

ARCHDIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL (APC) EVALUATION
September 2011

Genesis Vicariate - Planning Group 2
Our Lady Queen of Apostles
St. Florian
St. Hyacinth
St. Ladislaus
St. Louis the King
Transfiguration – Our Lady Help of Christians

1. Based on the reflections, 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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. The Church maintaining a visible sign of Catholicism in a Muslim community, by celebrating Mass/sacraments. Caring for the spiritual needs of the faithful who still live in the neighborhood.

Supporting Data:

- Mission of the Catholic Church.
- Sacramental statistics

- b. Co-existence with numerous ethnic groups and ecumenical dialogue.

Supporting Data:

- Catholics and Muslims united to defeat gay rights ordinance in Hamtramck. Without such a coalition, the City Council would have passed a new ordinance.

- c. Providing Christian service and outreach opportunities for the needy (both Catholic and non-Catholic) providing basic sustenance.

Supporting Data:

- Soup kitchens, food pantries, Westiarki sister activities (homebound ministry) and Christmas giving trees

- d. Providing religious education opportunities in both English and Polish language to the 152 youth in the metro area in 2010.

Supporting Data:

- Sacramental statistics

- e. Historical nature of the parishes; we desire to maintain the beautiful architectural structures and historical nature of these churches and parishes

Supporting Data:

- Parishes in the planning group are at least 85 years old

- f. Continuity depends on good relations with all organizations, cooperation of priests and parishioners, good leadership, dedicated (and certified) catechetical instructors. The participating parishes in the planning group would also like to create a monthly bulletin to distribute amongst themselves of all upcoming activities.

APC Response

- a. **How can these grow? What is the church doing to maintain a visible sign? Who is involved? How do the activities support the AOD mission? In what way are you caring for the needs? How are these "best practices"?**
 - b. **How does the dialogue continue and grow? In what other ways can the ethnic and ecumenical groups work together? How does this support the AOD Mission?**
 - c. **What are the activities? Who is involved and what is the target audience? How is this financed?**
 - d. **How will this continue? Is this a planning group activity or is it just one parish?**
 - e. **Does this desire extend beyond brick and mortar?**
 - f. **Can this be done on a vicariate level? Who will do it and how will it be funded? What is the ultimate goal for this?**
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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. Strong emphasis in religious formation of youth (Polish and English language).
Planning group recommendation is to have a stronger emphasis for catechesis for Polish speaking HS aged students. Enrollment falls from 90 grade school to 5 high school students at St. Florian (Polish), compared to the 40 grade school to 22 high school students at Queen of Apostles (English)

Supporting Data:

- 62 English students, 95 Polish students per statistics

- b. Collection from associate parishioners

Supporting Data:

- St. Hyacinth contribution envelopes.

- c. Ecumenical dialogue , which enables a better opportunity for evangelization

Supporting Data:

- Average of 2 to 4 conversions a year

- d. Maintaining Polish cultural traditions

Supporting Data:

- Devotions such as Gorzkie Żale (lamentations), Corpus Christi processions, 40 hour devotions, etc.

- e. Would like to establish a sister parish relationship(s) that has a predominately Polish congregation in the suburbs to revitalize the mother parishes of the Polish-American community on the east side of Detroit

Supporting Data:

- Missions, communal confessions

- f. Would like to establish direct debit from bank accounts for weekly collections

- g. What can people learn from this planning group:
 - Tolerance
 - Polish Tradition

Supporting Data:

- Acceptance of the Muslim Call to Prayer
- h. Strong Alumni association ties/databases

APC Response

- a. **Will you continue to provide Religious Education in English?**
 - b. **What does this mean – what are associate parishioners?**
 - c. **Please explain how this is a "best practice" and what activities actually happen.**
 - d. **How does this support the AOD mission?**
 - e. **Who will do this activity? What will your parishes share with the partner? What are the expected activities and outcomes of this partnership?**
 - f. **Why?**
 - g. **Please explain each of these and what others can learn from each. How can this be expanded to other parishes?**
3. Review the final recommendations from the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC). 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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. In terms of youth, the planning group offers two religious education programs – one in Polish language, one in English language. All the churches in the planning group should encourage sending youth to either the English or Polish religious education program. Also, look to see if there are social activities to organize for youth and young adults, outside of formal education program.

Supporting Data:

- The instructors would be trained and certified, and the combined congregations would pull resources to support such program(s). As a result of this exercise St. Hyacinth has decided to organize a formal youth group.
- b. In terms of Christian service/outreach, the group will comprise a needs list and share with all Churches in the planning group. All current services that are offered at each parish will be presented, a contact list will be established, and collaboration with churches will commence. In this fashion, we expect to see synergy and efficiencies.
 - c. In terms of Evangelization/Catechesis, each parish will establish an evangelization committee, as no formal groups presently exist. Priority for evangelization will be to search out non-practicing Catholics and attract them back to the Church, re-engage people through publicizing traditional aspect of services or finding an innovative way to welcome and draw people back.

Supporting Data:

- Piast Institute has identified 6000 (in Hamtramck only) Catholics in the city, and the statistics point to 1100 (approximately) active individual registered Catholics within our church group.
- d. In terms of Leadership, learn to better foster and cultivate leaders. For young adults, establish a mentor/mentee relationship. For example, using the Rel. Ed program, the DRE can initiate a mentoring relationship with young adult catechists to help their development, and enrichment classes to eventually grow to leadership role. Offer formal training possibilities for Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, and Hospital/homebound ministry. Perform a talent survey of parishioners for roles/responsibilities in the church

Supporting Data:

- Parishes would financially support the training costs.
- e. In terms of Stewardship, each parish will form separate stewardship and finance councils, as no parish has separate councils at this time. The parishes will establish a better communication tool to convey parish finances on a yearly basis.

APC Response

- a. **How is the encouragement done, who does it, and how is it monitored? What type of social activities? Who will do it? What is the funding for this?**
 - b. **Do you mean “develop”? And then what will happen? How does this support the APC recommendations? How will this help other parishes?**
 - c. **Can this be done as a planning group wide effort? What will be the activities, goals, and target audience for the committee?**
 - d. **Suggest that wording from the APC Leadership Committee be reviewed. How will this be monitored and how will the new leaders be utilized? Who will train them? Are there plans for utilizing the information garnered from the survey?**
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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. St. Ladislaus, Transfiguration/Help of Christians, and St. Louis the King are already in the merger process to form a new parish, come the new fiscal year.
- b. Queen of Apostles and St. Hyacinth will not identify a formal cluster partnership, but will work in a collaborative nature with each other until issues such as pastor re-assignment, death/serious illness, etc are reached.
- c. The planning group is concerned about St. Florian’s growing debt. The remaining parishes in the planning group are without debt and have the ability to maintain individual parish status. Recommendations from the planning group regarding St. Florian include:
 - Upon the Society of Christ order vacating the parish, the church would operate as a mission for Our Lady of Czestochowa Sterling Heights or close and all parish properties would be sold to reduce or pay the debt owed to the Archdiocese
 - If the order leaves and the parish is debt free, then the remaining collaborating parishes in the group would be open to cluster discussion.

Supporting Data:

- Financial data presented by the Archdiocese indicates from \$1,243,650 as of June 30, 2004 to \$1,805,973 as of December 31, 2010).
- d. Parishes will collaborate on coordination of Mass schedules.

Supporting Data:

- Data indicates many of our Masses are being celebrated at the same time (e.g. four of the six churches in the planning group have a Mass at 4:00 p.m.).
- Data also shows there is an overcapacity of seating relative to the number of Masses and the number of people attending.

APC Response

- a. Great collaboration.**
 - b. In What areas are they working together? You need firm plans for the future and need to make a firm recommendation for implementation of the plan. Who will develop the plan?**
 - c. Has the Society of Christ and Our Lady of Czestochowa agreed to this plan? Is there a plan to pay down or pay off the debt?**
 - d. What is the purpose of the coordination if there are no plans to cluster or merge? How does this deal with the possible priest shortage?**
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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. In essence we could, however if all the parishes in the planning group were to combine and assume the debt of St. Florian, the existing church buildings would need to close and be sold in order to make this merger financially sustainable. Such a combination would not be feasible. We feel it would be detrimental due to the number of people we would alienate and who would establish connections with suburban parishes. Since more than 50% of parishioners within the planning group live outside parish boundaries, logic indicates they would attend Mass closer to their homes rather than a church where they have no personal connection.

Supporting Data:

- Most recently, when Our Lady Help of Christians parish closed, none of the neighboring parishes saw any measurable increase in Mass attendance. When St. Stanislaus, Immaculate Conception, and Resurrection parishes closed, St. Hyacinth did not see any measurable increases in Mass attendance.
- This was also evidenced during school closures.
- Upon school closure at Queen of Apostles, children went to suburban schools instead of attending St. Florian.

APC Response

- a. **If the recommendation is not feasible, why are you making it?**

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?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. In a worst case scenario, if worship sites were closed, there would not be any source of financial support (weekly collections) of parishioners, making it impossible to continue operating as an outreach center. Unless the Archdiocese would provide funding, such an option wouldn't be feasible.

Supporting Data:

- Financial statistics
- b. If St. Florian were to lose parish status, it might be able to operate as a mission for Our Lady of Czestochowa, Sterling Heights – who is also operated by the Society of Christ order.
- c. Due to zoning laws in Hamtramck, it would be hard to convert a building from a religious to a non-residential use.

Supporting Data:

- City zoning laws
- d. Our churches are properly and architecturally “church” structures, not designed for any other uses, nor easily converted to other uses.

APC Response

- a. **Have you considered the possibility of parishes jointly sponsoring an outreach center?**
- b. **Good perspective, but see Question 4 response.**
- c. **Have you investigated this – please provide details.**
- d. **What other uses?**

7. What resources will be needed, including people, time, talent, and treasure? 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/vicariates/regions? How will the parishes support Catholic school education if a new Catholic school model is developed for current and future Catholic families?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. To ensure the vitality of a parish, young families must be attracted and retained. Parishioners must become active in the church. To retain young families in the planning group, the Archdiocese needs to conduct a needs assessment to determine if a Catholic school is needed in the planning group and if one school could be sustained through a major fundraising campaign outside of the parishes. Such a school would need to concentrate on the Polish immigrant children, and a support base would need to be established in the Polish American community in the Archdiocese.

If a need is identified but a school is not sustainable, the parishes would collaboratively invest in building a stronger religious education program to instill catechetical formation.

Supporting Data:

- Statistics provided by SEMCOG and Piast Institute.
- b. For those churches that have charter school/public school income from rental of school buildings, in lieu of sending the Archdiocese a proportion of the rental income, we could offer a stipend/scholarship to parishioners who attend other Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. This amount, along with archdiocesan grant amount, could help to lessen the cost of yearly tuition at the school of parents' choice.

APC Response

- a. **Given that there is an elementary school already in the vicariate (St. Bartholomew), has there been consideration given to working with them to make this school more attractive to the Polish community? Offering Polish Language classes?**
 - b. **Is this charter school income currently shared with St. Bartholomew, as called for by Archdiocesan Policy? What is the plan if the charter/public school income is lost?**
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? Could a parish better serve its population and mission in a different location and where?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. Current conditions of our structures meet our current and projected needs. However, St. Ladislaus school building and rectory are for sale, Transfiguration school building is up for sale, St. Hyacinth school building can be sold or leased, and the St. Hyacinth activities building (parish home) is also for sale.
- b. We do not believe relocating any of our parishes would be feasible because of the history of the parishes and history of the church structures.

APC Response

- b. **Good point.**
9. How does the data, maps and statistics provided support these recommendations?

Planning Group Recommendation

- a. Data is somewhat misleading, data does not recognize that the Catholic population is declining, and the Muslim population is increasing.
- b. Based on the 2010 census, the number of registered households in Hamtramck is understated in data presented to us by nearly 2000 households. (compared to SEMCOG data)
- c. The data, statistics, maps, etc. provided are consistent with our review and recommendations in questions 1-8.

**APC Response
(No response noted)**