



Genesis Vicariate Pastoral Council

TO SHARE CHRIST IN AND THROUGH THE URBAN CHURCH

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JUNE 13, 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. **Discussion of Recommendations For Questions 1-9**
3. **Vicariate Wrap up - Preparation for Next Meeting**
4. **Document Download Links**

OPENING PRAYER - GROUP ASSEMBLY/GROUP DISCUSSION

The meeting was opened at 6:43 pm with a prayer by Msgr. LeFevre.

The 2 groups assembled then will break into separate areas for discussion. This evening's meeting purpose is to put together a preliminary plan to be taken back to the parishes for review. Next meeting we will be putting together the final plan (with changes/additions) from the parishes that are to be sent to the APC and CPPC.

The plan is not about parish, it's about our working group. We need to address the challenges by the APC. Our challenge we would hand back is we heard them. We recognize these pieces will take place. Currently there are obviously some places with holes. We're not all doing Catholic schools, evangelization, etc. We need to do what the AOD is asking of us.

We leave behind the parochial and step into what we as a group (are what we are not doing). We need to formulate some concrete plans for what is not happening. The next meeting we'll fine tune that. In a large group it is difficult to do this type of work.

In your recommendations, you may come up with plans/programs for your individual parish and/or others in the vicariate. Be careful when making recommendations because there's no sense making a plan you cannot afford or put into place. This needs to be part of the process of the plan. Alton asked if everyone has their final recommendation plans; those without were provided with them. He also asked reps got feedback at their parishes; some said "yes", some "no".

Alton asked the parish reps to go to a table to discuss questions depending on their interest. Each table had reps from multiple parishes and took on 2 questions. They came back after an hour to discuss what they came up with.

Please note: Group 2 has already completed this task and their minutes will be sent out separately by the Group 2 Recorder.

DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1-9

The group came back together as a whole to hear the reports on their consensus to the Final Recommendation questions.

Question 1: "Based on the reflections and dialogue, and parish activities now and proposed for the future, what are the most important aspects of the Church's presence within the planning group, and in the vicariate? In the region? What are the most exciting things? How can these activities continue and grow?"

Recommendation 1: To actively engage with the community. They all each have weekly food distribution programs to the immediate community and St. Vincent DePaul. All do holiday outreach which is different from the weekly program; Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter as well as bringing Lilies and Poinsettias to the sick and shut-ins. They know they all lack young adult programs in the parishes, see it as a weakness. Don't know how to strengthen this, but know another group needs to address this area. They know they all have weak homebound ministry programs; they have some but need strengthening.

Recommendation 2: We need to uphold the dignity of the vulnerable who live among us, meaning people who are of various ethnic groups and down on their luck. We need to treat them with respect and embrace them when they come to Mass; get them to join in fellowship after Mass and provide them with things they need: clothes and furniture from St. Vincent DePaul and food from the Food Pantries. Incorporate into the community and invite them to join our Church family. They embraced some who came for outreach and they have become active members in the church because they were treated with dignity and respect when they approached us for assistance.

The supporting data: We have outreach programs in all the parishes.

Recommendation 3: Have the Black Urban Ministry develop a young adult program; they know they need to have youth programs. Currently they have no RCI candidates. Alton asked if they're suggesting specifically targeting African Americans and no, they want to focus on a diversified program.

A rep asked if the supplemental data in one recommendation be some phone numbers for things they can't do at the parish-level. What they can't do, give information to get people what they need. The answer is that St Vincent DePaul does that, it's a part of their existing program. They have strong outreach in that aspect. SVDP has many arms, it is part of what they do; it's a total, complete outreach program.

Question 2: "What are some best practices that should be duplicated in other parts of the vicariate, region or archdiocese that are not occurring now? What can other parishes and vicariates learn from this planning group?"

Recommendation 1: Many parishes have relationship with churches who give housing and gifts to urban parishes; this effort needs to be duplicated. Develop a brother/sister relationship with a suburban parish. The relationship should result in a partnering on projects and sharing of resources in support of each parish's mission.

Recommendation 2: Sharing of youth ministry & Vacation Bible School. Many churches have Vacation Bible School. We need to create a model like one where they created a large Bible school; increase attendance and volunteers, but he challenge is transportation. The location should be rotated and increase from 1 to 2 weeks. There's lot of possibilities and the same model could be used for evangelization.

Recommendation 3: Increase youth participation by implementing "Youth Sunday". This will help to get increased participation because when kids are involved, the adults will come. As with all outreach, it needs to be owned by the entire parish. The kids will have to be trained, but they can be ushers, altar servers, readers, etc. Implement this on a regular basis and make sure everyone knows it's on the calendar. Based on the number of participants, it can be held monthly or bi-monthly.

Question 3: "Review the final recommendations from the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. How will the parishes improve on what they are already doing, in response to the APC plans, or how will these plans be implemented in the future? How are these plans supported by the data and the planning process to date? What resources will be needed, including people, time, talent and treasure?"

Recommendation 1: Teaching all aspects of Stewardship can be accomplished in part through the written word. Align our parish bulletins to provide the communication needed for all aspects of stewardship recommended by the APC: events, prayer, service, thankfulness and grateful giving. Have bulletin editors exchange information for publication.

Recommendation 2: Have each parish create a parish stewardship committee if they don't already have one. Establish a parish and vicariate-level evangelization committee (training is required because the group is small or non-existent). A rep from each parish would participate at the vicariate-level. Experience level is low at their table, so someone with experience will be necessary to create the vicariate-level committee. They would need additional input whether a parish is strong or needs additional training.

Alton noted there's a helpful program in this area in the Southwest and there is an English version. It can be made available and readily accessed.

Recommendation 3: Support food bank/outreach/health services and publish in each other's bulletins what each other has and what they need.

Leadership level: The vicariate is to offer training as a group to be taught at Sacred Heart Seminary (with financial support) for people identified as lay-leaders; EME's, lectors, server, etc. Their deacons have been offering training for those who needed it.

Youth: Develop programs such as quarterly activities for youth at the diocesan-sponsored level. We're all hurting for youth. Form a committee with youth reps from each parish to formulate the needs and activities for youth under 18.

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

Recommendations for Question 4 are homework for the group and will be discussed at the June 27th meeting.

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?"

The discussion group didn't come to a clear consensus of opinion on all of the recommendations. No merger partners were identified at this time.

Recommendation 1: Some in the group have already merged. St. Raymond & OLGC will be merged with one site; maybe Our Lady of Good Counsel with Queen of Heaven in the future using OLGC as a worship site. They went building by building; try to get a more energy efficient building so they don't have to rely on charter to keep the lights on. Possibly buy or build a site more efficient.

Fr. Kotlarz said that two reps not present at the meeting agreed to propose one major parish with satellite sites. Possibly 2 major parishes and the others would downsize and become mission sites. That didn't come up for discussion at the table and it relates to this question. The group agreed to put it as part of the 2nd recommendation.

A rep stated that Assumption Grotto isn't clustered yet; shouldn't all parishes need to identify a cluster partner? Alton said yes. When looking at their capacity, it doesn't make sense to go forward without considering clustering for everyone. The issues of capacity come into play as do Mass schedules. We need to keep in mind the Basic Assumptions: every parish have a priest as pastor. Each must identify a cluster partner in the event something happens to the pastor or priest. They must build in a contingency plan. What do you do if you don't have a priest? It applies to every parish, not just Assumption Grotto because they're not participating in this process. Because in the event something happens to their pastor what would your recommendation be? The options are to close or merge; they had an opportunity to be here. We can't take into account what we don't know.

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?"

Their table didn't come to a consensus. St Gregory has food outreach and if it arises, they may have to do more. They were discussing the Raymond and Q of H; outreach at one could remain if warranted; they need to do more work.

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?"

Recommendation 1: Regional support of St. Bart School marketing to keep it open and flourishing.

Recommendation 2: Vicariate support of St. Bart. Supporting data is the same for both.

Regional: Marketing is one area they need support. They work with their own system of fundraising; they'd like to enhance and use the process in existence. They'd like to enlarge what they currently have going on; flyers, phone volunteers and recruiting. They currently have special fundraising events like charity poker, pizza days, and restaurants have a special day where they donate a portion of the sales to the school. Fundraising activities have to be approved by the board.

School funds are available from latchkey to 8th grade. There's good security and support for people who come into the system and have a PTO group. They need to recruit people to participate in all these programs, get support from the Archdiocese. They have a business plan to expand. Emphasize small classroom size (less than 20 students per teacher). They need to coordinate transportation drop off points throughout the region and vicariate.

Recommendation 3: Use of what we're doing here (the VPC council) and create a Catholic School Vicariate committee; spread out the workload. If they do a regional school it would have to be a regional committee. If the parishes supported with us with volunteers, they could do more. Alton noted that if support is regional it's going to include the whole region.

It was considered to add a recommendation to change the name of the school. Fr. Kotlarz stated that all parishes should be supporting our Catholic school. Alton asked "how are you going to make it happen?" Make it tax-based? There was a suggestion; to be supported Archdiocesan-wide. Fr. Kotlarz asked if we could address it as a secondary school.

One thing should be considered; what's lacking in the city? One thing they've heard talked about is high school education. It needs to be included in the discussion if there should be a K-12 school. Alton said it's been indicated there should be secondary school on the East side. It doesn't have to be K-12; it could be stand-alone high school. It should be part of their recommendations. Right now, Bart's doesn't have pre-K; their program is independent of St. Bart.

Paul Billion noted that St. Bart has a daycare they started this school year. Some parents who have preschool children have been offered day care services. They'd like to have preschool & latchkey run by St. Bart.

Recommendation 4 was added to have a Grade 9-12 school.

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?"

Recommendation 1: School may need a new roof in the next 3 years.

The rep from Q of H (?) said he knows their buildings are old and inefficient; that's why he suggested buying or building a new location; St. Greg's gym needs repair.

A rep made a proposal to have an engineering study on all of the parishes/buildings. Q of H had Peerless come in and do one. Peerless is sanctioned by the Archdiocese. They study the buildings and tell you the condition of your entire facility – security too – and make recommendations on what the longevity of the buildings and cost of repairs are going to be.

Alton asked if he was recommending all parishes have one; the rep answered yes, those that haven't had one in 3-5 years should have one done.

They can also do an 'energy audit'; there is a priest that does this. Everyone in the Blessed Sacrament cluster had both done.

Paul recommended St. Bart be brought bring up-to-date for handicapped-access.

Question 9: "How do the data, maps and statistics provided support these recommendations?"

Recommendations for Question 4 and 9 are homework for the group and will be discussed at the June 27th meeting.

VICARIATE WRAP-UP - PREPARATION FOR FINAL MEETING

We will meet again on June 27th. At that time we want to make sure we've all heard the preliminary recommendations. We should expect in a week to get this all sent out to the group. If there are things you need to add to your recommendations, please do so when we come together on 27^t we can put it up and show all recommendations line-by-line and get a consensus.

If you have updates in the meantime, please send them to the recorder at Monica@InstantAssistant.com for Group 1 (City); kasiamaziarz@sbcglobal.net for Group 2 (Polonia).

The first draft is the rough strokes; the primer. The APC & CPPC will review the data and send back their recommendations and updates to our recommendations. Make sure when you have supporting data you send it to Monica so we know what the recommendations are based on. If we have this information going forward it will make the process easier.

We'll be off in the summer and will reconvene in September. Then we'll look at what the APC & CPPC recommendations to the group are. We will refine them and get them back to the APC in October.

When 1-9 are completed the pastor has to sign them; it doesn't indicate their approval, just that they reviewed it.

The new Parish Pastoral Council and Financial Council guidelines are going out soon.

The meeting closed with a prayer at 8:55 pm.

DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD LINKS

[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](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Archibald
Genesis VPC Recording Secretary