

Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive Planning Model I – Meeting of Pastoral Council & Staff

Overview

At a minimum each parish is asked to have at least one meeting of the pastor/parish director/pastoral coordinator, the Pastoral Council and members of the staff. The purpose of the meeting is to review Bishop Ricken's pastoral letter on parishes, in light of the letter, discuss how the parish will strengthen the parish celebration of the Eucharist and consider whether or not to work on any of the other pastoral focus areas during 2011-2012.

Agenda Suggestions

- I. Prayer
- II. Introductions
- III. Overview of Meeting
 - a. Task 1 – to discuss Bishop's Pastoral Letter – Focus on Eucharist – determine how parish could strengthen Sunday Celebration of Eucharist
 - b. Task 2 – review pastoral letter and determine if the parish would like to address any other aspects of the pastoral letter during 2011- 2012
- IV. Distribute copies of pastoral letter, (if not mailed in advance) give brief presentation
 - a. Note result of year long Diocesan Visioning Process – note parish input fall 2010 – strengths and dreams (if available)
 - b. Mention Leadership Summit – Feb. 2011
 - c. Pastoral letter released by Bishop Ricken – June 12, 2011 based on input from parishioners, parish and diocesan leaders.
 - d. Over next 5-7 years parishes expected to address all areas outlined in letter.
- V. Focus 2011 – 2012 – Eucharist
 - a. Note hope to build on efforts already under way to implement the revised Roman Missal
 - b. Review section in pastoral letter on Eucharist
 - c. Challenge – in addition to implementing new Roman Missal – what else could be done in the course of the coming year to strengthen the way the parish celebrates Sunday Eucharist. Brainstorm, prioritize and determine who will be responsible for accomplishing what by when.

VI. Additional Focus Item(s)

- a. In light of parish dreams articulated in fall 2010 and or desire of those present address some other aspect(s) of the pastoral letter – discuss whether or not the parish wishes to work on any other items during 2011 – 2012.
- b. If decision is to tackle additional item(s) – brainstorm list of possibilities, prioritize, and determine who will be responsible for accomplishing what by when.

Following the Meeting(s)

Determine who will be responsible for completing the status report due to the diocese by November 15, 2011 and who will outline the final plan to be mailed to Bishop Ricken by no later than January 15, 2012.

Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive Planning Model II – Pastoral Council Study Year

Overview

At a minimum the pastor/parish director, staff and Pastoral Council should meet together one time to discuss together how during 2011 - 2012 the parish will work together to strengthen the Sunday Eucharist as outlined in Planning Model I. In addition the pastor/parish director and members of the pastoral council might consider using the coming year for study and formation on the mission and vision of the church for parish life. This could be done by setting aside the first part of every council meeting to study another part of the pastoral letter. At the end of the year the pastor/parish director and council would use their reflections to establish plans and priorities for future implementation of the pastoral letter. What follows is a suggested outline of topics for council meetings.

Session I – Setting the Context – Called to Be Holy

Read pages 3-5 of the hard cover edition of the pastoral letter. Go to the diocesan website to get more information on the summary documents for the various “voice groups” that provided input during the Diocesan Visioning Process. Explore what it means that each and every member of the parish is called to be holy.

Session II – The Vision for Parishes

Read pages 6-9 of the pastoral letter. Download from the diocesan website the document “Pastoral Reflection on the Parish and the Mission of the Church”. If the parish participated in the fall 2010 process of naming the parish strengths and dreams, make copies of that document. Discuss what aspects of the vision and dream for parishes your parish is currently doing well. Explore some preliminary thoughts and ideas on how to strengthen the parish in the future.

Session III – Evangelization - Being a Welcoming Parish Called to Evangelize

Read pages 10-13 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources. Talk about how the parish could foster a more family like welcoming spirit in the parish. Consider the call to evangelize and what the possibilities might be for the parish.

Session IV – Youth, Young Adults and Family

Read pages 13-15 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources.

Session V – Leadership – Priesthood, Religious Life, Diaconate, Lay Ministry

Read pages 16-18 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources.

Session VI - Education – Catholic Schools, Catechesis & Life Long Learning

Read pages 18-20 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources.

Note: If more needs to be done to consider additional ways to enhance the Sunday Eucharist, an additional session should be inserted here.

Session VII – Dignity of Human Life, Justice and Charity

Read pages 22-25 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources.

Session VIII – Stewardship & Planning

Read pages 26-27 of the pastoral letter. Check the diocesan website for additional background information and resources. In addition to considering the call to stewardship as outlined at the end of the letter, in light of the year of study, this would now be a time for the pastor/parish director, staff and members of the pastoral council to consider what its priorities might be over the next several years with regard to the further implementation of the pastoral letter. Keep in mind that each parish is expected to address 1-2 of the pastoral focus areas of the pastoral letter for the next 5-7 years until all areas of the letter have been implemented in the parish.

Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive Planning Model III – Parish Leadership Summit

Overview

This model provides a unique opportunity for all parish leaders to gather for a kind of a mini-planning retreat. Outlined here is a Friday evening and Saturday morning model. The model can also be adapted to an all day Saturday model as well. Invited to the Parish Leadership Summit are the pastor/parish director, staff, members of the Pastoral Council and Finance Council, trustees, chairpersons and or representatives from each of the major committees and organizations of the parish. The model can be adapted for participation by multiple parishes at the same time. Typically there are 30- 50 people in attendance to review the first priority the Sunday Eucharist and then to consider the other pastoral focus areas as outlined in the Pastoral Letter. Staff members of the diocesan Department of Stewardship and Pastoral Services are available to assist parish leaders with this model.

Preparations

- Send copies of Pastoral Letter in Advance
- Send copies of “Pastoral Reflection on the Parish and the Mission of the Church” (optional – available on diocesan website)
- Snacks
- Newsprint & markers

Basic Schedule

Friday

6:00 Gather, Opening Prayer

6:15 Introductions, Overview of Time Together, Ground Rules

6:30 Setting the Context – The Parish

- Invite those present to complete the following question
“The parish exists to...,”
- Put into small groups of 3-4 to discuss personal definitions
- Invite those present to consider the definition of parish as found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church listed on page 3 of the hard cover version of the Pastoral letter and Bishop Ricken’s vision for parish found on page 4
- Have large group discussion – in light of the vision it strikes me that our parish..., (optional – take notes on newsprint)

7:30 Break

7:45 Priority for 2011 – 2012 – Sunday Eucharist

- Give brief presentation on how the parish is planning to implement the New Translation of the Roman Missal
- Invite those present to reflect on and then discuss in small groups pages 20 – 22 of the Pastoral Letter
- Brainstorm and list on newsprint the various ways in which the parish could strengthen the Sunday Eucharist during 2011-2012
- Prioritize the list

9:00 Conclude

Saturday

8:00 Gather, coffee, snacks, opening prayer

- Overview of morning
- Plan to review 5 other pastoral focus areas and Stewardship

8:15 Review Focus Areas – Round I

- Have people count off to create small groups of 3 – 5
- Once groups formed – assign one of the first three focus areas- Evangelization, Youth, Young Adult & Family, Leadership to each of the groups (you should have more than one group address each of these three areas)
- Their task – is first of all to review the appropriate sections from the pastoral letter – have them answer the question – “As I review this and think about our parish, it occurs to me that...,”
- Recruit – via your announcement – the youngest person in each group to take some notes and be the group reporter.
- Allow about 30 minutes for discussion
- Invite each group to give a verbal report (of can be written and handed in) jot notes on newsprint highlighting the discussion

9:15 Break

9:30 Review Focus Areas – Round II

- Follow same process as in Round I. Have people count off and create new groups. Assign to each group the areas of Education, Dignity of Human Life and Stewardship.

10:30 Break

10:45 Prioritize Input

- Considering all that was shared this morning, ask each person to take a few minutes and jot down a few notes for themselves on which of the ideas presented should be parish priorities – in addition to those priorities determined on Friday night for strengthening Sunday Eucharist.
- Put people back into small groups of no more than 3-4.
- Each small group is charged with the task of listening first to each person as to the suggested priorities they came up with and then determining as a group no more than 3 possible priorities for the whole group to consider for action.
- Session leader lists items on newsprint and numbers them – this time the oldest person (Wisdom Person) in each group is invited to be the recorder and reporter from the group.
- Once all items on list – each person present is asked to pick the 3 that they believe should be priorities for action.
- Session leader asks for a show of hands – those with highest votes are the priorities.

12:15 – Thanks, Closing Comments, Concluding Prayer

Follow-Up

Following the Leadership Summit, a small committee of 3-5 people should meet to take the information from the Summit and compile a summary report. This report should include the priorities for strengthening the Sunday Eucharist and other parish priorities. It should propose who will be responsible for following through on the items determined, what should be accomplished, and by what date(s). This draft plan should be presented to the pastor/parish director for his or her blessing and then presented to the Pastoral Council and staff for their approval or further development.

Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive Planning Model IV – Planning Committee 3-5 Year Plan

Overview

In this model a special parish planning committee is appointed by the pastor/parish director that includes members of the Pastoral Council and other interested parishioners. The planning committee assists in the organization of a number of ad hoc time limited sub-committees who are charged with the task of studying the basic building blocks of the parish including the pastoral focus areas as outlined in the Pastoral Letter. Input from each of these committees comes together toward the end of the 6-8 month process in a parish Leadership Summit (see model III). From the input of the committees and deliberations of the parish Leadership Summit a draft of a 3-5 year plan is developed for the parish by the planning committee and presented to the pastor/parish director for approval and implementation. Staff from Department of Stewardship and Pastoral Services are available to assist parishes with this model.

Note: this would be in addition to planning model 1 – where the parish leadership has spent time looking at ways that it will strengthen the Sunday Eucharist which is a priority for year 2011 – 2012.

I. Step One Organize Planning Committee

1. Basic role and responsibility of the Planning committee is to
 - a. facilitate communication between the various core committees
 - b. oversee the entire the process, setting time lines, establishing guidelines, etc.
 - c. take recommendations of core committees and facilitate a process to help parish leadership (which includes Pastoral Council, Finance Council and staff) to establish parish and inter-parish priorities for the implementation of the pastoral letter and the creation of a ministerially complete parish in both the short term and long term.
2. Clarify Roles
 - relationship with Parish Council, Finance Council, Board of Education
 - pastor/parish staff
 - diocesan staff

II. Step Two – Engage Parishioners – Parish Strengths

Options – 1-1 interviews (whole parish – or just a sample or parishioners?)
Survey – (mailed, random sample, online survey, at masses?)
4X6 Cards at Masses

Planning Committee collates responses and puts them into summary report for feedback to parishioners and parish leadership.

III. Step Three – Organize Core Committees

1. Recruit committees of 3-5 parishioners who would be willing to make a six month commitment. If available, assign a parish staff person to assist.
2. Engage, the appropriate diocesan staff person(s) to assist in the development of parish and inter-parish plans. The involvement of the diocesan staff person could be extensive or fairly limited. One way or another, the committees should consult the appropriate staff person to make sure that a review of the diocesan vision, policies and resources in the given core area are included in the work of the committee.
3. The Basic Work of the Core Committees would be to prepare a written report that would address the following areas;
 - a. Gather information and data to review the current practices, programs and services offered within the given core area.
 1. List for each individual parish
 2. List any shared inter-parish cooperative efforts
 - b. Study and consider vision/standards for core area.
 - c. Make recommendations for growth
 1. Short Term – next 18 months – for each parish and inter-parish
 2. Long Term – visionary – 3-5 years – for each parish and inter-parish

Ideally, Parishes that are Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive, would have quality programs and staff in various core areas or building blocks of parish life. These would include the six pastoral focus areas found in the Pastoral Letter, but may include other items as well.

IV. Step Four – Study Renewed Parish Life Materials

Planning Committee reviews inspirational and thought provoking materials provided by the diocesan department of Stewardship and Pastoral Services or other appropriate sources on best practices and successful parishes.

V. Step Five – Parish Dream Process

Parishioners are asked to consider – “Wouldn’t it be great, wouldn’t it be wonderful, if with God’s help. 3 (or more) years from now _____

Options – 1-1 interviews (whole parish – sample?)
Parish Assembly – Town Hall Meeting
Survey – (mailed, random sample, online survey, at masses?)
4X6 Cards at Masses

Planning Committee collates responses and puts them into summary report for feedback to parishioners and parish leadership.

VII. Step Six – Leadership Summit

1. Leadership Summit meets to review recommendations from core committees and planning committee
2. Leadership would include?
 - Pastors
 - Pastoral Councils
 - Finance Councils
 - Trustees
 - Staff
 - Key Committee and organizational heads
 - Other?
3. Leadership would utilize a process, (See planning model III) that would
 1. Consider and prayerfully reflect on the collective hopes and dreams of leadership and parishioners for the parishes.
 2. Review the Parish Best Practices materials
 3. Consider the hopes and dreams of the Core committees
 4. Consider current realities as outlined by the Core Committees
 5. Consider the recommendations for action as outlined by the Core Committees
 6. Look at what's best for the total parish and establish parish priorities.
 7. Provide input on implementation plans, short and long term

VI. Step Seven – Planning Committee Prepares Draft of Plan

Utilizing the wisdom of the various inputs to the Leadership Summit, and the recommendations of the planning committees, the Planning Committee prepares the first draft of parish plans.

VII. Step Eight – Presentation of Draft Plan to Parish Leadership

Plan is presented to pastor and Pastoral Councils for approval and future action. (It may be appropriate to present drafts of plans to parishioners for their comment as well via open parish meeting or printing in parish newsletters)

VIII. Step Nine – Implementation

Pastoral Council working in close collaboration with pastor and staff determine who will be responsible for follow through on each aspect of plans. This would mean designation of appropriate parish councils, committees, organizations and or staff.

Pastoral Council would monitor implementation via regular reports from responsible bodies on a regular basis.