

REVISED SEPTEMBER, 1997

GUIDED BY FAITH WORKBOOK



CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING PROCESS

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE FOR RESEARCH AND PLANNING
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PRAYER FOR RENEWAL

God, our Father,
You call all Your children
to a life of holiness.

Through Baptism,
You give us the gift
of Your Spirit
and welcome us
into the Family of Your Church.

Guide us
to increase our love for You
through prayer and service.

Teach us
to live and share
the message of Your Son and

Help us
to worship You
with hearts full of faith.

We give You praise and thanks,
through Mary our Mother,
in asking You to renew us
in the name of Jesus our Lord,

Amen.

Imprimatur
Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua, D.D., J.C.D., J.D.
Archbishop of Philadelphia
October 22, 1991

REVISED SEPTEMBER, 1997

**Mission Statement
of the
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia**

We, the faithful of the Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia, in communion with our Holy Father, shepherd of the universal Church, and our Archbishop, shepherd of the Church in Philadelphia, proclaim to everyone the Good News that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, who offers to all who follow Him the light of life.¹

Baptized into Christ Jesus and confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, we desire to share this Light with all by proclaiming the Gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation to every person.²

We are one in our Church's teachings and in the variety of the gifts, services and ministries that we employ to help build up the Kingdom of God.³ We therefore commit ourselves to:

WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH through "prayer without ceasing"⁴, and particularly through the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments of the Church;

CREATE AND NOURISH CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY in the domestic church of the family, in the life of every parish, and in society as a whole;

PROCLAIM IN WORD AND DEED THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST to all persons, inviting each of our sisters and brothers in the human community to share our faith and our mission;

TEACH THE SAVING MESSAGE OF CHRIST so that all believers may come to deeper understanding, conversion and personal witness to Christ;

SERVE ALL OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, particularly the poor and needy, by generous acts of charity and by working together with all people of good will for justice and peace.⁵

We pray to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through the intercession of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, to whose care the Archdiocese is consecrated, and through Saints Peter and Paul, the Archdiocesan patrons. May the Lord of Light guide us in our earthly journey and to our heavenly home.

Approved by Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua on February 14, 1992.

¹ John 1:4-5; 8:12.

² Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-49.

³ First Corinthians 12:4; Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, par 32-33.

⁴ First Thessalonians 5:17.

⁵ Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, par.36.

PREFACE

**"He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, according to his good pleasure which he determined beforehand in Christ, for him to act upon when the times had run their course: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth."
(Ephesians 1:9-f) ***

The Church's divine elements, essential to our salvation, are nevertheless channeled to us through the Church's human elements which are likewise important to our salvation. As we cooperate with God in the renewal of our spiritual lives we are in need of renewing those visible Church structures through which the response to our Baptismal calling is expressed.

Beyond the family, the most common Church experience for Catholics is the parish. In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, every parish is being invited to participate in an ongoing Renewal process. A Parish Pastoral Council, a consultative body which advises and assists the pastor in areas of pastoral concern, has been established in every parish. Through the Parish Pastoral Councils, parishes are engaging in **Parish Pastoral Planning**.

As one of the first tasks of **Parish Pastoral Planning**, the **Parish Pastoral Council** adopts a **Mission Statement**, through which the parish expresses its identity as a community of faith and sets broad goals. **Parish Self-Study** is a prayerful, reflective process through which a parish assesses how effectively it is carrying out its mission. Parish Self Study results in actions to be taken to strengthen and renew the parish.

As Parish Pastoral Planning continues, parishes of a particular cluster are being called to gather together in a process of **Cluster Pastoral Planning**. Through this process, parishes are challenged to reflect and pray, and to be open to ideas and ways they could work together to renew the lived expression of the Church in the parishes of that cluster.

This **Guided by Faith Workbook** is offered to facilitate Cluster Pastoral Planning. The possibilities for dialogue and mutual cooperation are endless. Let us accept the challenge, aware that the Spirit of God is with us.

** All Scripture quotations are taken from THE NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE, copyright ©1985 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd. and Doubleday & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.*

PART 1: PURPOSE OF CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING

"Yes, I know what plans I have in mind for you, Yahweh declares, plans for peace, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. When you call to me and come and pray to me, I shall listen to you. When you search for me, you will find me, when you search wholeheartedly for me, you will find me (Yahweh declares. I shall restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and wherever I have driven you, Yahweh declares. I shall bring you back to the place from which I exiled you). (Jeremiah 29:11-14)

PURPOSE OF CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING

The purpose of the Cluster Pastoral Planning is to reflect prayerfully on and strengthen the vitality of the Church in the reality of a cluster of parishes. The product of the Cluster Pastoral Planning is the recommendation to the Regional Vicar, for presentation to the Archbishop, of a five-year pastoral plan for the parishes in the cluster. The plan would include organizing and coordinating ministerial activities within the cluster for a more effective expression of Church in the parishes of that cluster. It would be developed within the spirit of the Archdiocesan Renewal and according to the elements of the Archdiocesan Mission Statement.

CONNECTION WITH ARCHDIOCESAN RENEWAL

Cluster Pastoral Planning is an integral part of Renewal, since it enables a group of parishes to find the ways and means to be better Church communities within the present realities and **in the most authentic and effective manner possible**. Because the catholicity of each parish calls it to be concerned with making disciples of all nations (cf. Mt.28:19), a cluster of parishes will find value in comparing and coordinating their pastoral efforts with one another. Cluster Pastoral Planning allows parishes to learn from the pastoral plans of neighboring parishes, to blend with and support one another's plans and, when advisable, to combine these efforts with other parishes in certain common activities.

Through **Cluster Pastoral Planning**, a Regional Vicar gathers representatives from a group of parishes to reflect prayerfully and to dialogue about the vitality of the Church in that area. The Regional Vicar leads the group in a collaborative process to evaluate whether the parishes, parish resources, programs, buildings and organizational structures in a given cluster are of the necessary number, type and variety in light of the parish pastoral plans of that cluster. In the spirit of ongoing conversion, some change can always be anticipated in Cluster Pastoral Planning. In some instances, given the realities in a particular cluster, a parish may need to be founded there, or altered or even closed. The same could be said of schools, programs and other parish organizations as the situation warrants.

CONNECTION WITH PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Within each parish, the **Parish Pastoral Council** is the key structure which facilitates Archdiocesan Renewal by fostering the full participation of the entire parish (laity, religious and clergy) in the devising of a plan for the pastoral mission of the parish.

Members of the **Parish Pastoral Council** participate in ongoing pastoral planning on a parish level and some members participate as well in pastoral planning on the cluster level.

CONNECTION WITH PARISH SELF-STUDY, "ON THE WAY TO RENEWAL"

Results and insights from the Parish Self-Study are brought to the Cluster Pastoral Planning activity. Cluster Pastoral Planning begins with an **appreciation** for "what exists" in the parishes of the cluster; what gives "life" and activates parishioners' competencies and energies. In Cluster Pastoral Planning, the knowledge generated in the Parish Self Studies is "put to work" to assist pastors and parishioners in carrying out the mission of the Church. The Cluster Pastoral Plan is intended to propose a potential for the parishes within the cluster that is **challenging**. It recognizes that the existing organization, structures and practices of the parishes are capable of becoming more effective if people from different parishes work together to develop a plan for parishes to cooperate.

The proposed Cluster Pastoral Plan is developed by an Ad Hoc Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee. This Committee assists Archdiocesan renewal by identifying the best way for parishes of the cluster to support one another in their work. After the Parish Self-Study, the Pastors and selected representatives from the Parish Pastoral Councils share with one another their Parish Mission Statements and the results of their Parish Self-Studies, identify common goals and priorities, and plan how the parishes might work together to build up the Church in their area.

PREPARATION FOR CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING

All parishes, in clusters, will be asked to participate in Cluster Pastoral Planning as a way to enhance both the spiritual life and the temporal life of the parishes.

Cluster Pastoral Planning relies on certain essential preparations. These are:

A. Parish level preparations:

- Formation of the Parish Pastoral Councils
- Development of Parish Mission Statements
- Completion of Parish Self Studies

B. Consultation by the Regional Vicar with the Pastors in the Cluster to:

- Consider the readiness of the parishes in the cluster to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning;
- Determine specific time schedules, meeting locations and other logistical concerns;
- Identify the major opportunities and problems that could be encountered in the process;
- Clarify the specific role of the pastor in every stage of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process.

C. Training in Preparation for Cluster Pastoral Planning

After a cluster has been identified by the Regional Vicar to enter Cluster Pastoral Planning, the Regional Vicar, pastors and other priests in the parishes, the Cluster Pastoral Planning agenda subcommittee, and the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee will participate in training programs to prepare them for their roles in the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process. This includes:

- A briefing on the process for the pastors and other priests of the parishes.
- Consultation by the Regional Vicar with the Pastors in the Cluster.
- Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee orientation.
- Role training for the agenda subcommittee (Regional Vicar, coordinator, secretary, communications liaison, facilitator).

In addition, the pastor will be asked: 1.) to orient his Parish Pastoral Council in order that they might be able to explain the Cluster Pastoral Planning process and the role of the Parish Pastoral Council, and 2.) elect representatives.

D. Formation of the Committee

The Committee shall be formed when the Regional Vicar determines that the parishes are ready to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning. The Committee members shall be elected in a manner described in appendix D.

PART 2:

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING

"And all who shared the faith owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and distributed the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. Each day with one heart, they regularly went to the Temple but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

(Acts of the Apostles 2:44 ff)

After the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee (CPPC) members have been elected, they will participate in a series of meetings beginning with an orientation. The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) will also be oriented by the Pastor.

ORIENTATION PERIOD

CPPC One evening and a Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for Committees entering Cluster Pastoral Planning.

PPC Evening meeting following the Committee Orientation.

Parishioners It is suggested that a Celebration of Liturgy, be **held in each parish of the Cluster**, followed by a meeting to inform parishioners about the Cluster Study Process. This celebration and meeting should be on a Sunday following the PPC orientation meeting .

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Cluster Pastoral Planning process itself is carried out in four stages. The Committee:

- gathers information about the parishes and their surrounding communities
- identifies the criteria for an acceptable plan and the possibilities for cooperating to carry out the work of the Church,
- creates alternative options and tests these ideas with the Parish Pastoral Councils of the parishes involved
- writes and proposes a Cluster Pastoral Plan to the Regional Vicar.

When the Regional Vicar accepts the plan, he proposes it to the Cardinal for his comments, further suggestions and approval. Those involved in Cluster Pastoral Planning are guided by prayer, celebrations of the Word of God, and the Eucharistic Liturgy. PPC meetings, and ongoing communication activities in each of the parishes also facilitates this process.

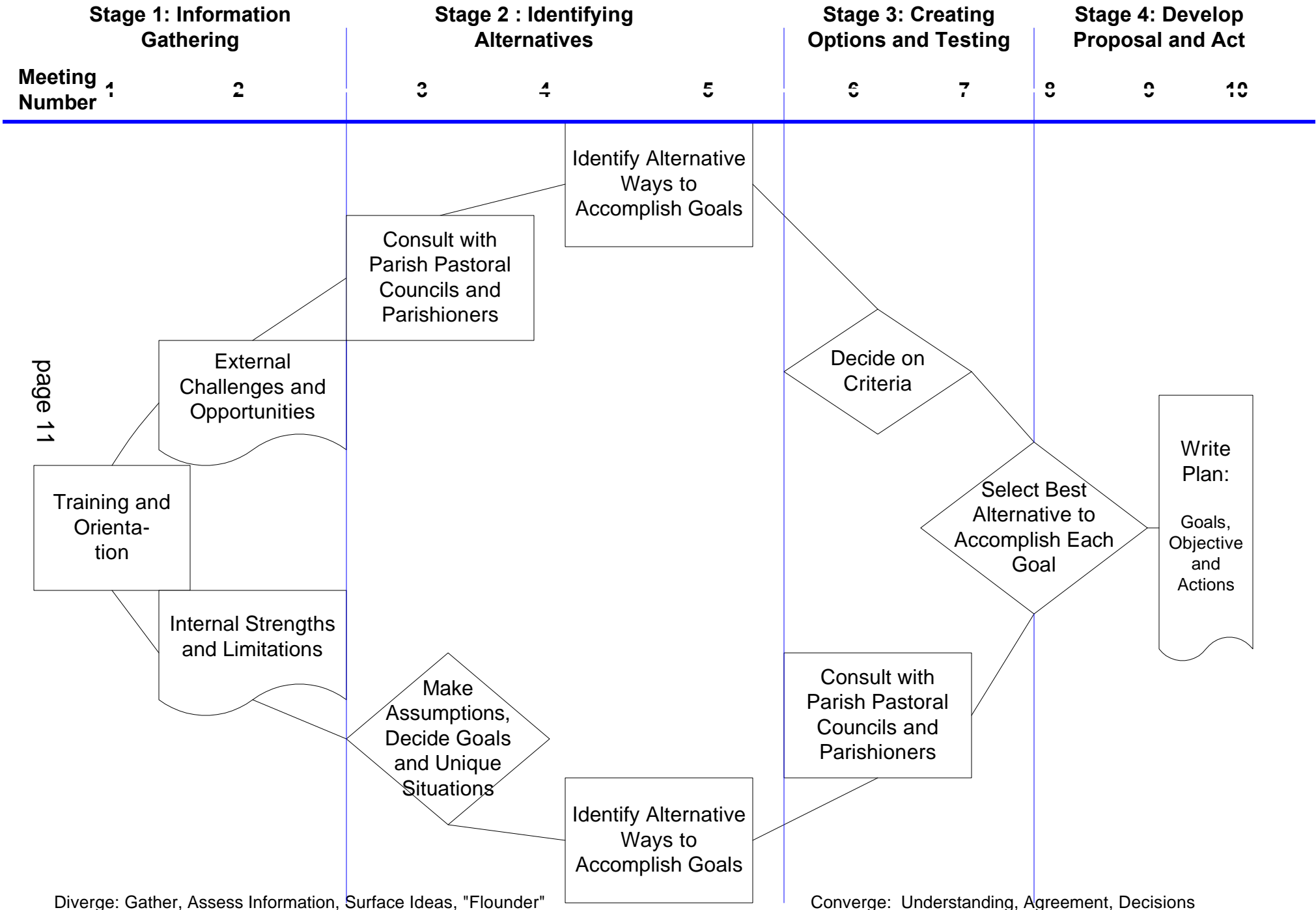
Schedule of Meetings: (tentative)

It is anticipated that the process will include about ten meetings of the **CPPC** (about one per month). Each meeting will run two to three hours in length depending on the CPPC completing the goals of each stage of the Cluster Pastoral Planning.

Four **PPC** meetings are held at appropriate times for each stage of Cluster Pastoral Planning.

Parishioners remain informed through communication processes initiated by the Pastor and the PPC. Pray that the Archdiocese be renewed and strengthened in the mission of the Gospel through Cluster Pastoral Planning, and pray to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit upon those directly involved in the committee, and to formalize commitment to the plan once approved by the Archbishop, is recommended.

Cluster Pastoral Planning:



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Diverge: Gather, Assess Information, Surface Ideas, "Flounder"

Converge: Understanding, Agreement, Decisions

STAGE 1: INFORMATION GATHERING AND EXPLORING

PURPOSE

- To establish a prayerful environment.
- To gather the information about the parishes in the cluster.
- To obtain additional information as needed.
- To review cluster information.
- To identify the internal strengths and limitations of the cluster.
- To identify the external opportunities and challenges that exist for the cluster.
- To identify valid assumptions about the future of the cluster
- To assist the Regional Vicar to identify the specific issues that the Cluster Pastoral Plan must address.

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: Two evening meetings: two to three hours in length; whatever is necessary to complete work under topic.

THE COMMITTEE

- Gathers parish and cluster information.
- Gathers additional information as needed.
- Identifies internal strengths and limitations.
- Identifies external opportunities and challenges.
- Makes assumptions about the future of the cluster.
- Recognizes the specific issues, identified by the Regional Vicar, that the Cluster Pastoral Plan must address.

Expected outcome: "Based on the Committee assumptions and those of the Regional Vicar, the specific issues that this Cluster Pastoral Plan must address are...."

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- CPPC representatives inform Parish Pastoral Councils of the shared assumptions about the cluster, the specific issues that the Cluster Pastoral Plan must address and the information that was considered by the Committee in meetings one and two.
- Solicits feedback.
- PPC sends summary of feedback to Cluster Agenda Subcommittee.
- PPC keeps parishioners informed about the information, assumptions and issues that must be addressed.

MEETING 1: CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- One person from each parish is to prepare a Summary of the Parish Self Study Report on worksheets #1, #2 and #3. and send them to the Cluster Secretary prior to the first meeting so that the secretary can distribute them to all of the committee members. The Summary should include the following:
 - One page highlighting the parish's prioritized goals. **(Worksheet #1)**
 - One page highlighting parish strengths/resources and limitations/needs. **(Worksheet #2)**
 - One page highlighting the needs from the cluster. **(Worksheet #3)**
 - All members shall review and prepare Worksheets #4 and #5 for discussion.

- All members shall bring Guided by Faith Workbooks and Cluster Information and come prepared to discuss the Cluster Information received in training and the summaries of the parish self study that were received in the mail.

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion: Acts 2:42-47
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II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

Using the distributed information, locate the following information:

Section #1: Place the Summary of the Parish Self Study for each parish in the cluster in this section.

Section #2: A Cluster Report which highlights the demographic, sacramental, and educational data for the cluster over the last fifteen years has been summarized from each of the Annual Pastoral Reports to reflect the trends that have taken place within the cluster.

Section #3: A Cluster Financial Report that reflects the financial history of the cluster over the past five years. It contains information on income and expenses.

Section #4: A Clergy Projection Report provides the projected number of clergy that will be available to the cluster over the next 3-5 years.

Section #5: Contains the individual Parochial School Enrollment figures for the current year. This provides the most current school population by grade level.

Section #6: A map of the cluster, showing the surrounding territory, parish boundaries, streets, territorial parishes, and personal parishes, alternative worship sites, parochial schools, Archdiocesan High Schools, and other Catholic schools.

Section #7: A Census Tract map and U.S. Census information for the cluster. The map visually displays the cluster boundaries, parish boundaries, parish locations, census tract areas and numbers for the cluster. The accompanying information includes total population, racial and ethnic makeup, housing statistics, income, educational attainment, and occupation of all the residents in each census tract area.

Discussion: (guided by facilitator)

- One person from each parish is prepared to **answer questions** about the parish plan summaries that were distributed in preparation for the meeting
- **Small groups list on newsprint:**
- What are the **internal strengths** of our cluster of parishes(**Worksheet #4**) (note: individual parish strengths do not always 'add up' to a strength of the cluster)
- What are the **internal limitations** of our cluster of parishes(**Worksheet #5**) (note: individual parish limitations do not always 'add up' to a limitation of the cluster)

Report conclusions to the whole Committee; give time for questions for clarification.

III. DECISION MAKING(large group)

- The **internal strengths** of our cluster of parishes are:
- The **internal limitations** of our cluster of parishes are:
- What other information do we need from the Archdiocese?(**Worksheet #6**)
- What other information do we need from the parishes in the cluster? (**Worksheet #7**)

(For example, information about other institutions within the cluster)

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Parish representatives are to bring any additional information as decided and be prepared to present it.
- The Regional Vicar or someone he designates will bring additional information needed from the Archdiocese to the next meeting.
- **Prior to the meeting**, one person from each parish shall prepare and **distribute copies of the Facilities Report, Financial Report and Report to Pastor** for her/his parish.
- **One person from each parish** shall be prepared to highlight the parish information and answer questions.
- Each person shall review the distributed parish reports and come prepared with questions, as necessary.
- Each person is to be prepared to identify external opportunities and challenges of the cluster. **(Worksheets #8 & #9)**

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcement

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

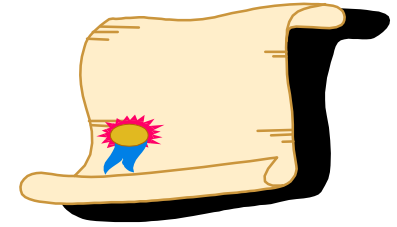
PROCESS: How well did we listen?
What feelings did this meeting generate?
Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

TASK: Have we reviewed the cluster information adequately?
Have we identified the additional information needed?
Did we identify opportunities and challenges in the cluster, outside of our parishes?
Have we identified assumptions about our cluster and validated them against our information?

Closing Prayer

Worksheet 1 - Information Gathering

Parish Name _____



Parish Priorities and Goals

- Goal 1
 - Action 1
 - Action 2

- Goal 2
 - Action 1
 - Action 2

- Goal 3
 - Action 1
 - Action 2

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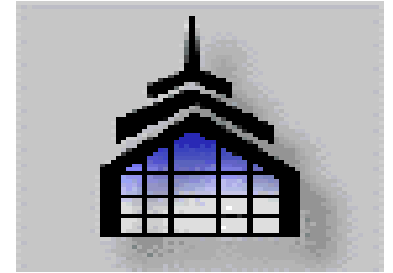
List as many **Goals** and **Actions** as appropriate from your Parish plan

Worksheet 2 - Information Gathering

Parish Name _____

Parish Strengths and Limitations

- Strengths



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- Limitations

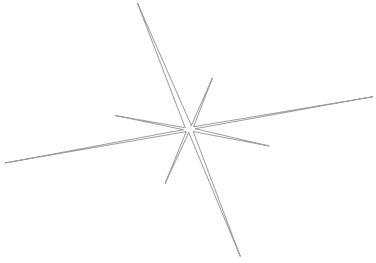
List the strengths and limitations as appropriate from your Parish plan.

Worksheet 3 - Information Gathering

Parish Name _____

Needs From Our Cluster





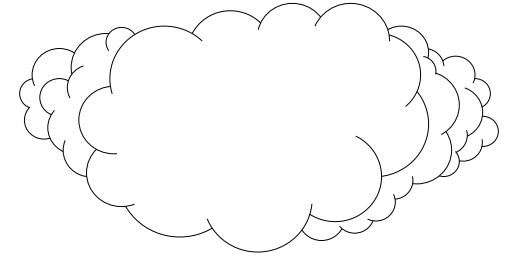
Worksheet 4 - Information Gathering

The internal strengths of our cluster of parishes are:

STRENGTHS - What gives life to our cluster of parishes and activates competency and energy?

Worksheet 5 - Information Gathering

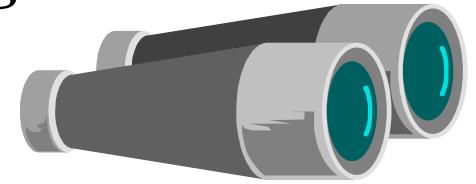
The internal limitations of our cluster of parishes are:



LIMITATIONS - Weaknesses or constraints present in our cluster of parishes.

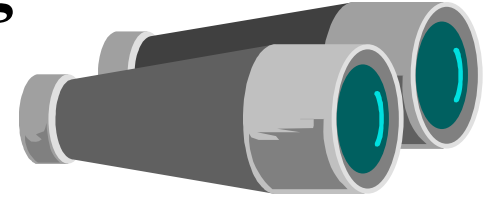
Worksheet 6 - Information Gathering

Additional Information Needed
from the Archdiocese



Worksheet 7 - Information Gathering

Additional Information Needed from Parishes



MEETING 2: CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- **Prior to the meeting**, one person from each parish is to prepare and **distribute copies of the Facilities Report, Financial Report and Report to Pastor** for her/his parish.
- One person from each parish is to bring any other information as decided and be prepared to distribute it.
- **One person from each parish** is to be prepared to answer questions.
- Each person shall review the distributed parish reports and come prepared with questions, as necessary
- The Regional Vicar (or someone he designates) will have obtained additional information needed from the Archdiocese and be prepared to explain it, if needed.
- Each person shall be prepared to identify external opportunities and challenges **beyond our parishes and beyond our control in our cluster communities** by filling out Worksheets #8 and #9 and assumptions about the future of the cluster by filling out Worksheet #10 prior to coming to the meeting.

HANDOUTS

- Additional information needed from the Archdiocese or parishes in the cluster.

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Romans 12: 2-8
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

- One person from each parish is to answer questions about the parish information that was distributed in preparation for the meeting.
- Additional Archdiocesan information will be shared and explained by the Regional Vicar or the person designated.

Discussion: (Facilitator)

Small groups will be formed with a mix of representatives from different parishes present in each one. Each group will identify:

- What **external opportunities** exist **beyond our parishes and beyond our control in our cluster communities** that could help us to carry out the work of the Church in the cluster? (**Worksheet #8**)
- What **challenges** exist **beyond our parishes and beyond our control in our cluster communities** that need to be addressed in order to carry out the work of the Church in the cluster? (**Worksheet #9**)
- What are our **assumptions** about the future of the cluster?(**Worksheet #10**)
- Can we verify these assumptions as **valid** in view of the cluster information available? Do we need further information? What?

- Report conclusions to the whole Committee; give time for questions for clarification.

III: DECISION MAKING(large group)

- What **external opportunities** does the group believe exist here?
- What **external challenges** does the group believe exist here?
- What are the **valid assumptions** about the future of the cluster?
- What are the specific issues that the plan should address that have been identified by the Regional Vicar? (**Worksheet #11**)

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Each member should begin to prepare Worksheet #12 concerning cluster goals and Worksheet #13 concerning the unique situations of the cluster.

Committee members meet with their Parish Pastoral Councils and the parishioners to share the results of the first two CPPC meetings as follows:

- The valid **assumptions** about the future of the cluster.
- The **external opportunities and challenges** beyond our parishes in the cluster community.
- The **internal strengths and limitations** in our cluster.
- The **specific issues that the plan must address** that have been identified by the Regional Vicar.

(all of these lists are to be summarized by the secretary and communications liaison and distributed to the Committee members)

The reaction of the Parish Pastoral Council members and the parishioners is to be summarized in writing and distributed to all the members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee. If there are any notable issues that emerge, the pastor or his delegate should notify the Regional Vicar to see if the item could be placed on the next meeting agenda. This information will be addressed during the 'discussion' segment of the next meeting.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How did we resolve differences in perception?

What feelings did this meeting generate?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

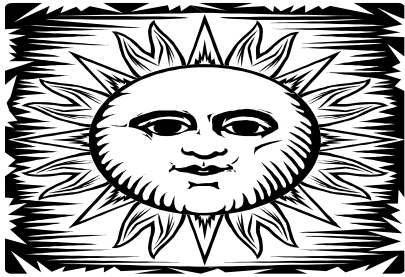
TASK: Did we identify our assumptions about the future of our cluster?

Did we validate our assumptions with objective information?

Did we identify goals of the cluster that need to be addressed?

Have the specific issues that the plan should address been defined by the Regional Vicar?

Closing Prayer:



Worksheet 8 - Information Gathering

External opportunities that exist beyond our parishes in our cluster communities.

EXTERNAL = outside the Church; beyond our control

Worksheet 9 - Information Gathering

External challenges that exist beyond our parishes in our cluster communities.



EXTERNAL = outside the Church; beyond our control



Worksheet 10 - Information Gathering

Assumptions about the future of our cluster:

ASSUMPTION - something that is likely to happen given the current information.

Example - In the next 5 years the number of priests assigned in our cluster will decline from 7 to 5 or in the next 5 years the number of families in our cluster will increase.

Worksheet 11 - Information Gathering

Critical Issue(s) Identified by the Regional Vicar
that the Plan Must Address



STAGE 2: ASSESSING AND IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO ACCOMPLISH GOALS

PURPOSE

- To reaffirm and understand the Archdiocesan Mission Statement, the general expectations and principles that every Cluster Pastoral Plan should address (appendix A), and the characteristics of vital parishes (appendix B).
- To understand the specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar that the plan should address and to accept responsibility for developing a plan that will address them.
- To **review feedback** from Parish Pastoral Councils on Stage 1.
- To **identify and prioritize our cluster goals**.
- To identify **unique situations** in the cluster that the plan may need to address.
- To develop **alternative ways** to achieve each of the cluster goals.

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: Three evening meetings: whatever is necessary to complete work under topic.

THE COMMITTEE

- Understands and accepts the Archdiocesan Mission Statement, general expectations for Cluster Pastoral Plans (appendix A) and the characteristics of vital parishes. (Appendix B)
- Understands the specific issues that the plan should address identified by the Regional Vicar and accepts responsibility for developing a plan that addresses them.
- Reviews feedback from Parish Pastoral Councils on Stage 1.
- Identifies and prioritizes cluster goals.
- Identifies situations that are unique to one or a few parishes.
- Begins to develop a list of alternative ways to accomplish each of the cluster goals.

Expected Outcome: We have these goals that include addressing specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar and a range of alternative ways to accomplish each goal.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee members inform their Parish Pastoral Councils of the cluster goals, unique situations the plan should address, and proposed alternative ways to accomplish the goals.
- PPC reacts and makes suggestions for the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee.
- PPC determines how to best receive responses from the parishioners regarding the proposals being developed when they become available.

MEETING 3:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- All members are to familiarize themselves with the feedback from the PPCs.
- All Committee members should be prepared to identify the cluster goals and the unique situations that will require cluster action. **(Worksheets #12 & #13)**

HANDOUTS

(Prepared by the Committee secretary)

Summaries developed in Stage 1 which include:

- valid **assumptions** about the future of the cluster,
- external **opportunities** and **challenges** in our cluster communities,
- internal **strengths** and **limitations** of the cluster.
- **issues identified by the Regional Vicar** that the plan must address.

I. GATHERING (Regional Vicar)

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Philippians 2: 1-4
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting.

- Review the summaries developed in Stage 1. (quiet reading)
- Review the feedback from PPCs about Stage 1. Is there anything in the PPC feedback that adds to information that we have already established?
- Do we need to make any decisions about the feedback? If so, allow time in that segment of the meeting.
- Review the use of brainstorming and explain the multi-voting process for prioritizing cluster goals.

Discussion:

Small groups(each with a mix of all parishes) will meet at the same time to:

- **Identify the goals** that the parishes in the cluster hold in common. Include goals that are greater than the sum of individual parish goals and require cluster action. For example, training programs for parish volunteers. **(Worksheet #12)**
- **identify any situations** that are **unique** to one or a few parishes that will require cluster action.**(Worksheet #13).**

Report conclusions to the whole Committee; give time for questions for clarification.

III. DECISION MAKING(large group)

The whole Committee:

- Determines if the goals identified require cluster action
- Develops consensus around these **cluster goals**.
- **Prioritizes** the cluster goals.
- Acknowledges **unique situations** of one or a few parishes that will require cluster action.
- If necessary, make decisions regarding PPC feedback.

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

In preparations for the next meeting:

- Review and become familiar with the Worksheet #14 which gives an overview of the analysis process.
- Cluster secretary prepares Worksheets #15, #16, #17, #18 with the **external opportunities and challenges**, and the **internal strengths and limitations** typed on each sheet. Enough copies should be made so that every committee member has one of each page.

All cluster committee members should:

- Examine and become familiar with the prioritized **cluster goals**.
- Review the **external opportunities and challenges** in our cluster community.
- Review the **internal strengths and limitations** of our cluster of parishes.
- Examine and become familiar with the **situations** that are **unique** to one or a few parishes that the plan may need to address.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How well did we listen?

What feelings did this meeting generate?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

TASK:

Did we prioritize the cluster goals that the plan should address?

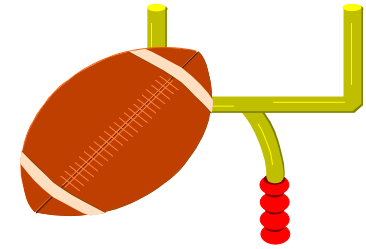
Did we identify any situations that are unique to one or a few parishes that require cluster action?

Are the prioritized goals consistent with the missions of the parishes and the Archdiocese?

Closing Prayer:

Worksheet 12 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways To Accomplish Goals

We will address these goals:



GOAL - a purpose toward which an endeavor is directed; a desired end or achievement.

Example - Re-engage the registered but marginal members of the community into the life of their parishes.

Worksheet 13 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways To Accomplish Goals

These unique situations will require Cluster action

page 34

UNIQUE SITUATION - circumstances specific to only one or two parishes.
Example -one parish is responsible for three hospitals; two parishes share a school which is overcrowded

MEETING 4:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Examine and become familiar with prioritized goals of the cluster.
- Review the external opportunities and challenges in our cluster.
- Review the internal strengths and limitations in our cluster.
- Examine and become familiar with situations unique to one or a few parishes that the plan may need to address.
- Review and become familiar with **Worksheet #14**, which gives an overview of the analysis process.

HANDOUTS

- Worksheets #15, #16, #17, #18 as prepared by the Cluster Secretary.

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Genesis 1: 26-31
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting (Regional Vicar)

In Stage 1, the Committee used the parish plans and cluster information as well as their own knowledge to identify the **external opportunities** and **challenges** in the cluster community, and the **internal strengths** and **limitations** of the cluster. This enabled the committee to make some **assumptions** about the future of the cluster.

In meeting #3 the Committee identified and prioritized **goals** of the cluster as well as **unique situations** to one or a few parishes that may need to be addressed in the plan.

The **GOALS** of each Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee will guide the entire process. Finding as MANY alternative ways as are possible to accomplish these goals will enhance the QUALITY of decisions made.

Directions: Distribute goals among the small groups within the Committee. Each small group will then engage in thinking through all of the possible ways to accomplish this goal given the INTERNAL **strengths** and **limitations** of the cluster and the EXTERNAL **opportunities** and **challenges** beyond the parishes in our cluster community.

Each small group addresses four possible combinations of variables within the cluster to discover a range of alternative ways to reach the goal:

Looking from the perspective of the cluster strengths matched against the opportunities and challenges beyond the parishes but in the cluster community the group addresses the questions:

1. How can the **internal** cluster **strengths** be used to take advantage of the **external opportunities** in the cluster community? (Worksheet #15)
2. How can the **internal** cluster **strengths** be used to address the **external challenges** in the cluster community? (Worksheet #16)

Looking from the perspective of the cluster limitations matched against the opportunities and challenges beyond the parishes but in the cluster community the group addresses these questions:

3. How can the **external opportunities** in the cluster community offset the **internal** cluster **limitations**? (Worksheet # 17)
4. Can the **internal** cluster **limitations** be modified to address the **external challenges** in the cluster community? How? (Worksheet 18)

At the completion of this exercise, each small group posts its alternative ways to reach the goal it is working on. The CPPC should now have a large set of **alternative ways to accomplish each goal**, with clear **objectives** and containing innovative and imaginative **actions**.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If all the goals are not addressed, this work should continue in the next meeting. This provides the CPPC with the content of its plan. It is important to give it all the time it needs.

- III. **DECISION MAKING:** Does the committee have all the alternative ways it needs to accomplish each goal? Do we need to give more time to developing alternative ways?
- IV. **IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES AND MEETING EVALUATION**

Closing Prayer

Worksheet 14 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways to Accomplish Goals

INTERNAL

Strength

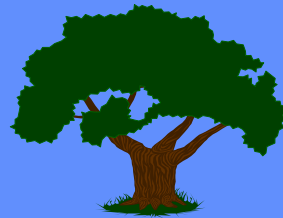
Limitations

EXTERNAL

Opportunities

page 37

Grow, Invest
(+,+)

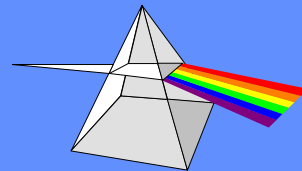


Add, Build (-, +)

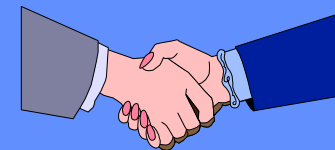


Challenges

Invent, Improve,
Reallocate (+, -)



Transform, merge (-, -)



Alternative Way - means, method or procedure to accomplish a goal.

Worksheet 15 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways To Accomplish Goals

Goal _____

List Internal Strengths (+,)

What alternative ways to accomplish your goal could be proposed for the parishes to use their strengths to take advantage of opportunities in the cluster?

page 38

“We must care and protect.”

List External Opportunities (,+)

I. Grow, Invest (+,+)
1.

Worksheet 16 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways to Accomplish Goals

Goal _____

List Internal Strengths (+,)

What alternative ways to accomplish your goal could be proposed for the parishes to use their strengths to address challenges in the cluster?

page 39

“We must try something new.”

List External Challenges (, -)

- II. Invent, Improve,**
- 1. Reallocate (+, -)**

Worksheet 17 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways to Accomplish Goals

Goal _____

List Internal Limitations (- ,)

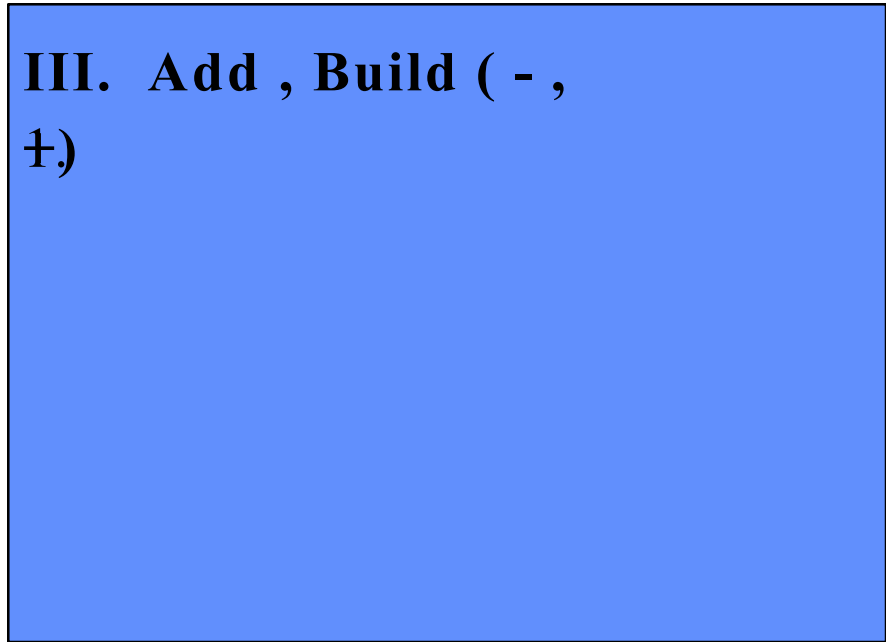
What alternative ways to accomplish your goal could be proposed for the parishes to take advantage of opportunities in the cluster to offset the limitations of the parishes in the cluster?

page 40

“We must add to our cluster.”

List External Opportunities (, +)

III. Add , Build (- , +)



Worksheet 18 - Assessing and Identifying Alternative Ways to Accomplish Goals

Goal _____

List Internal Limitations (- ,)

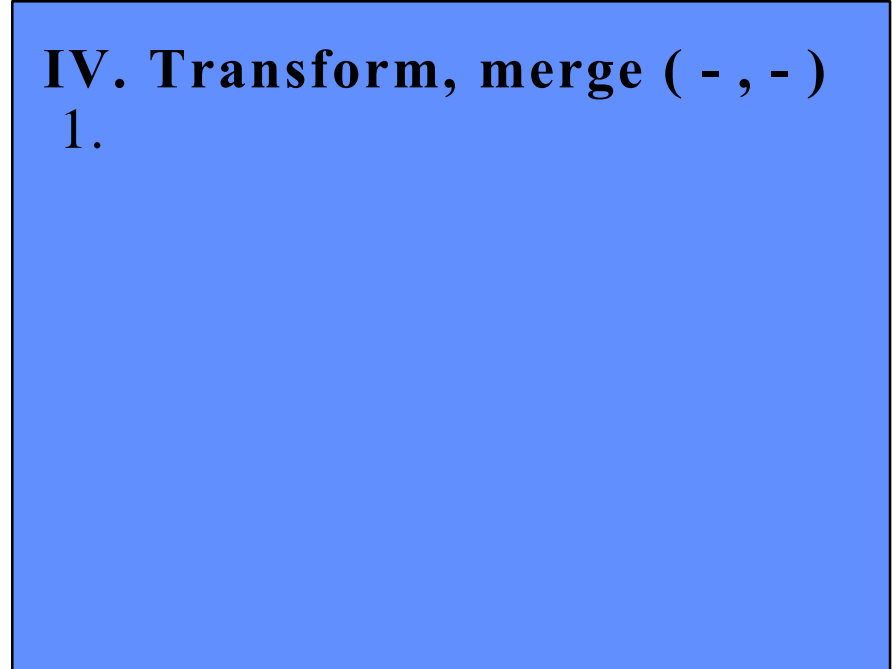
What alternative ways to accomplish your goal could be proposed to reduce the limitations in order that the parishes are in a position to address the challenges?

page 41

“Let’s work together.”

List External Challenges (, -)

IV. Transform, merge (- , -)
1.



MEETING 5:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Review for this meeting as for Meeting #4, keeping in mind any goals that were not addressed in the previous meeting.

HANDOUTS

- Same as for Meeting #4.

I. GATHERING (Regional Vicar)

Prayer/Reflection **Scripture Suggestion:** **Luke 5: 4-7**

- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS(Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

Education: (Guided by the Facilitator)

- Review 'Education' segment from Meeting #4 as necessary.

Discussion:

- Divide into small groups and begin the analysis process on any remaining goals that were not addressed in Meeting #4.
- Follow Meeting #4 format as necessary.

III: DECISION MAKING (None)

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

Meet with your Parish Pastoral Council and parishioners and share the following:

- Prioritized **goals** of the cluster.
- Any **unique situations** affecting one or a few parishes that the plan should address.
- **Proposed alternative ways** for parishes in the cluster to accomplish each of the cluster goals.

(all of these lists should be summarized by the secretary and communications liaison and distributed to the pastors)

The reaction of the Parish Pastoral Council members and the parishioners is to be summarized in writing and distributed to all the members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee. If there are any notable issues that emerge, the pastor or his delegate should notify the Regional Vicar to see if the item could be placed on the next meeting agenda. This information will be addressed during the 'discussion' segment of the next meeting.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How did we resolve differences in perception?
What feelings did this meeting generate?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

TASK: Did we identify alternative ways for parishes in the cluster to work together to accomplish each goal?

Do our goals and the ways we have identified to accomplish them address the issues identified by the Regional Vicar?

Do our goals and the alternative ways to accomplish them further the mission of the Archdiocese?

Closing Prayer:

STAGE 3: *CREATING OPTIONS AND TESTING*

PURPOSE

- To consider the cluster goals and alternative ways of accomplishing the goals in light of the response of the Parish Pastoral Councils.
- To identify criteria which must be met by any alternative ways we propose to accomplish each goal.
- To test the proposed alternative ways to accomplish the goals against the criteria.
- To eliminate alternative ways to accomplish each goal that do not meet the criteria.
- To share alternative ways to accomplish each goal that meet our criteria with the Parish Pastoral Councils and the parishioners.

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: Two evening meetings: two to three hours in length; whatever is necessary to complete work under topic.

THE COMMITTEE

- Considers the response of the Parish Pastoral Councils to the cluster goals and revises them as needed.
- Develops criteria for testing the feasibility of proposed alternative ways to accomplish each of the goals.
- Tests proposed alternative ways to accomplish each goal against the criteria.
- Revises or eliminates alternative ways to accomplish each goal that do not meet the criteria.
- Identifies at least one alternative way to accomplish each goal that has been tested against the criteria and communicates these to the PPC and parishioners for their response.

Expected outcome: "We submit these proposed goals and alternative ways to accomplish the goals..."

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- CPPC representatives inform Parish Pastoral Councils of the final goals, and proposed alternative ways to achieve the goals.
- Solicits feedback from the Parish Pastoral Council and the parishioners.
- PPC sends summary of feedback to Cluster Agenda Subcommittee.

MEETING 6:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- All members are to familiarize themselves with the feedback from the PPCs.
- All Committee members should be prepared to identify criteria by filling out Worksheet #19 prior to the meeting.

HANDOUTS

Secretary and communications liaison prepare the following summaries and distribute to the Committee members:

The outcomes from Stage 1:

- valid **assumptions** about the future of the cluster,
- external **opportunities** and **challenges**,
- internal **strengths** and **limitations** of the cluster of parishes,
- specific **issues the plan must address identified by the Regional Vicar** from Stage 1 meetings.

The outcomes from Stage 2:

- prioritized list of **goals** the plan should address,
- **unique situations** affecting one or a few of our parishes
- **alternative ways** for the parishes to work together **to accomplish each goal.**

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Matthew 14: 15-21
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

- Review the summaries developed in Stages 1 and 2(quiet reading)
- Review the feedback from PPCs about Stage 2.
Is there anything in the PPC feedback about which we need to make a decision?
If so, allow time in that segment of the meeting.

Discussion (small group)

- The Committee divides into several groups using brainstorming to begin to **identify criteria** for testing the **alternative ways** to accomplish each **goal** of the cluster. **(Worksheet #19)**
- Each group reports criteria they identified to the whole Committee by posting on newsprint.

III. DECISION MAKING (large group)

- The whole Committee comes to consensus about the **essential criteria** that must be used to consider the proposed **alternative ways** to achieve the **goals**.
- These criteria may be prioritized by multi-voting if necessary.
- If necessary, make decisions required from PPC feedback.
- If there are changes required from the feedback from PPC, the Committee comes to consensus on a **final list of goals**.

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Review the **characteristics of vital parishes** (appendix B), the **valid assumptions** about the future of the cluster and the **issues** that the plan must address identified by the Regional Vicar in consultation with the Committee.
- Review the **final list of goals** of the cluster.
- Review the **alternative ways** to accomplish each of the goals.
- Review the list of **criteria** that have been identified in this meeting.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How well did we listen?

Were we able to reach consensus when needed?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

TASK: Did we agree on a final list of goals for the cluster?

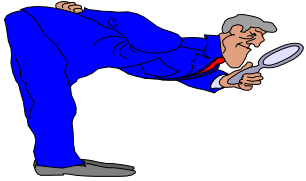
Did we develop a list of criteria that the alternative ways to accomplish the goals must meet?

Do our criteria include addressing the issues that the plan must address identified by the Regional Vicar?

Do our criteria support the mission of the Archdiocese in our area?

Closing Prayer:

Worksheet 19 - Creating Options and Testing Criteria to be considered when choosing among alternative ways to accomplish goals are,



page 47

CRITERIA - standards or tests by which correct judgments can be made.

Examples - The alternative ways must be:

1. doable in terms of cluster resources
2. consistent with expected outcomes of Regional Vicar
3. consistent with the Archdiocesan and Parish Mission Statements.
4. appropriate to be done at cluster level (in a coordinated way among parishes)

MEETING 7: CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Review the characteristics of vital parishes (appendix B), the assumptions about the future of the cluster, and the issues identified by the Regional Vicar in consultation with the Committee, that the plan must address.
- Review the final list of goals of the cluster.
- Review the alternative ways to accomplish the goals and prepare **Worksheet #20** for each goal.
- Review the list of criteria that have been identified in the last meeting.

I. GATHERING (Regional Vicar)

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Ecclesiasticus 2:1-11
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting.

Review the essential criteria to insure standards consistent with:

- the mission of the Church in Philadelphia,
- the characteristic of vital parishes,
- the issues, identified by the Regional Vicar, that this plan must address,
- the goals of the cluster.

Discussion: No small groups needed at this time.

III. DECISION MAKING

- Committee members walk past all posted goals with the alternative ways to accomplish each goal and criteria and **mark** those alternative ways that they support for each goal. (**Worksheet #20**)
- The whole Committee comes to consensus on **at least one alternative way to accomplish each goal** that:
 1. **meets the criteria** established by the Committee,
 2. **further the mission** the Archdiocese,
 3. **contributes to the vitality** of parishes,
 4. **addresses the issues identified** by the Regional Vicar, and
 5. receives the **support of the Committee**.

Straw vote will be taken to assess group consensus around the top alternative ways to accomplish each goal.

IF CONSENSUS IS APPARENT THE GROUP WILL FORMALLY

ACKNOWLEDGE ITS SUPPORT.

IF CONSENSUS DOES NOT EXIST MOVE TO FINAL PARAGRAPH IN THIS SECTION.

Unresolved questions will be identified. **(Worksheet #21)**

- Committee will seek clarity or negotiate around conflict if there is no consensus on proposed alternative ways.

If the group cannot reach consensus at this time, the decision should be postponed until the next meeting. This will give time for prayerful reflection, accessing necessary data, resolving unanswered questions, seeking counsel of PPCs etc....

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

Committee members report back to Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners:

- the final list of **goals** of the cluster,
- the **alternative ways** to accomplish each goal
- the **criteria** used to identify which alternative ways will be proposed.

(all of these lists should be summarized by the secretary and communications liaison and distributed to the pastors)

The reaction of the Parish Pastoral Council members and the parishioners are to be summarized in writing and distributed to all the members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee. If there are any notable issues that emerge, the pastor or his delegate should notify the Regional Vicar to see if the item could be placed on the next meeting agenda. This information will be addressed during the 'discussion' segment of the next meeting.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: Were we able to reach consensus ?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

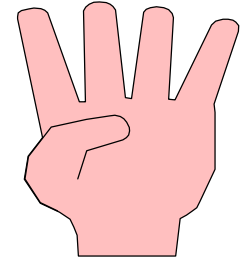
TASK: Did we use the criteria to choose among the alternative ways to accomplish each goal?

Do the ways we selected support the mission of the Archdiocese, contribute to vital parishes, and address the issues identified by the Regional Vicar?

Closing Prayer:

Worksheet 20 - Creating Options and Testing

Choose the best alternative way
for each goal.



- Goal
- Best alternative
- Goal
- Best alternative
- Goal
- Best alternative
- Goal
- Best alternative

Worksheet 21 - Creating Options and Testing

Unresolved issues that will need to be addressed in a plan for the cluster are:

STAGE 4: DEVELOPING PROPOSALS AND TAKING ACTION

PURPOSE

- To consider the responses of the Parish Pastoral Councils and the parishioners to the goals and alternative ways to accomplish each goal.
- To draft a written Cluster Pastoral Plan identifying specific objectives and actions to be taken by parishes in the cluster and the Archdiocese to accomplish the goals.
- To insure that the plan addresses those issues that Regional Vicar identified
- To share the draft Cluster Pastoral Plan with Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners and to solicit their responses and suggestions.
- To revise the draft plan as needed and submit the final Cluster Pastoral Plan to the Regional Vicar who will present it to the Archbishop.
- To provide for the communication, celebration, and implementation of the approved Cluster Pastoral Plan.

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: Three evening meetings: two to three hours in length; whatever is necessary to complete work under topic.

THE COMMITTEE

- Considers the responses of the PPC and the parishioners to the goals and alternative ways to accomplish the goals they identified.
- Develops a written Cluster Pastoral Plan that includes:
 - the **external opportunities and challenges** present in the cluster.
 - **Assumptions** about future conditions.
 - the **internal strengths and limitations** of the cluster of parishes.
 - **issues that the plan must address** identified by the Regional Vicar.
 - **Goals** and alternative ways to accomplish each goal.
 - Specific **objectives** and **actions** that are required to be taken by the parishes and the Archdiocese.
- Shares the draft with PPC's and parishioners for further comment, makes final revisions as needed and submits it to the Regional Vicar to be conveyed to the Archbishop.

Expected outcome: We propose the following plan, including specific actions to be taken by the parishes and the Archdiocese, to accomplish our goals and to address the specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- CPPC representatives distribute a draft of the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- Solicit feedback from the Parish Pastoral Councils and the parishioners.
- PPC obtains responses from parishioners.
- PPC sends summary of feedback to Cluster Agenda Subcommittee.

MEETING 8:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Review the responses of the PPC's and the parishioners to the proposed alternative ways to accomplish each of the goals in the plan.
- Identify objectives and actions necessary for the implementation of the recommended alternative ways to accomplish each goal.
- Review any unresolved questions and be prepared to suggest ways to resolve them.
- Be prepared to identify required actions specific to each parish and actions that require collaboration among parishes.
- Be prepared to identify those actions which will require action by the Archdiocese or the direct assistance of Archdiocesan services for their implementation.
- Be prepared to identify opportunities for collaboration with other Catholic institutions in the cluster, other religious communities, civic groups or government.

HANDOUTS (Secretary)

- Responses of the PPC and parishioners to the proposed alternative ways to accomplish each goal. (Mailed in advance)

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Jeremiah 29: 11-14
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

- Review elements of the draft plan. (Communication liaison)
 - Goals
 - Today's situation
 - opportunities and challenges; strengths and limitations
 - assumptions; issues to be addressed
 - How did we get here?
 - Ways to accomplish each goal
 - Results of consultations
 - Recommendations including specific objectives and actions required.
 - Commitment

Explanation of actions to be taken by parishes within the Cluster, by the Archdiocesan administrative staff, and by collaboration with other religious or civic agencies and organizations within the geographic area. (Communications liaison)

- Review goals and alternative ways to accomplish each goal.
- Review the feedback from PPCs about Stage 3. Are any modifications to the alternative ways to accomplish each goal required? If so, **do it now**(list on

newsprint and multi-vote to determine consensus around modifications) before going into small group discussions.

Discussion: (small groups)

Divide work of writing the parts of the plan among small groups in the Committee.

Each group will:

- Identify the objectives, actions, accountability, and time schedule for assigned goal. **(Worksheet #22)**
- Post on newsprint all written parts for the whole group to critique.
- Answer questions for clarification.
- Make revisions as needed.

Regional Vicar identifies a small writing group (1-3 members of the committee; not the facilitator) to take the material developed and write a first draft of the plan. **(Worksheet #23)**

III. DECISION MAKING (Called for by the Regional Vicar)

- Test consensus of the CPPC for each part of the Committee's work.
- General consensus on the goals, objectives, actions, accountability and time schedule to be included in the written plan.
- Consensus on the drafters of the plan.

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Writing Committee drafts and distributes draft prior to the next meeting.

All committee members

- Consider time schedules and means for evaluation of goals.
- Identify appropriate responsibilities for implementation.
- Identify any additional information required.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How did we resolve differences in perception?

Have we treated each other, our parishes and our Church with respect?

TASK: Do we have adequate information to develop a first draft?

Is there a general consensus on the goals? objectives? actions?

Closing Prayer:

Worksheet 22

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLAN OUTLINE

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY (WHO IS RESPONSIBLE)	TIME SCHEDULE

Worksheet 23

- 1 **Sample Cluster Pastoral Plan**
 - Vicariate, Cluster 00
- 2 **Goals and Mission**
 - Archdiocesan and Parish Mission Statements
 - What gives life to the cluster and activates the competencies and energies of the parishioners?
 - State the desired goals of the plan
- 3 **Today's Situation**
 - Internal strengths of the cluster of parishes
 - Internal limitations of the cluster of parishes
 - External opportunities in the cluster
 - External challenges in the cluster
 - Assumptions about the future and long term direction
 - Specific issues the cluster pastoral plan must address
- 4 **How Did We Get Here?**
 - Any relevant historical information
 - Original assumptions that are no longer valid
- 5 **Alternatives Ways to Accomplish Each Goal**
 - State the alternatives ways to accomplish each goal (include objectives and actions)
 - List advantages & disadvantages of each alternative way
 - Parishioner support / reaction of others in the community
 - State cost (time, talent, financial, energy, commitment of parishioners, etc..) for each alternative
- 6 **Recommendation(s)**
 - Recommend at least one alternative way to accomplish each goal
 - Identify actions for each parish and the Archdiocese
 - Identify a time schedule for implementation
- 7 **Commitment**
 - Signatures of Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee
- 8 **Executive Summary (summarize 2-7)**
 - Goals
 - Recommended alternative way to accomplish each goal
 - objectives and,
 - actions required of each parish
 - actions required of the Archdiocese

MEETING 9:

CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

Review the draft plan sent to Committee members before the meeting. (**Worksheet #23**)

Prepare written revisions to the draft plan if necessary.

HANDOUTS (Secretary)

- Draft plan (distributed in advance by mail)

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection **Scripture Suggestion:** **Hebrews 8:8-11**

- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting

Discussion: (small groups)

- Make revisions as needed. (Writing group)
- Form working groups as required and begin working on assigned topic: Implementation, Communication, and Celebration. (See Appendix E)

Implementation Group

Identify those people who have been empowered by the Regional Vicar to monitor implementation of the plan and insure that they are present at the last meeting of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee.

Communication Group

Small group develops a plan for communication to Parish Pastoral Councils who will be responsible to communicate to the parishioners, to the broader public, and to the Church in Philadelphia with the help of the Archdiocesan Communication Office.

Celebration Group

Small group creates a plan to celebrate the completion of the cluster pastoral planning as an important step in the Renewal of the parishes in the cluster.

Communication and Celebration Groups report out their suggestions to the whole committee.

III. DECISION MAKING (Called for by Regional Vicar)

What should be included in final draft of Cluster Pastoral Plan?

Identify provisions for:
Implementation
Communication
Celebration

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Writing Group prepares final draft.
- Communication group prepares communication plan.
- Small group working on celebration prepares final suggestions for celebration.
- Implementation group identifies process to bring plan to fruition.

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How did this experience impact my life as a member of the Church?
How are we committed to this plan in a personal way?

TASK: Do we have a final draft in process?
Do we have a plan to communicate about it?
Do we have a way to celebrate our accomplishments?
Do we have an implementation plan in process?
Do we feel confident that we have completed our charge?

Closing Prayer:

MEETING 10: CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

Review the final draft, implementation plan, communication plan and celebration suggestions sent to Committee members before the meeting.

HANDOUTS (Secretary)

- Final Draft of Cluster Pastoral Plan
- Implementation Plan
- Communication Plan
- Suggestions for celebration

I. GATHERING

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Revelation 21: 1-7
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- **Approval of Minutes**

II. PROCESS (Regional Vicar/Facilitator)

Education:

Establish context for the Committee: where we have been, where we are going, and what we will be doing at this meeting.

- Identify and, if possible, introduce those responsible for monitoring the implementation of the plan.
- Review the final draft of the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- Review the plan for communicating the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- Review the plan for celebrating this step toward spiritual renewal in the parishes.

Discussion:

- Raise and answer any questions about the final draft of the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- Raise and answer any questions about implementing, communicating, and celebrating the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- Make suggestions.
- Revise as needed.

III. DECISION MAKING (called for by the Regional Vicar)

- Come to consensus that the work is completed.
- Signatures of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee members on the proposed Cluster Pastoral Plan.

IV. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES (Regional Vicar)

- Give thanks and rejoice!

Committee members report back to Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners:

- the proposed Cluster Pastoral Plan

Handouts/Questions/Comments/Announcements: (Secretary)

Meeting Evaluation: (Facilitator)

PROCESS: How did this experience have an impact on my life as a member of the Church?
What are my feelings at this time?

TASK: Do we feel confident that we have completed our charge?
Are we committed to this Cluster Pastoral Plan in a personal way?
Are we prepared to communicate it clearly?
Are we prepared to celebrate it joyfully?

Closing Prayer:

PART 3: MEETING SCHEDULE FOR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING NUMBER 1

(to be held after the completion of stage 1 of Cluster Pastoral Planning)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- To receive information from Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee (CPPC) representatives on the assumptions about the future of the cluster and specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar that the Cluster Pastoral Plan must address.
- To give feedback to CPPC on the assumptions and the goals of the cluster, and the specific issues that the plan must address identified by the Regional Vicar.

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Reflect on Acts 2:42-47.
- Review strengths/limitations, and needs identified in the Parish Self Study (On The Way to Renewal, pp. 50-51)

AGENDA

Prayer/Reflection Scripture Suggestion: Acts 2:42-47

- **Education/Formation of Members**
Parish CPPC members share:
 - The **valid assumptions** about the future of the cluster.
 - external **challenges** and **opportunities**; internal **strengths** and **limitations**.
 - The **specific issues** identified by the Regional Vicar in consultation with the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee that the plan must address.
 - PPC members ask questions to clarify meaning.

BREAK

- PPC considers to what extent they agree with the assumptions identified and to make suggestions for additions or deletions to the list based on their knowledge.
- PPC decides when and how to communicate the assumptions, goals, and the specific issues that the plan must address to parishioners; how to obtain responses and how to communicate back to the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee.

- **Announcements**
- **Evaluation**

Closing Prayer

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING NUMBER 2

(to be held after the completion of stage 2 of Cluster Pastoral Planning)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- To receive information from Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee (CPPC) representatives on the prioritized cluster goals, the unique situations of one or a few parishes that the plan should address, and the alternative ways to accomplish each goal.
- To receive responses and suggestions from the Parish Pastoral Councils.
- For the PPC to determine how best to receive responses from the parishioners regarding the alternatives developed in the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee.

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Reflect on Romans 12:2-8.
- Review and reflect on the materials from PPC meeting held at the end of Stage 1 of Cluster Pastoral Planning.

AGENDA

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture suggestion:	Romans 12:2-8
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- **Education/Formation of Members**
Parish CPPC representatives report on the prioritized goals and unique situations that have been identified and proposed alternative ways to accomplish each alternative.
- **Discussion**
 - PPC responds to goals of the parishes in the cluster identified by the CPPC.
 - PPC discusses and comes to consensus on the best way to share proposed alternative ways to accomplish the goals with parishioners and obtain their responses when they are made public.
- **Announcements**
- **Evaluation**

Closing Prayer

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING NUMBER 3

(to be held after the completion of stage 3 of Cluster Pastoral Planning)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- CPPC representatives present the final list of goals and a range of proposed prioritized alternative ways to accomplish each of the goals and the criteria being used to select among the alternatives.
- PPC reacts to the alternative ways to accomplish each goal that are being proposed.
- PPC plans the manner and the schedule to communicate the goals and the proposed alternative ways to accomplish the goals to the parishioners and to obtain responses from the parishioners.

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Reflect on Sirach 2:1-11 and the Archdiocesan and Parish Mission Statements.
- Review the cluster goals and specific issues that the plan is intended to address that were provided in previous meetings.

AGENDA

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Sirach 2:1-11
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■ **Education/Formation of Members**

The parish representatives to the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee presents materials from stage three of cluster pastoral planning:

- Final list of goals of the Cluster
- List of alternative ways to accomplish each goal
- List of criteria for testing proposed alternatives

PPC members ask questions to clarify the alternative ways to accomplish each goal and the specific objectives and actions that are required to accomplish each of the goals.

■ **Discussion**

Come to consensus on the best way to consult with the parishioners on the proposal and to provide a response to the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee from the Parish Pastoral Council and the parishioners.

■ **Announcements**

■ **Evaluation**

Closing Prayer

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING NUMBER 4

(to be held after the completion of stage 4 of Cluster Pastoral Planning)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- To receive information from Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee (CPPC) representatives on outcomes of meetings eight, nine, and ten.
- To receive the final draft of Cluster Pastoral Plan.
- To appreciate in what ways the plan will further the mission of the Church within the cluster.

PREPARATION FOR MEETING

- Reflect on Revelation 21:1-7 and the Parish Mission Statement.
- Review the materials from Stage 3:
 - List of the cluster goals, proposed alternative ways to accomplish the goals, criteria for choosing among these alternatives.
- Make notes on the connections between the alternative ways to accomplish the goals proposed and the Archdiocesan and Parish Mission Statements, the goals of the cluster and the specific issues that the plan was intended to address.

AGENDA

Prayer/Reflection	Scripture Suggestion:	Revelation 21:1-7
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- **Education/Formation of Members**
The parish representatives to Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee present the final draft of the Cluster Pastoral Plan developed during Stage 4 which was recommended to the Regional Vicar.
- Final steps in Cluster Pastoral Planning that will happen after the Cluster Pastoral Plan is approved by the Archbishop:
 - development of a plan for communication to parishioners,
 - creation of a plan for celebrating the cluster plan in the parish.
 - development of a plan to implement
- **Discussion**
The Parish Pastoral Council as a consultative body uses the consensus style of decision making when recommending the endorsement of the Cluster Pastoral Plan. When it appears that consensus has been reached, the Parish Pastoral Council commits itself to work toward implementation of the actions of the parish called for in the Cluster Pastoral Plan.
A written version of the consensus needs to be reviewed by the whole Parish Pastoral Council, and promulgated to the entire parish. (e.g. through the parish bulletin, or a letter from the Parish Pastoral Council)
- **Announcements**
- **Evaluation**

Closing Prayer

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

William J. Austin, Jr.
Sister Janet Baker, RSM
Reverend Monsignor John Bartos
Reverend John Close
Sister Kathleen Coll, SSJ
Reverend John Conway
Sharon DeSipio
Reverend Monsignor Charles Devlin
Reverend William Donnelly, OSA
Reverend Thomas Flanigan
Loretta Fox
Reverend John Graf
Paul Haggerty
Reverend Anthony Janton
Reverend Matthew Kornacki

Most Reverend Robert Maginnis
Reverend John Marine
Most Reverend Joseph Martino
Reverend Michael T. McCulken
Reverend Monsignor James T. McDonough
Reverend Monsignor Francis Menna
Robert J. Miller
Theresa Mudrick
Bernadette O'Connell
Reverend Salvatore Riccio
Sister Linda Sariego, OSF
Patricia Shearer
Frances Stratton
Evelyn Tarpey
Reverend Richard York

APPENDIX A: General Expectations and Principles of Cluster Pastoral Planning

The general expectation of every Cluster Pastoral Plan is that it promote the spiritual renewal of the people of the parishes within the particular cluster. Through this process, all the parishes within the cluster are expected to become more aware of the elements that identify them as vital communities of the faithful who are promoting the work of the Church. Drawing on the work of the Parish Self Studies, members of the Committee propose how to advance both parish and cluster vitality by prayerfully reflecting on the use of the spiritual and the temporal resources of the parishes. The Cluster Pastoral Plan is intended to describe how the parishes in the cluster, working together, will develop and become increasingly vital throughout the next five years.

Certain principles should be followed in the development of a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan. These principles are consistent with the fundamental principles of pastoral rule identified in the Directory of the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, Sacred Congregation for Bishops, 1973. (cf par ##93-98) They are:

1. To assure current and accurate knowledge of the common good of the diocese by ongoing study, by counsel with and discussions with the faithful. **(cf. Principle of the Common Good*)**
2. To insure that clergy and laity understand the importance of deepening the unity among the faithful in parishes, the diocesan bishop and the entire Catholic Church. **(cf. Principle of Unity *)**
3. To assist the Catholic people in the cluster to become more aware of Church issues which extend beyond the boundaries of their own parish to the wider community and to help them to cooperate in programs and to share resources so that the people are served more faithfully and effectively. **(cf. Principle of Responsible Cooperation*)**
4. To insure respect for the legitimate competencies of others, by providing them with the influence they need and support for their initiatives. **(cf. Principle of Subsidiarity*)**
5. To enable every parish in the cluster to have an ongoing willingness to consult and plan in collaboration with other parishes of the cluster to address pastoral needs which can be met more effectively through inter-parochial cooperation. **(cf. Principle of Coordination*)**

* Full excerpts are found in Guided by Faith, appendix B.

APPENDIX B:

Characteristics of Vital Parishes

The recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan is intended to insure parishes that are vital, vibrant, and vigorous as defined here. The plan should include specific performance expectations in each area for each parish. It is understood that various programs include several of the thematic dimensions listed below. Parishes, for example, may have programs directed primarily to the elderly, youth, etc. Where needed, programs in ecumenical and interreligious affairs should be considered as well.

WORSHIP- Parishioners recognize worship as their center and the focal point from which everything else follows. Clergy and laity plan and participate in the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments of the Church, devoting appropriate resources to these activities.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY- Parishioners create and nourish a strong sense of community within the larger Church. Members identify themselves with the Catholic Church. They also identify themselves with their parish community and seek to improve it. The clergy and the laity have a deep sense of the importance of unity among the Faithful in the parishes and with their diocesan bishop.

EVANGELIZATION- Parishes have active programs of evangelization to share the Catholic faith and mission. People are active in ministries of sharing the faith such as participation in the **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** and appropriate resources are made available to support their efforts.

TEACHING- Parishioners commit to the religious education and spiritual development of adults and children to bring them to a deeper understanding of Church doctrine, to a deepening conversion to faith and to expressions of personal witness to the Faith. Appropriate resources are made available to support their efforts. A parochial school is understood to be a part of a vital teaching ministry and, wherever possible, a parish should operate its own school or support one which has been regionally established.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE- Parishioners provide service at several levels. First, parishioners direct some services to the poor in keeping with the Church's expressed priority for the poor. Second, parishioners work for peace and justice with other people of good will. Third, parishioners contribute in service to the civic community in which the parish exists.

LEADERSHIP- Parishioners recognize and accept their responsibilities as baptized Catholics to full participation in the life of the Church. The pastoral leadership encourages full collaboration among the People of God by assisting them to take an active, responsible role in the life of the parish. Parishes have a sufficient number of members in their active years who participate productively in the parish ministry. The number of parish staff and parishioner volunteers, as well as their training and sense of mission, are adequate to carry out all of the work of the parish as identified in the Parish (and Archdiocesan) Mission Statement(s). The parish actively supports vocations in the parish by insuring that parish leaders and parishioners,

especially parents, know how to support vocations to the priestly or religious life, by identifying resources to foster vocations at the elementary as well as the high school level, and by providing peer support and expressing pride to those who express a desire for a priestly or religious vocation.

STEWARDSHIP- Parishes have sufficient resources and facilities to support the current work of the parish and reasonable plans to expand or modify resources as needed without placing unrealistic expectations on the pastoral leadership and staff nor undue burden on the parishioners. The pastor, staff and parishioners are not overly preoccupied with temporal affairs at the expense of the pastoral ministry. The parishioners are sufficiently able and disposed to support the parish with their time, talent and treasure. All seek to be open in collaborating in ministry with other parishes so that people are served more effectively.

APPENDIX C: Issues That the Cluster Pastoral Plan Must Address

In every cluster, specific issues that the plan must address will be identified by the Regional Vicar after consultation with the Committee. Addressing these issues may require reorganization or restructuring of some or all of the resources of the parishes of the cluster.

As part of their Parish Self-Study process, parishes identified the resources they have that support and sustain the mission of the Church in that area. Before identifying the specific issues that the plan must address, the Regional Vicar will consult with the Committee to benefit from their knowledge of the parishes and the cluster. *This consultation normally takes place during the information gathering stage of Cluster Pastoral Planning.* In addition, the Regional Vicar considers the results of the Parish Self Studies and the data on the various resources, as exemplified on page 44.**

** It is helpful to recognize that the term reorganization is used here, in its widest sense, to include consideration of all of the resources of the cluster's parishes (personnel, religious activity and programs, finances, buildings, etc.) whether in expansion or in consolidation. By addressing the specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar, the plan is intended to result in vital and vigorous parishes. These specific issues are determined through deliberations by the Regional Vicar in consultation with the Committee. For example, after study of all of the available resources, it is possible that the Regional Vicar might identify the need for the plan to address the issue that a parish is without sufficient resources of its own to carry out its mission. In addressing this issue, the Cluster Pastoral Plan may identify that such a parish could obtain the benefit of resources which had been limited to a nearby parish by restructuring. In a given cluster, resources could be combined in such a fashion that some parishes might consolidate convents and others consolidate school buildings, etc. without any one parish needing to close in its entirety.

RESOURCES

The following is an illustrative list of some resources that the Regional Vicar may look at across the cluster. There may be additional indicators which are particular to a parish or a specific cluster. Examination of such types of information helps to guide the Regional Vicar in identifying specific issues in each cluster that the plan must address.

Personnel:

- Number of Registered Parishioners/ Registered Households
- Number of Active Priests/Deacons
- Number of available Religious
- Number of (other) Parish Staff
- Number of Students
- % of Catholic Students
- School Faculty
- Community Size (population, households, geographic)
- Projected Needs

Religious Activity:

- Number of Baptisms
- Number of Funerals
- RCIA Participation
- Mass Attendance
- Number of Marriages
- Institutions within the Cluster
- Other activities of the parish communities
- Projected Needs

Finances:

- Operating Income
- Operating Expenses
- The Number and Cost of Required Capital Expenditures
- Projected Needs (e.g. IPCC subsidy)

Physical Plant:

- Number of Buildings
- Size of Buildings
- Type of Buildings
- Condition of the Buildings
- Projected Needs

(Examples of indicators based on Archdiocesan policy and practice will be provided by the Regional Vicar.)

APPENDIX D: **Characteristics of the Ad Hoc Committee for Cluster Pastoral Planning**

The Committee shall be formed when the Regional Vicar determines that the parishes are ready to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning. The Committee is responsible for developing a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan as part of the Spiritual Renewal of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Like the Parish Pastoral Councils, the Committee must be **guided by prayer, education, and reflection at every meeting.**

1. Membership qualities. The Committee consists of the Regional Vicar, along with the pastor and two representatives from the Parish Pastoral Council of each of the parishes in the cluster.

Each person selected to be a representative to The Committee shall:

- a. be a member with some experience on the Parish Pastoral Council of the parish which they represent. Ordinarily, each member should have knowledge of the parish through information received from the Parish Self Study,
- b. be able to communicate to the members of the Parish Pastoral Council the suggestions of the Committee and vice versa,
- c. have a positive attitude toward pastoral planning, a commitment to fostering the good of the whole cluster and the flexibility to assist in achieving consensus,
- d. have a vision of Church broader than her or his own parish,
- e. be willing to make a commitment to attend all the meetings of the Committee,
- f. be willing to maintain confidentiality, when required,
- g. possess a sense of unity which unites parishioners with their pastor and the Archbishop.

In addition, it would be helpful if the representatives possess familiarity with the Renewal endeavors in the Archdiocese, a willingness to enter into and/or lead the Committee in prayerful reflection at its meetings, and have a general contemporary knowledge of Church teaching.

Members identified to serve on the Committee will normally continue to serve until the conclusion of the Cluster Pastoral Planning process even if their term on the Parish Pastoral Council expires during that time. In such cases, they should be invited to the Parish Pastoral Council meetings when issues of Cluster Pastoral Planning are discussed.

2. Selection and Size of the Committee. The Pastor of each parish shall nominate three members from the Parish Pastoral Council, at least one of whom shall be from among the elected membership and at least one of whom shall be a lay person. The members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall then select from among these nominees two representatives to serve on the Committee. Vacancies resulting from the loss of a parish representative will be filled according to this same process.

Committee Membership Roles

1. Regional Vicar. The Regional Vicar will consult with the Pastors of the parishes in the cluster to consider the readiness of the parishes in the cluster to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning, determine specific time schedules, meeting locations and other logistical concerns, identify the major opportunities and problems that could be encountered in the process, and clarify the specific role of the pastor in every stage of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process.

After consultation with the Committee, the Regional Vicar will determine the specific issues that must be addressed by the plan. The Regional Vicar may also consult appropriate Archdiocesan Secretaries and others as necessary.

The Committee shall be administered by the Regional Vicar, who shall convene and chair the meetings, approve agendas, and review both the Minutes and the summary communications of each meeting. The Regional Vicar shall appoint a Coordinator (cf. # 4 below), a Secretary (cf. # 5 below) and a Communications Liaison Person (cf. # 6 below). Along with a facilitator (cf. # 7 below), these people comprise the agenda sub-committee chaired by the Regional Vicar.

The Regional Vicar, in consultation with the Committee, may form ad hoc subcommittees made up of other individuals representing the parishes. Such individuals may include Parochial Vicars, Principals of the parish schools, Directors of Religious Education, Parish Social Workers, Parish Services Directors, Chairpersons of Liturgy Committees, etc. This arrangement allows for participation by deacons, Religious, priests or laity who hold such positions in the parish.

The Regional Vicar should meet with the Major Superiors of communities of Religious which are associated with parishes of the cluster in order to exchange information concerning planning for their respective areas.

Without prejudice to the responsibility of the Committee to achieve a consensus on its recommendations, the Regional Vicar always may call special meetings of some or all of the vicariate's pastors as spiritual leaders in their respective parishes to promote the spiritual welfare of the vicariate. During Cluster Pastoral Planning such gatherings of the pastors may wish to consider, for example, evaluating the progress of the Committee(s), reviewing special difficulties, and receiving suggestions to improve the work of that vicariate's Committee(s).

The Regional Vicar will also review the plan to insure that the process was faithfully followed and to exercise his own pastoral discretion as a Regional Vicar in shaping the final product. He will either return it to the Committee with his comments for further development or recommend it to the Archbishop for his approval.

2. Pastors. The pastors have an essential role to assist the Archbishop through the Regional Vicar in leading the people of the parishes through the pastoral planning process in their cluster. The Regional Vicar, as leader of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process, will consult with the pastors in the cluster to:

- a. consider the readiness of the parishes in the cluster to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning;
- b. determine specific time schedules, meeting locations and other logistical concerns;

- c. identify the major opportunities and problems that could be encountered in the process;
- d. clarify the specific role of the pastor in every stage of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process.
- e. assess the effectiveness of the Committee in accomplishing its work.

3. The Parish Representatives. While some members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee contribute designated services (such as the recording of meeting minutes) over and above their regular service on the Committee, it is the regular work of every member of the Committee to assist the Regional Vicar in devising a plan for the future of the Church's work in that cluster. The stages of this endeavor are described in Section E below.

Sub-Committee for Agendas

(Chaired by the Regional Vicar, the agenda sub-committee assists the Regional Vicar in the drafting of an agenda for each meeting of the Committee)

4. The Committee Coordinator. A Committee Coordinator will be appointed by the Regional Vicar from among the priest members. The Committee Coordinator assists the Regional Vicar in the ordinary business of The Committee and presides over its meetings in the absence of the Regional Vicar. The Committee Coordinator serves on the agenda subcommittee for the meetings, and assists in the smooth running of meetings and in other ways.

5. The Committee Secretary. A secretary, who shall be a member of The Committee, will be appointed by the Regional Vicar to keep summary Minutes of each meeting. The secretary serves on the agenda subcommittee for the meetings.

6. The Communications Liaison Person. A communications liaison person, who shall be a member of The Committee, shall draw upon the Minutes and reports of the Committee in order to draft regular communiqués according to the guidelines prepared by the Archdiocesan Communications spokesperson. These communications reports are intended to make information available uniformly to the Parish Pastoral Councils of the cluster and, through the Councils, to parishioners. This person will have responsibility for writing drafts of the Cluster Pastoral Plan. The communications liaison person serves on the agenda subcommittee for the meetings.

7. The Facilitator. A qualified facilitator, as defined by the Office for Research and Planning and approved by the Regional Vicar in consultation with the Committee, will be responsible for assisting the Committee to complete its work. The facilitator is not a member of the Committee. The facilitator serves on the agenda subcommittee for the meetings, and assists in the smooth running of meetings.

APPENDIX E:

Communication

Reasons to Communicate with the Parishioners and the Community where Parishes are Located.

The value and effectiveness of Cluster Pastoral Planning is very dependent on keeping parish members and others in the communities around the parishes and the Church in Philadelphia informed. In some degree, the need for information about this activity includes also representatives of the business and government communities. As a result, both in preparation for and throughout the work of Cluster Pastoral Planning, it is to the benefit of those involved in the process that they create an adequate system of regular communications both within the parish and throughout the cluster and the archdiocese. Parishioners want to be aware of significant developments in a timely manner. There are four general areas that should be addressed by every parish.

1. BUILD AWARENESS "This is what is happening"

- give specific information about the Cluster Pastoral Planning process. A brochure and other material will be available from the Archdiocesan Office for Communication.
- restate and affirm the Archdiocesan and Parish mission statements and the purposes for Cluster Pastoral Planning in the cluster.

2. PROVIDE A STATUS REPORT "This is where we are going"

- share the findings about the cluster from the Cluster Report and from the information collected by each of the parishes in their parish self studies.
- share the goals of the cluster.
- connect the Archdiocesan Mission Statement and the Parish Mission Statement to the goals of the Parish Self Study and the goals of the cluster and the criteria being used to identify alternative ways to accomplish the goals that are being proposed in the Cluster Pastoral Plan.

3. FOLLOW-UP "This is what it will mean to you and how we will make it work"

- statements of support from the Regional Vicar, the Pastor, and the Parish Pastoral Council
- provide specific information on the options that will be tried in the cluster and how they might affect the parish, the people, (for example, parishioners will be asked to support and participate in an adult religious education center to serve the cluster)
- identify cluster planning as a way to get support from other parishes for individual parish goals that require the support of neighboring parishes.
- listen to and act on parish staff and parishioners' suggestions and needs.

4. CELEBRATE THE CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING COMMITTEE PROCESS

The completion of the writing of the plan to be proposed to the Archbishop sets the stage for the Pastor, others members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee, and Parish Pastoral Council Members to become spokespersons for the plan, explaining how it will effect the life of the parish and encouraging parishioners to appreciate that which is being addressed by the plan.

The approval of the proposed plan by the Archbishop sets the stage for actions to begin in the parish to accomplish the goals. It is a moment in the history of the parish that calls for celebration.

Who celebrates?

The entire Parish.

Why celebrate?

To rejoice in the grace of the moment
To affirm the goals as an expression of the parish mission.
To express appreciation for the time, talent, and treasure invested by the members of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee, the Parish Pastoral Council, and others.

How can you celebrate?

A prayerful celebration focusing on the three original questions that the parish self study process asked and that were enhanced by the work of the cluster pastoral planning:

Who are we?

What do we value?

Who do we seek to become as a parish faith community?

A **presentation** of the major goals and required actions from the Cluster Pastoral Plan.

A **ceremony** of appreciation to all the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, especially those who served on the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee for their gifts of time and talent to the parish.

A parish **social gathering**.

APPENDIX F: Glossary for Cluster Pastoral Planning

action - process of doing or performing in a specific way to produce a desired effect or to achieve an objective.

Ad Hoc Cluster Pastoral Planning Committee (The Committee) - (see Guided by Faith, pages 13-19 or Guided By Faith WORKBOOK, Appendix D).

Administrator of Religious Education (ARE) - certified, non-degree person who is responsible for one aspect of the parish religious education program.

agenda - meeting outline that lists time of the meeting (beginning and end), place and the purpose of the meeting.

alternative way - An approach or idea intended to accomplish a goal. It may be expressed in the form of objective(s) and actions intended to move the cluster of parishes closer to the goal(s) identified by the committee.

Archdiocesan Mission Statement - a concise expression of the Archdiocese's fundamental purpose.

Archdiocesan Resource Person - an individual identified and trained by the Archdiocesan Office for Research and Planning to assist parishes doing self-study in training the Parish Planning Steering Committee and orienting them to the self-study process, "On the Way to Renewal," and facilitating the Cluster Pastoral Planning Committees.

Archdiocesan Secretary - person who supervises an Archdiocesan administrative grouping called a Secretariat; member of the Archbishop's principal staff designated to study and plan specific programs as well as implement those which the Archbishop, after consultation with his advisory councils, sanctions as official archdiocesan programs. This person is the primary means of communication between the Vicar for Administration and the director of each department and office within his/her specific Secretariat.

brainstorming - a method for generating ideas that allows everyone on a team to speak and encourages everyone to listen. All ideas are listed to be evaluated at a later time.

Canon Law - the body of law constituted by legitimate ecclesiastical authority for proper organization and government of the Church as a visible society. (Peter Huizing, New Catholic Encyclopedia)

Cluster Pastoral Planning - a planning process through prayerful dialogue in which parishes located in the same geographic area plan together to carry out the mission of the Church in their area.

Committee Coordinator - (see Guided By Faith, page 18 or Guided by Faith Workbook, Appendix D)

Committee Secretary - (see Guided By Faith, page 18 or Guided by Faith Workbook,

Appendix D)

Communications Liaison Person - (see Guided By Faith, page 18 or Guided by Faith Workbook, Appendix D)

consensus - a process of arriving at a decision after a time of prayer and study; characterized by general agreement rather than by voting; results in a recommendation that all, or nearly all, the members of the council agree to accept and support. (see Guided By Faith page 19)

Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) - person responsible for part of the parish religious education program. Has a Bachelor's Degree in Religious Education, Religious Studies, Theology or an equivalent.

decision making - the act of choosing one alternative from among more than one. The decision making process includes recognizing and defining the nature of the decision situation, identifying alternatives, choosing the "best" alternative, and putting it into practice. A decision making group may be most effective when members openly discuss and agree on the best alternative.

Director of Religious Education (DRE) - person responsible for total parish religious education. Has a Master's Degree in Religious Education Studies, Theology or an equivalent.

environmental analysis - a careful look at the community and its environment to determine the primary opportunities and threats confronting the parish.

facilitator - a person identified to have the responsibility of keeping the Committee clearly focused on the discussion at hand in an ordered, purposeful way so that the participants' time together is more productive. (see Guided By Faith, page 18)

goal - a purpose toward which an endeavor is directed; a desired end or achievement.

group - two or more individuals in face-to-face interaction, each aware of his or her membership in the group, each aware of the others who belong to the group, and each aware of their positive interdependence as they strive to achieve mutual goals.

Major Superior - the superior general or provincial superior of a religious institute or of a society of apostolic life.

multi-voting - A method of reducing a list to the most important issues by allowing each member a number of choices (usually about 1/3 of the total on the list) and reorganizing those items that all or most of the group identify as important.

nominal group technique - A method of generating, clarifying and selecting from among several ideas or alternatives.

norms - the rules or expectations that specify appropriate behavior in the group; the standards by which group members regulate their actions.

objective - the purpose or aim of a specific action; something to be worked toward as a step in accomplishing a goal.

parish analysis - a detailed diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the parish. It generally includes consideration of the number and gifts of the parishioners, parish staff and clergy, the kind and quality of worship provided, the opportunities for and quality of religious education, opportunities to serve, the recognition of the parish as an evangelizing presence in the community, the availability and use of land, buildings, and other temporal resources of the parish, its financial resources, the quality and quantity of information available about the parishioners and the people in the community and their spiritual needs.

Parish Mission Statement - a concise expression of a parish's fundamental purpose.

Parish Pastoral Council Coordinating Committee - the coordinating committee is composed of the Pastor, who is chairperson, the vice-chairperson and the secretary. It is responsible for formulating the Council's agenda and dealing with Council matters between meetings.

Parish Pastoral Councils - a consultative body within the parish with the role of advising and assisting the Pastor in areas of pastoral concerns; develops and recommends parish pastoral plans through a consensus process and prayerful reflection.

Parish Pastoral Planning - a prayerful, reflective process of setting goals, gathering and analyzing information, prayerfully evaluating the information, making decisions and acting; occurs through the Parish Pastoral Council.

Parish Self-Study - a planning process used by parishes to involve the Parish Pastoral Council in conducting a parish analysis to answer the questions: what do we believe as Catholics, how do we live in light of what we believe and who do we hope to become by imitating Christ more thoroughly as we look toward the future.

Parish Social Worker - formerly known as Parish Social Ministers; engages in social service at the direct parish level; involves provided intake, information and referral, brief services, material assistance, and ongoing case management services; also involves collaborating with the local Catholic Social Services Center to direct referrals for specialized services and programs; can vary depending on parish community needs and priorities.

parish staff - full and part time, paid and volunteer, workers in the parish who work at the direction of the Pastor or other member of the parish staff who has supervisory responsibility. (e.g. school principal)

parish viability - parish capable of existing, but not filled with life: not meeting performance expectations in various areas, including worship, Christian community, evangelization, teaching, Christian service, leadership, and stewardship.

parish vitality - parish filled with life: meeting performance expectations in various areas, including worship, Christian community, evangelization, teaching, Christian service, leadership, and stewardship. (see Guided By Faith, pages 21-22)

Parochial Vicars - a priest who renders his services in pastoral ministry as co-worker with the pastor in common counsel and endeavor with him, and also under his authority.

personal parishes - a parish is ordinarily territorial, that is, it embraces all the Christian faithful within a certain territory. However, personal parishes may be established "which are based upon rite, language, the nationality of the Christian faithful within some territory or even upon some other determining factor," such as a University parish. (Canon 518) In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, there are no University personal parishes. Since all our personal parishes are based upon language or nationality, they may be called "national parishes." (see Guided By Faith, page 28)

pilot studies - preliminary research or study serving as a tentative model for future experiment or development. (for 1991-92 Pilot Studies, see Guided By Faith, page 11)

planning - a process of selecting a rational course of collective action to achieve a future state of affairs. It includes setting goals, gathering and analyzing information, evaluating the information, making decisions and acting.

priority - an established sequence by order of importance or urgency.

Regional Vicar - a priest appointed by the Archbishop of Philadelphia to assist him in the exercise of the Archbishop's pastoral office. The Regional Vicar shares the Archbishop's responsibilities (teacher of doctrine, priest of sacred worship and minister of governance for the Archdiocese) with reference to the parishes and institutions to which he is assigned. The Regional Vicar represents the Archbishop to the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the vicariate. The Regional Vicar brings the Archbishop into more immediate contact with each parish and institution in the vicariate and the parishes and institutions with the Archbishop.

resources - something that can be looked to for support or aid of parish vitality; available assets; in a parish could include the number of registered parishioners, priest personnel, parish staff, number of faculty and students the community size, the number and usefulness of the buildings, the current and future financial situation and other institutions in the community associated with the mission of the parish.

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Secretariat Representative - an employee of each specific Archdiocesan Secretariat or Office assigned to assist the Regional Vicars during the Cluster Pastoral Planning process. (see Guided By Faith, page 18)

APPENDIX G: Suggested Prayers and Readings for Each Meeting

STAGE 1

MEETING 1

Scripture suggestion: Acts 2:42-47

These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

And everyone was filled with awe; the apostles worked many signs and miracles.

And all who shared the faith owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and distributed the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

Each day, with one heart they regularly went to the Temple but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

REFLECTION QUESTION: In what ways do we live our lives as a Christian community in our cluster?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 10:26-27

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

"So do not be afraid of them. Everything now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What do we need to proclaim about our cluster?

STAGE 1

MEETING 2

Scripture suggestion: Romans 12:2-8

Do not model your behavior on the contemporary world, but let the renewing of your minds transform you, so that you may discern for yourselves what is the will of God what is good and acceptable and mature. And through the grace that I have been given, I say this to every one of you: never pride yourself on being better than you really are, but think of yourself dispassionately, recognizing that God has given to each one his measure of faith. Just as each of us has various parts in one body, and the parts do not all have the same function: in the same way, all of us, though there are so many of us, make up one body in Christ, and as different parts we are all joined to one another. Then since the gifts that we have differ according to the grace that was given to each of us: if it is a gift of prophecy, we should prophesy as much as our faith tells us; if it is a gift of practical service, let us devote ourselves to serving; if it is teaching, to teaching; if it is encouraging, to encourage. When you give, you should give generously from the heart; if you are put in charge, you must be conscientious; if you do works of mercy, let it be because you enjoy doing them.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What gifts do I have to bring to the work of Cluster Pastoral Planning?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 11:28-30

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.

Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light."

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: In Cluster Pastoral Planning what burdens can I foresee turning into a blessing?

STAGE 2

MEETING 3

Scripture suggestion: Philippians 2:1-4

So if in Christ there is anything that will move you, any incentive in love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any warmth or sympathy I appeal to you, make my joy complete by being of single mind, one in love, one in heart and one in mind. Nothing is to be done out of jealousy or vanity; instead, out of humility of mind everyone should give preference to others, everyone pursuing not selfish interests but those of others.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What does your life in Christ mean to you?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 17:1-5

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as dazzling as light. And suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you want me to, I will make three shelters here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with a shadow and suddenly from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favor. Listen to him.'

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What is God asking me to do in the light of Cluster Pastoral Planning?

STAGE 2

MEETING 4

Scripture suggestion: Genesis 1:26-31

God said, "Let us make man in our own image, the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the creatures that creep along the ground."

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth."

God also said, "Look , to you I give all the seed-bearing plants everywhere on the surface of the earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this will be your food. And to all the wild animals, all birds of heaven and all living creatures that creep along the ground I give all the foliage of plants as their food." And so it was.

God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came; the sixth day.

REFLECTION QUESTION: How can we be good stewards of all God has given to us?

Scripture suggestion: Luke 13:6-9

A reading from the gospel according to Luke.

He told this parable, 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to his vinedresser, "For three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied, "leave it one more year and give me time to dig around it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What are the strengths of our cluster and what still needs to be cultivated?

STAGE 2

MEETING 5

Scripture suggestion: Luke 5:4-7

A reading from the gospel according to Luke.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch." Simon replied, "Master, we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets." And when they had done this, they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signaled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled both boats to the sinking point.

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION : What can we do differently to increase our catch? In what ways can our parishes benefit from helping each other?

Scripture suggestion: Ezekiel 11:19-20

I shall give them a single heart and I shall put a new spirit in them; I shall remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh, so that they will keep my laws and respect my judgements and put them into practice. Then they will be my people and I shall be their God.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What is necessary for a change of heart?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 13:4-9

A reading from the gospel according to Matthew.

He said, "Listen, a sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, at once, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Anyone who has ears should listen!" The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What is the rich soil in your cluster that has the potential to yield a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold?

STAGE 3

MEETING 6

Scripture suggestion: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into a heritage that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you who are being kept safe by God's power through faith until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the final point of time.

This is a great joy to you, even though for a short time yet you must bear all sorts of trials; so that the worth of your faith, more valuable than gold, which is perishable even if it has been tested by fire, may be proved to your praise and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

You have not seen him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him you believe in him and so are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described; and you are sure of the goal of your faith, that is, the salvation of your souls.

REFLECTION QUESTION: In what do you believe that you cannot see?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 14:15-21

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

When evening came, the disciples went to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the time has slipped by; so send the people away, and they can go to the villages to buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "There is no need for them to go: give them something to eat yourselves." But they answered, "All we have with us is five loaves and two fish." So he said, "Bring them here to me."

He gave orders that the people were to sit down on the grass; then he took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing. And breaking the loaves he handed them to his disciples, who gave them to the crowds. They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected the scraps left over, twelve baskets full. Now about five thousand men had eaten, to say nothing of women and children. The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: A crowd was fed with five loaves and two fish. How does this relate to our cluster?

STAGE 3

MEETING 7

Scripture suggestion: Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 2:1-11

My child, if you aspire to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for an ordeal. Be sincere of heart, be steadfast, and do not be alarmed when disaster comes. Cling to him and do not leave him, so that you may be honored at the end of your days. Whatever happens to you, accept it, and in the uncertainties of your humble state, be patient, since gold is tested in the fire, and the chosen men in the furnace of humiliation. Trust him and he will uphold you, follow a straight path and hope in him. You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy; do not turn aside for fear you fall. You who fear the Lord, trust him, and you will not be robbed of your reward. You who fear the Lord hope for those good gifts of his, for everlasting joy and mercy. Look at the generations of old and see: who ever trusted in the Lord and was put to shame? Or whoever, steadfastly fearing him, was forsaken? Or whoever called to him and was ignored? For the Lord is compassionate and merciful, he forgives sins and saves in the time of distress.

REFLECTION QUESTION: In what ways are you being tested in the work of Cluster Pastoral Planning?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 13:44-46

A reading from the gospel of Matthew.

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: What is one hidden treasure in your cluster that needs to be noticed more?

STAGE 4

MEETING 8

Scripture suggestion: Jeremiah 29:11-14

Yes, I know what plans I have in mind for you, -Yahweh declares, plans for peace, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. When you call to me and come and pray to me, I shall listen to you.

When you search for me, you will find me; when you search wholeheartedly for me, I shall let you find me (Yahweh declares. I shall restore your fortunes and gather you in from all the nations and wherever I have driven you, Yahweh declares. I shall bring you back to the place from which I exiled you).

REFLECTION QUESTION: What is God's plan for our cluster?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 14:24-31

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

While the boat by now some furlongs from land, was hard pressed by rough waves, for there was a head-wind.

In the fourth watch of the night he came towards them, walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, "Courage! It's me! Don't be afraid." It was Peter who answered. "Lord," he said, "if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water." Jesus said "Come." Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking toward Jesus across the water, but then noticing the wind, he took fright and began to sink. "Lord!" he cried "Save me!" Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. "You have so little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: How do we keep focused with this work when our steps falter like Peter's?

STAGE 4

MEETING 9

Scripture suggestion: Hebrews 8:8-11

And in fact God does find fault with them; he says:

Look, the days are coming, the Lord declares, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors, the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, which covenant of mine they broke, and I too abandoned them, the Lord declares.

No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel, when those days have come, the Lord declares:

In their mind I shall plant my laws writing them on their hearts. Then I shall be their God, and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for each to teach his neighbor, and each his brother, saying "Learn to know the Lord!" No, they will all know me, from the least to the greatest,

REFLECTION QUESTION: How does our Cluster Pastoral Plan help us to know God?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 16:15-18

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

"But you," he said, "who do you say I am?" Then Simon Peter spoke up and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Simon son of Jonah, you are a blessed man! Because it was no human agency that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my community. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it.

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: How does this Cluster Pastoral Plan strengthen my belief in Jesus?

STAGE 4

MEETING 10

Scripture suggestion: Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, Look, here God lives among human beings. He will make his home among them; they will be his people, and he will be their God, God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness or pain. The world of the past has gone."

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke. "Look, I am making the whole of creation new. Write this, What I am saying is trust worthy and will come true." Then he said to me, "It has already happened. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty; anyone who proves victorious will inherit these things; and I will be his God and he will be my son."

REFLECTION QUESTION: How is God with us in the writing of our Cluster Pastoral Plan?

Scripture suggestion: Matthew 16:24-26

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?"

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION QUESTION: How has our Cluster Pastoral Plan given rise to Christ's agenda rather than individual agendas?

Scripture Texts from: The New Jerusalem Bible Copyright 1985, Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd. and Doubleday, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

CLOSING PRAYER FOR EACH MEETING

Source: Shorter Christian Prayer Catholic Book Publishing Co., New York, 1988.

Night Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours could be used.

- Any of the "Prayers over the people" from the back of the Sacramentary (pp. 579-583)...with a blessing from the leader of prayer or the Regional Vicar.
- A hymn commonly known to all.
- A communal prayer commonly known to all and/or appropriate to the season.
- Prayer for Renewal