER, SOME OF YOUR PARISHES HAVE MOVED TO SHARING PRIESTS WITH EACH OTHER: HOLY NAME AND ST. CLEMENT, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS PARISHES IN SHEBOYGAN. WE ESPECIALLY COMMEND THE PARISHES OF THE CITY OF SHEBOYGAN FOR THEIR PROACTIVE CREATIVITY TO CREATE A PLAN FOR FURTHER INTER-PARISH COLLABORATION AND MINISTRY. LAST, BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, WE COMMEND THE RETIRED PRIESTS OF THE DISTRICT FOR CONTINUING TO MINISTER IN THE PARISHES AND INSTITUTIONS.

WE HAVE SEEN YOUR GOOD WORKS IN BEHALF OF THE HISPANIC AND HMONG COMMUNITIES IN YOUR PARISHES. WE ARE HEARTENED BY YOUR WORK WITH THE THE SICK AND THE AGING AT ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL AND OTHER HEALTH CARE FACILITIES. WE APPRECIATE THE TENDER CARE YOU GIVE TO NURSING HOMES AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GOOD WORK WITH THE AGING POPULATION IN YOUR DISTRICT. WE COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AND YOUR SUPPORT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS. SPECIFICALLY IN KOHLER AND ELKHART LAKE, BUT CERTAINLY IN OTHER AREAS OF THE DISTRICT AS WELL, WE CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT AND WELCOME VISITORS INTO YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY, WHETHER IT IS FOR BUSINESS REASONS OR SIMPLY AS TOURISTS AND TRAVELERS TO THE AREA.

WE HAVE HEARD YOUR PLEAS FOR MORE FORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE ARCHDIOCESE AND WE ARE COMMITTED TO EXPLORING WITH YOU WAYS THAT THIS CAN HAPPEN.



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DISTRICT DIRECTIVES

As a People of God committed to ensuring

- Access to the Eucharist in its totality, namely Word, Sacrament, Service and Community for all the faithful
- Opportunities to live Eucharistic lives through practice of spiritual and corporal works of mercy

Wise stewardship of our human and temporal resources,

we make the following recommendations. (These recommendations have been adjusted based on the responses we received at the January 20, 2004 hearings as well as other responses sent to the commission, including those of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and the Council of Priests.)

1. Cluster pastoral staffs and councils study the data included here, as well as their seating capacity and Mass attendance trends, and develop complementary Mass schedules by January 1, 2005, that provide access to the Eucharist at their sites over a span of time each weekend.
2. Priests and deacons, under the leadership of the Dean, study the range of extra sacramental workload within the district, i.e. baptisms, marriages and funerals. Develop a plan to balance this work among the clergy of the district. Offer your proposal to the Archdiocesan Council of Priests by January 2005.
3. Each parish should have or share a qualified director of liturgy and music, make a commitment to training and forming all music ministers and develop a repertoire of music for use at all liturgies to enhance the full conscious and active participation by the faithful at liturgy.

From *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, Vatican Council II, Dec. 4, 1963

#2 ...The liturgy is the outstanding means by which the faithful can express in their lives, and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.

#10 ...**The liturgy is the summit** toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the **source** from which all her power flows."



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4. In district or cluster partnerships, develop plans to meet the life-long spiritual needs of each of parishioners in a variety of ways, e.g. study, reflection, small group faith sharing, communal prayer and devotions. Begin implementation by August 2005.
5. Clusters form evangelization committees to develop plans to help their parishes respond to the challenge to "Go and make disciples."
 - Compare data on membership and Mass attendance
 - Develop ways to increase attendance at Mass on a regular basis by 10% by June 2005.
 - Implement a program of welcoming back inactive Catholics by July 2005.
6. Parish clusters develop meaningful ways to offer financial support to our Catholic elementary and secondary schools, whether they have a school or not by July 1, 2006.
7. Parishes/clusters continue to hire, professionally trained and competent school principals, Directors of Religious Education (DREs) and where appropriate Directors of Youth Ministry (DYMs) and Adult & Family ministers.
8. As priests or parish directors serve more than one parish that they gather the councils together to review both the council and committee structures to see if a new model for council should be developed collaboratively.
9. Each parish make the development of a "Culture of Vocations" a priority in the living out of its own mission. Educating the faithful about God's call to each of us needs a foundation built on solid catechesis, a strong sense of Catholic identity that is rooted in the Church's sacramental life. It must be supported by prayer – both individual and communal, by evangelization, liturgical experiences, mentoring, companioning, and finally repeated genuine invitations to consider priesthood, diaconate, religious life and lay ministry. Lift up Christian marriage and dedicated single life as vocations of service as well.
10. Continue to discern who among you is called to ministry
 - **As a priest.** The Archdiocesan recruitment goal is a minimum of 68 new seminarians or religious in formation by the year 2009, which is about .0001 of our Catholic Population. This district is accountable to the Archdiocesan Vocations office for the recruitment of 3 seminarians or novices.

From *Evangelii Nuntiandi*,
Pope Paul VI, Dec. 8, 1975

#12 "The Church is born of the evangelizing activity of Jesus and the Twelve.

*#1...**Evangelization is a task and mission** which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more **urgent**.
Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity."*



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- **As a deacon.** Encourage and support candidates to the diaconate so that each parish might enjoy the ministry of one or more deacons.
- **As a lay minister.** Encourage, invite, train and form lay ministers in the parish involving them in liturgical, educational, outreach and community activity. Urge effective lay ministers to seek certification or advanced education for ministry through one of the seminaries, colleges or universities ministry programs. Offers some financial support toward their education toward certification or degree.

11. Encourage parishioners to place their time and talents at the service of the parish/cluster through the myriad parish volunteer ministries available. Provide training and resources so these "faithful and reliable" members can experience the joy and satisfaction of the important contributions they make to parish vibrancy.

12. Promote the healing ministry of Christ and foster holistic health and wellness within the parish by using the expertise of a parish nurse or sharing one with other parishes. Use the talents and services of human concerns ministers, adult and family ministers, pastoral associates and business administrators to help the parish achieve its mission and contribute to the social ministry of the Church as it builds the reign of God.

From *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*,
Vatican Council II, Nov. 21,
1964

*"All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status are **called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity.**"*

13. As good stewards

- Ensure that all parish staff are justly compensated and given the resources they need to fulfill their ministries.
- Parishes work with the Development Office to examine comprehensive approaches to stewardship that will enable them to adequately fund parish programs and share their human and material resources with parishes in need in the local, national and international Church. We recommend the Archdiocese, through the World Mission Office, with the assistance of parishes, continues to support the parish of the Holy Family in the Dominican Republic.



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SOME COMMENTS ON THE DATA

In District 9

In 1988 there were 19 priests in the district. Now there are 9 a decline of 53%.
In 1988 there were 10 deacons. Now there are 4 – a decline of 60%.

In 1988 total parish membership was 25,058; in 2002 it is 25,307 – an increase of 1%.
In 1988 Mass attendance was 16,190 (64.6%); in 2002 it was 9,583 (37.9%) – a decline of 26.7 percentage points.

Concerning parish sacramental ministry, baptisms, marriages and funerals:

The averages per parish for the years 1997-2002 are

Baptisms – 31.4 Marriages – 11.1 Funerals - 24

The ranges of sacraments per parish for the years 1997-2002 are

- Baptisms low = 6 high = 72
- Marriages low = 3 high = 27
- Funerals low = 8 high = 43

In the Whole Archdiocese:

In 1988 there were 404 active diocesan priests. In 2002 there were 229, down 43.3%.
In 1988 there were 110 active deacons. In 2002 there were 125, an increase of 13.6%.

In 1988 average parish membership was 2103; in 2002 it was 2509, an increase of 19.3%.
In 1988 average Mass attendance was 1255 (59.7%); in 2002 it was 905 (36.1%), a decline of 23.6 percentage points.

Concerning parish sacramental ministry, baptisms, marriages and funerals:

The averages per parish for the years 1997-2002 are

Baptisms - 34.5 Marriages - 12.5 Funerals - 27.4

The ranges of sacraments per parish for the years 1997-2002 are

- Baptisms low = 0 high = 119 (275)
- Marriages low = 0 high = 55 (89)
- Funerals low = 0 high = 124 (191)



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CLUSTER DIRECTIVES

Based on parish data and demographic changes, careful study of parish and cluster recommendations, priest district discussions, district level core committee discussions and dialogue with the District Dean and parish consultant(s), we propose the following:

CLUSTER	PARISHES	DIRECTIVES
A	Parishes of the city of Sheboygan: St. Dominic St. Clement Holy Name Ss. Cyril & Methodius Immaculate Conception St. Peter Claver	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further develop and implement the "city parishes' association plan." Include in your discussion and planning the possibility that some parish site(s) may have to close. 2. Strengthen your school cooperation by creating a city-wide school association or system so that the schools have common tuitions, salary scales, shared teachers and programs, etc. 3. Prepare in the next five years to work with one less priest than the current four. 4. We commend the ministry being done with the ethnic groups, particularly the Hispanics and the Hmong. Please continue this good work.
B	St. John the Baptist, Plymouth St. Thomas Aquinas, Elkhart Lake	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We heard St. John's preference to collaborate with St. Thomas Aquinas in Elkhart Lake. We recommend that you begin to surface areas of inter-parish collaboration. Set up a schedule of regular meetings among parish leaders and staff to accomplish this no later than January 2005. 2. Begin to plan for sharing one pastor between the two parishes.



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C	<p>St. John the Evangelist, Kohler</p> <p>Blessed Trinity, Sheboygan Falls</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We heard St. John's preference to create a new model for inter parish collaboration and sharing of staff and priest. We caution that any new model proposed be consistent with the Code of Canon Law. 2. Begin to surface areas of inter-parish collaboration. Set up a schedule of regular meetings among parish leaders and staff to accomplish this no later than January 2005 3. Begin to plan for sharing one priest between the two parishes no later than June 2007. 4. Because of the small capacity of the church in Kohler and the need to assure access to the Eucharist with a declining number of priests, St. John's should create a plan to increase the size of its worship space. Since the parish will share a priest with another parish in the future, the plan for increasing the worship space will have to envision fewer Masses per weekend at the parish. This planning process should begin immediately, with Archdiocesan help, carefully following the Archdiocesan building guidelines.
	<p>Our Lady of the Lakes, Random Lake</p>	<p>This parish is proposing to move to district 10 for planning and collaboration purposes. It will cluster with the parishes of northern Ozaukee County. Plans for that cluster are found in the recommendations for district 10.</p>



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LONG-TERM DISTRICT DIRECTIVES

Having studied the data for priests and deacons, projected priest retirements and ordinations, and the number of lay pastoral ministers with degrees from the seminary or similar courses of study elsewhere, we make the following recommendations.

- That the district will create of a district-wide Catholic parochial school system.
- Keeping in mind the existing SCORE program, we encourage the parishes to develop a district wide, coordinated religious education program to meet the needs of all members of the parishes from “womb to tomb”.
- Monitor the demographic changes in the Hmong and Hispanic populations and develop a plan to minister to them.
- Work with the district Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC) member, the parish consultant(s) and Office for Parish Councils and Planning to continue the planning process, initiate and follow-through on the plans approved and provide annual progress reports to the Archbishop. Plans will evolve over time depending upon the needs of the parishes and the larger Church, the human and financial resources available, and the “unexpected.”

Now, according to God who strengthens you, according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, with joy in the communion that exists among us, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ and the in the Holy Spirit be glory forever and ever. Amen.