



**Diocese of Green Bay**  
**DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 20, 2017**

**Attendees:** Bishop David Ricken, Very Reverends Daniel Felton and James Baraniak, O. Praem., Pat Kosuth, Jeff Taylor, John Folk, Jan Clark, Steve Parent, William Graf, Sister Natalie Binversie, Pat Ratajczak, Patrick Hart, Paula Freimuth and Betty Hove

**Excused/Absent:** Judi Gosenheimer, Maurine Overesch, Elizabeth Kostichka, Deborah Schmidt, Deacon Randy Haak, Deacon Chuck Schumacher, Michael Witte, Cindy Massey and Dottie Borowski

**Opening Activities**

- Meeting opened at 8:45 a.m.
- Bishop Ricken led the assembled in the Liturgy of the Hours.
- Mission Statement was recited by Council members.
- A motion was made to approve and adopt the meeting minutes of January 7, 2017 as written. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
- A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded and approved unanimously.
- Introductions from each individually.

**Opening Comments**—Bishop Ricken. Tremendous opportunities and challenges in the midst of change. In the last 10-15 years, numbers are down for baptisms, first communion and confirmation. We have to position ourselves to help the Holy Spirit. Each parishioner is sent on a mission to live out the gospel. We have had many projects going on. By 2020, we will launch the new evangelization. Have a core leadership be on purpose and on mission and ready for 2020. The diocese's role is to help guide and direct it. The four modules are: Discover Jesus, Follow Jesus, Worship Jesus and Share Jesus. Leadership will be invited to go through a Discipleship Formation Seminar and Alpha. We will continue to develop this over time and moving forward. This is a paradigm shift. Walk with Jesus as individuals and as communities. We are moving from a corporate culture to a discipleship mission model.

**Mission and Vision Overview**—Fr. Dan Felton went over the strategic overview for Disciples on the Way. There is a pattern and method to moving forward. The parish survey helped lead to a new mission and vision statement. This framework has become our response to the challenges. Look at everything through the lens of discipleship. Everything that we do, we will put the framework of discipleship around it. Within the process, leadership is being trained. There are different waves of discipleship. We are moving from a corporate culture to a discipleship mission model, so a change in culture. An example was given of Fr. Benny Jacob, O. Praem., from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. Fr. Benny wants to visit with 50 families per year and in order to do that he needed to have a conversation of what can he give up. This is an example of changing to a mission driven model. Mission planning will occur after a cultural process.

Want to grow the areas of concentration driven by discipleship. We need to get everything in order before we launch the new evangelization in 2020. What do we need to do internally to be ready? We need alignment of the curia to the mission. There is a Meitler Study for schools. We have an IT Strategic

Plan. IT is about driving the mission and vision. We are looking at the Parish Survey and a list of areas where the field has asked for help. Look at what we need to strengthen. Spend the resources on discipleship.

#### Bishop Ricken Areas of Concentration

- Alive & Vibrant Parishes
- Strong & Vibrant Catholic Schools and Religious Education Programs. Turn the Catholic School into a school of discipleship. Turn Religious Education into a school of discipleship.
- Vocations-Help parishes embrace the call to serve as disciples.
- Our Lady of Good Help Shrine—Went from 10,000 to 130,000 pilgrims. Prepare for the increase in pilgrims.

Bishop Ricken—Connect with parish boundaries. Each parish has a mission field, concentrate your missionary efforts on your neighborhoods. Look at what we need to keep doing, start doing and stop doing. This is a cultural shift out of silos.

Look at the challenges that we face. Put the framework of discipleship around everything that we do. Train the leaders and get prepared so we can be ready to help the parishes with discipleship. We are being called by the Holy Spirit. Your mission field for the DPC is your vicariate.

#### Discussion/reactions:

- Footprints of where you are within the diocese. Pair up with The Abbey to see what resources can help. The Abbey has a 2021 focus.
- 150 years for Sisters in 2019. Opportunity for collaboration.
- Refreshing, getting back to the basics.
- DCCW—It has a personal touch. Support and educate all Catholic women. Connect with the Hispanic community.
- The corporate model has gotten in the way. Be able to work with the curia. Administrative duties get in the way of getting out.
- Alpha is a pilot at several parishes.
- The plan pulls in the parishioners.
- The elderly often are the ones stepping up in the parish.
- Young adults often ask what is in it for me. How do we connect the DPC members to the other leaders within the vicariate?
- There will be fear. Alpha will be important.
- Attitude. Use your gifts and talents. Do what you are good at.

#### Jeff:

- Ability to overcome fear.
- As you ask parishioners to evangelize, remember parishioners have not studied evangelization. Be prepared.
- With regards to Alpha, 30-40% of parish councils change out every year. So, there is continuous movement of people. Have a plan for ongoing Alpha training to new individuals.
- We have started an onboarding program for parish council member, so the new member is ready to go at the first meeting.
- We are turning a cruise ship, not a speed boat. Acknowledge this is a cultural shift. This is a gradual change that continues to happen with constant motion.

- As a diocese, we are preparing our house for guests. When we prepare for a party, we get the house ready and then we invite people in at the door.
- What can we do? We should help where we can. Meet with other leaders within our vicariate on a regular basis to build the relationships. Get to know the priests and pastoral leaders. You have to build a foundation that understands and can follow this. The curia is the cornerstone, and now we need to build the foundation to help maintain and revitalize.
- We use a pyramid graph and turn it upside down. Start with the parish members and go out.

**Discipleship I & II**—Fr. Dan Felton went over discipleship timeline. Parish staff invited to Leadership Convocation. Kristin Bird of Burning Hearts will be doing 9 Saturday Vicariate presentation events for parish volunteer leaders.

### **Discussion on Community Councils**

Bishop—Smaller parishes have a heavy burden to have so many individuals for so many councils and/or committees. How do we help them to care for the parish? Do not want unrealistic structural expectations.

Fr. Dan Felton—Relates back to mission. Simplify and streamline where you can to meet the needs of the people. The Community Council hand out goes over criteria parishes would need to meet. With the current criteria, 30-35 parishes would qualify for a community council. A parish does need to do a community council if they do not want to. The purpose of the community council and membership was discussed. It is a smaller working group of people who would be overseeing. This is a draft, it is a guideline. It is meant to have flexibility.

Discussion/feedback:

- 3-year term renewable once for parish finance council members.
- Who is parish leadership if it is not the community council?
- Could any of the parishes that fall into this category be linked up to another bigger parish for assistance?
- How was the size chosen? There are some other parishes a little bigger that might benefit from this community council? The parish could solve the issue prior to it getting to the point.
- Good way to go.

**Update on Meitler Catholic School Study**—Fr. Dan Felton. Look at information for your region/vicariate. There is not a cookie cutter approach how to best respond for a particular region. Work with leadership and a number of people within a region to come up with a plan. Priests, pastoral leaders, principals and board members were invited for two presentations. There are some general data that goes across the diocese.

Bishop Ricken—Not all schools are the same. Is there a more creative way to deliver a high level education? Look for different ways to deliver discipleship formation. Look for what will be the most helpful for the diocese. Quality academic is necessary.

Fr. Dan—Meitler has the data and ideas, but they work with the leaders and other individuals to make decisions. There will be a future report and follow up. Want to align schools with the mission. Catholic schools are critical to move the mission and vision forward.

Discussion/feedback on Meitler Study:

A recommendation is to break the data down even more. Numbers skewed in the county data, for example in Door County. Look at numbers by school district.

**Q & A**

School Choice Program discussed. Bishop Ricken thanked everyone for coming and for sharing their input.

Bishop led closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jami Rogne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jami Rogne  
Recording Secretary