

GUIDED

BY

FAITH

a

**GUIDE BOOK FOR
THE PEOPLE OF GOD
IN
CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING**

REVISED AUGUST 1996

**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

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, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth."
(Ephesians 1:9 f) **

We need to understand how the Lord is calling us to grow and change so that we can better proclaim the mystery of his love.

What follows is premised on the conviction that even more than having criteria solely for parish viability we are also being called beyond every sort of minimalism to discover how parishes can be made full of spiritual vitality.

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Through Baptism, we are incorporated into Christ and we are called to share in his mission. Each of us, through distinctive roles, is called to participate in God's work of salvation. Lay women and men, through their Baptism, are given a special mission to carry the gospel into their everyday activities. Religious men and women, through the practice of chastity, poverty and obedience and through the particular works of their religious communities, are called to a distinctive witness to their Baptism and to the values of the Kingdom of God. Through their sacramental ordination, deacons are called to mirror the work of Christ as Servant. Through their sacramental ordination to the priesthood, priests become other Christs, participating in a special way in the role of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and Shepherd (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraphs 3, 50, 790, 1267; in the remainder of this manual the "Catechism" is identified as 'CCC').

* All Scripture quotations are taken from THE JERUSALEM BIBLE, copyright ©1966 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd. and Doubleday & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

To be authentic bearers of the Good News of Christ we need to respond to Christ's call to personal holiness. Our life in Christ is not only a private matter, however, for we know that in Christ, we are bound to one another. As each of us responds to his or her Baptismal call and lives out the Eucharist and all the other sacraments, the Church is built up. Our personal sanctification is increased. Our family life is deepened. Our parishes become more vibrant.

This spiritual vibrancy has been the constant aim of the Church. It is the particular focus of our Archdiocesan Renewal, a nine-year process which, in response to the call of Pope John Paul II, is helping to prepare us spiritually for the year 2000, the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ.

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 strive toward Renewal. A 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.*

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

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Cluster Pastoral Planning

The purpose of the Cluster Pastoral Planning is to reflect prayerfully on and evaluate 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 themes of the Archdiocesan Mission Statement.

Chapter 1 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 in our Archdiocese within the present realities and **in the most authentic and effective manner possible**.*

"Because she believes in God's universal plan of salvation, the Church must be missionary." (CCC #851). 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, 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.*

Chapter 2 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 (clergy, religious and laity) 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.

Chapter 3 Connection with Parish Pastoral Planning

The adoption of a **Parish Mission Statement** and the participation in the **Parish Self-Study** are key elements of **Parish Pastoral Planning**. **Parish Pastoral Planning** is a prayerful and participative process through which a parish characterizes itself as a particular community of faith by developing its own **Parish Mission Statement**; assessing its strengths/resources, limitations/needs; making recommendations to the pastor concerning establishment of priorities and goals and devising ways to accomplish its mission. A fundamental prerequisite for successful Cluster Pastoral Planning is the formulation of at least a provisional Parish Pastoral Plan at the completion of the **Parish Self-Study**.

A. Parish Mission Statement

The Parish Mission Statement helps the parish to identify itself as a community of faith and to set goals for its pastoral activities in fulfilling the missionary mandate unique to that individual parish (cf. CCC #852). It is set within the context of the mission of the Universal Church and the **Archdiocesan Mission Statement**.

B. Parish Self-Study

The Parish Self-Study is an instrument to assist the parish in reviewing its identity and mission within the mission of the Church in Philadelphia. It is a detailed process which allows the parish to:

- . look at itself in light of its mission;*
- . assess its strengths/resources;*
- . assess its limitations/needs;*
- . assess the external conditions which affect the parish;*
- . make recommendations in specific areas;*
- . establish priorities and goals for 3-5 years;*
- . devise ways to accomplish its plans.*

This prayerful, reflective process is done in light of Sacred Scripture, Church Teaching and Tradition, the Archdiocesan and Parish Mission Statements, and the specific realities of the parish.

The Holy Spirit calls the Church to an ongoing renewal in greater fidelity to her vocation (cf. CCC #821). Parish Self-Study, then, will be repeated periodically to allow for further reflection on and adjustment of the Parish Pastoral Plan. Results and insights from the Parish Self-Study are brought to the pastoral planning activity on the Cluster level.

Chapter 4 Considerations In Church Law

It is presumed that church activities are to be done in accordance with the prescriptions of Canon Law and not in violation of it. The activity of Cluster Pastoral Planning is a process that leads to the formulation of a pastoral plan which is proposed to the Regional Vicar. The Regional Vicar, in turn, recommends a pastoral plan to the Archbishop. The actual study of the activities and needs of parishes in the cluster would not affect the canonical rights and obligations of persons. When it comes to considering action to be taken in light of the recommendations submitted to the Archbishop, all rights in Canon Law are to be respected and all obligations in Canon Law are to be fulfilled.

Chapter 5 Parishes Which Were Part of the 1991-1992 Pilot Studies

A small number of parishes, or their recently established successor parishes, have already been part of the forerunner program to Cluster Pastoral Planning, namely the "pilot studies". Because these parishes are currently implementing the results of pilot study cluster planning in their areas, they will have a one-time exemption from the possibility of being considered for closure as a result of this particular cluster planning study alone when it is initiated in their respective clusters. Nevertheless, these parishes which had been part of the pilot studies are expected to participate both in Parish Self-Study and in the Cluster Pastoral Planning when it is initiated in their respective clusters. This participation will afford them the benefit of collaborating with other parishes in the cluster.

*"All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."
(Acts of the Apostles 2:44 ff)*

Chapter 1. Overview of Cluster Pastoral Planning

Cluster Pastoral Planning is an opportunity for parish leaders to discuss how to use the vast talent and energy of all the baptized in the parishes of the cluster to do the work of the Church. Parishes can work together by sharing information and coordinating activities, by sharing ministry through programs, by sharing personnel and by planning together for a more authentic, faithful, effective and vital expression of lived Church life than any one of the parishes could provide on its own.

*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 (hereafter, the 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.

Chapter 2 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:*

- 1. Formation of the Parish Pastoral Councils*
- 2. Development of Parish Mission Statements*
- 3. Completion of Parish Self Studies*

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

- 1. consider the readiness of the parishes in the cluster to begin Cluster Pastoral Planning;*
- 2. determine specific time schedules, meeting locations and other logistical concerns;*
- 3. identify the major opportunities and problems that could be encountered in the process;*
- 4. clarify the specific role of the pastor in every stage of the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process.*

C. *Formation of the Committee*

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. 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.

Chapter 3 Elements of Cluster Pastoral Planning

"For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future filled with hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 29:11 ff)

A. Parish Self Study

Each of the individual Parish Self Study processes, the knowledge obtained from them, and the parish priorities, goals, and needs identified, are elements of Cluster Pastoral Planning. The pastors and representatives from the Parish Pastoral Councils (i.e., the Committee, cf. B below), under the guidance of the Regional Vicar will use the information from the Parish Self Studies to develop a Cluster Pastoral Plan.

B. Characteristics 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 is responsible for developing a recommended pastoral plan for the cluster 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.*

C. Roles Involved in Cluster Pastoral Planning

I. 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.*

II. THE 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.*

III. OTHER ROLES RELATED TO THE COMMITTEE

8. Secretariat Representative(s). *An Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative is assigned within each Secretariat primarily to assist the Regional Vicar during the Cluster Pastoral Planning process. A role description for this function is attached as Appendix "A". A Secretariat Representative may, upon invitation from the Chair, participate in the discussion but not in the development of consensus.*

D. Method of Operation of the Committee

The Committee will be provided with the necessary training and formation to conduct the appropriate process. Working meetings of the Committee shall be attended only by the members and by the assigned facilitator. As a general rule no others may attend. By prior invitation from the Chair other individuals may attend a particular meeting. Requests for such invitations must be made at least three days prior to the meeting.

The Committee will recommend a Cluster Pastoral Plan by consensus. Consensus is defined here as a process of arriving at a decision after a time of shared prayer and study. It is characterized by general agreement rather than by voting, and results in a recommendation that all, or nearly all, the members of The Committee agree to support. Once consensus is achieved and has been accepted by the Regional Vicar, members agree to accept and support the recommendations. In the event that consensus is not achieved, the Regional Vicar will exercise his own pastoral discretion in shaping the final product. (cf. p. 19 above on the role of the Regional Vicar.)

Chapter 4. Process Steps for Cluster Pastoral Planning

Within the schedule established for the Cluster Pastoral Planning process, the Committee develops a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan applicable to the next five years. It should address the following general expectations and goals.

A. General Expectations and Principles

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 in Appendix "B")*
- 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 in Appendix "B")*
- 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 in Appendix "B")*

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 in Appendix "B"**)

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 in Appendix "B"**)

B. Characteristics of Goals, Objectives and Actions

The recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan will be stated in the form of goals designed to further the Mission of the Archdiocese and related objectives and actions for each parish. Each of the objectives and actions will be:

- a. clearly stated
- b. specific
- c. measurable
- d. assigned a deadline for completion
- e. related to implementing themes of the Archdiocesan Mission Statement

C. 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).*

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.*

D. Issues That Cluster Pastoral Planning 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 24.***

*** 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 (cf. Appendix C)*

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 (cf. Appendix D for 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.)

E. THE FOUR STAGES OF CLUSTER PASTORAL PLANNING

The Cluster Pastoral Planning process is carried out in four stages. The Committee gathers information and recognizes the specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar that the plan must address. The Committee identifies possibilities, creates options, tests them and proposes to the Regional Vicar a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan.

Stage 1: Information Gathering and Exploring

- 1. Form the Committee.*
- 2. The Committee gathers the information*
 - appreciates that which gives life to the parishes, and activates the parishioners' competencies and energies,*
 - identifies opportunities and problems.*
- 3. The Regional Vicar identifies specific issues that the Cluster Pastoral Plan must address.*

Stage 2: Assessing and Identifying Possibilities

- 4. The Committee looks for ways to enhance the mission of Church in the cluster.*
 - identifies priorities, goals and needs of the parishes in the cluster.*
 - identifies common goals and begins to develop a list of alternative ways to achieve these common goals*
- 5. The Committee considers the general expectations and principles for all Cluster Pastoral Plans (cited on page 20), the characteristics of vital parishes (cited on page 21), and the specific issues that the plan must address identified by the Regional Vicar.*
- 6. The Committee shares the **priorities and goals that the parishes have in common, and the specific issues identified to be addressed by the plan** with Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners for reaction. For example, the Committee might share that one of the identified goals is that parishes contribute in service to the community and that several parishes have expressed a priority to increase outreach in service to growing numbers of elderly parishioners.*

Stage 3: Creating Options and Testing

7. *The Committee identifies external Challenges and Opportunities in the cluster environment and the Strengths and Limitations of each parish and makes assumptions about the future conditions. ("CLOS" analysis)*

8. *The Committee develops a list of cluster priorities and goals, and alternative ways to accomplish the goals and shares them with Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners for reaction.*

Stage 4: Developing Proposals and Taking Action

9. *The Committee develops a draft Cluster Pastoral Plan that addresses the specific issues identified by the Regional Vicar, and proposes goals and actions to accomplish the goals, based on assumptions about future conditions in the cluster.*

10. *The Committee shares the draft Cluster Pastoral Plan with Parish Pastoral Councils and parishioners for reaction and further suggestions.*

11. *The Committee develops a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan, which its membership supports, and proposes the plan to the Regional Vicar.*

F. Schedule

1. *The schedule for the development of a recommended Cluster Pastoral Plan shall be identified by the Regional Vicar who shall determine, after consultation with the pastors of the cluster, when Cluster Pastoral Planning begins.*

2. *The inception of the process begins with the first meeting of the Committee. The frequency of the meetings will be determined by the Regional Vicar after consultation with members of the Committee.*

3. *Normally, Cluster Pastoral Planning shall begin about six months after the last parish in a cluster completes Parish Self Study. During the break between parish self study and Cluster Pastoral Planning, parishes should:*

- work at implementing actions to accomplish the goals identified for the parish in its self study;*
- prepare for participation in Cluster Pastoral Planning.*

4. *Since the Cluster Pastoral Planning requires a focused period of time and attention from the Committee, the Cluster Pastoral Planning would normally coincide with the beginning of one of the regular academic semesters (that is, begin in January or September) and should not exceed a nine month period.*

G. Communication

The value and effectiveness of Cluster Pastoral Planning is very dependent on keeping parish members 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. Parishioners want to be aware of significant developments in a timely manner. Specific suggestions for communication will be offered in the training sessions.

A NOTE ON PERSONAL PARISHES

Generally, priorities and needs of an individual parish are identified through use of the Parish Self Study process. Then, in the course of Cluster Pastoral Planning, the parishes share the results of their self studies with the other parishes of the cluster.

Additional consideration needs to be given to the unique status of personal parishes within specific clusters since these personal parishes also are related to other personal parishes beyond their territorial cluster.

To address this situation, the Regional Vicar will consult the established pastors' committee (namely: Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak) for the personal parish(es) in question for the purposes listed below. Guidance from the pastors' committee(s) for personal parishes will be needed in a timely manner, generally four to six weeks from the time of the Regional Vicar's request. Assistance will be sought to:

- 1. Assess the needs that arise from the ethnicity of the parish(es) in question and to receive the recommendations of such committees made in light of the ethnic needs of the parish(es), the needs of the Archdiocese as a whole and the resources of the cluster's parishes.*
- 2. Request the appropriate pastors' committee to assess the need for the personal parish(es) in the geographical area of the cluster, especially in neighborhoods where a majority of the members of the personal parish have moved from the area.*
- 3. Provide information back to the Committee to ensure that planning will take into account both the geographical and the ethnic involvements of the personal parish(es).*

PART 3: PRESENTATION TO REGIONAL VICAR

The recommended pastoral plan for the cluster is presented to the Regional Vicar for his consideration.

PART 4: IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Once a plan has been accepted by the Archbishop, the Regional Vicar, if necessary or advisable, may seek advice from the Committee concerning steps to be taken in preparing for the implementation of the approved Cluster Pastoral Plan.

PART 5: CONCLUSION

Once all of the clusters in the Archdiocese have completed a first Cluster Pastoral Plan, the process described in this manual (Guided by Faith) should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised in light of experience.

"He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth." (Ephesians 1:9 f)

We need to understand how the Lord is calling us to grow and change so that we can better proclaim the mystery of his love.

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SECRETARIAT RESOURCES

ROLE DESCRIPTION

TITLE: *Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative to Cluster Pastoral Planning*

(The title of Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative encompasses representatives from Archdiocesan Secretariats as well as the Office of the Chancery, the Office of the Vicar for Religious and the Office for Research and Planning, etc.).

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each Secretariat will assign one (1) Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative who is primarily responsible to assist the Regional Vicars during the Cluster Planning Process. In all instances the Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative participates only at the expressed invitation of the Regional Vicar and/or his designee.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND TASKS:

Prior to Cluster Pastoral Planning

- *To attend training process for Archdiocesan Secretariat Representatives.*

During Cluster Pastoral Planning

- *To provide information, education and/or referral regarding specific issues and/or demographics.*
- *To assist in analyzing data.*
- *To participate as resource person(s) in the Ad-Hoc Committee for Cluster Pastoral Planning discussion but not in the development of consensus.*
- *To review cluster recommendations for adherence to Archdiocesan policies and procedures.*

- *To update appropriate Central Administration personnel regarding the Cluster Pastoral Planning Process in accord with normal lines of communication.*

After Cluster Pastoral Planning

- *To assist the Regional Vicar in the implementation of approved recommendations by providing information, education and/or referral.*

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- *Knowledge of Archdiocesan structure and services.*
- *Excellent communication skills.*
- *Ability to work in a collaborative manner.*

INTERNAL PROCEDURES

For purposes of uniformity and order and to insure timely responses to stated needs the following internal procedures are provided:

- *The Regional Vicar will directly contact the appropriate Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative regarding any Cluster Pastoral Planning requests.*
- *The Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative will directly respond, in a timely manner, to such requests from the Regional Vicar.*
- *The Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative is responsible for providing periodic updates of activity as determined by his/her administrative supervisor.*
- *In situations where a request involves two or more Archdiocesan Secretariat Representatives, **the Representative receiving the initial request**, will place the Regional Vicar in contact with the appropriate Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative(s) or will consult with the other Archdiocesan Secretariat Representative(s) and personally respond to the Regional Vicar.*

APPENDIX B

Fundamental Principles of Pastoral Rule

(The following principles are taken from the directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, Sections 93-98. The English translation is copyright, 1974 by the Canadian Catholic Conference.)

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE COMMON GOOD

The common good of the diocese is ordained to the good of the universal church and takes precedence over that of more particular communities of the diocese. To avoid hindering a particular legitimate good, the bishop should acquire an exact knowledge of the common good of the diocese; and then by study, by inquiry into socio-religious custom, by the counsel of prudent persons and through discussions with the faithful, he constantly reviews and checks his information, since things change so quickly today.

THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY

In exercising his ministry of shepherd the bishop, knowing that he is and acts as “the visible principle and foundation of unity” (LG 23) of the particular church entrusted to him, is always actively concerned about the unity of the entire Catholic Church. This concern for unity does, however, admit legitimate variety which the bishop accepts according to the norms of law.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPONSIBLE COOPERATION

All the faithful, both individually and in association, have the right and duty of cooperating in the mission of the Church according to each one’s particular vocation and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. LG 30, 33; AA 2, 3). They also enjoy equitable liberty of thinking and of taking action in matters that are not necessary for the common good.

In ruling his diocese the bishop readily recognizes and preserves this healthy multiplicity of burdens and the just liberty both of individuals and of particular groups.

He willingly shares with others the sense of both individual and group responsibility and by showing his confidence in those who give their assistance in church offices and duties he encourages and helps them in such a way that they knowingly assume and willingly perform the duties entrusted to them by their own vocation or the directives of the sacred canons.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY

The bishop takes care that he does not ordinarily take upon himself what can well be done by others; rather, he carefully respects the legitimate competencies of others and also gives his co-workers the powers they need and favors the just initiatives of individual believers and of groups.

THE PRINCIPLE OF COORDINATION

The bishop considers it his duty not only to stir up, encourage and increase the energies within his diocese but also to weld them together so as to avoid harmful scattering and useless duplications as well as destructive dissensions, while at the same time always preserving the lawful rights and liberty of the faithful.

THE PRINCIPLE OF PLACING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT PLACES

In making use of the human resources of those who cooperate in ruling the Church the bishop is led by supernatural considerations, and pursuing above all the good of souls he preserves the dignity of persons by employing their talents in as fitting and useful a way as possible for the service of the community and by placing the right person in the right place.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PRIEST/DEACON PERSONNEL

When a Cluster enters the planning stage the Secretary for Clergy will provide guidelines regarding priest and deacon personnel. These guidelines will reflect the best possible statistical information available at that given time. Also considered would be the age and health of the available priests and deacons. Included in this information will be such statistics as:

- *Priests to parishioner ratio.*
- *Number of active priests in parish ministry.*
- *Number of Institutions needing priestly service or sacramental coverage in a particular cluster.*
- *Anticipated allocation of priests and deacons to cluster for 3-5 years.*

COMMISSION FOR INTER-PAROCHIAL COOPERATION

Status as an IPCC parish is subject to change from year to year. In any given year, the dollar amount for allocation to each eligible parish, recommended to the Vicar for Administration, will be determined by the Commission, based upon the funds available for such grants.

*The "Policies and Procedures" document for the **Commission for Inter-Parochial Cooperation** (IPCC) states as the purpose of this Commission: "To review budgets of parishes requesting subsidy from the Inter-parochial Cooperation fund in order to recommend to the Vicar for Administration a specific dollar amount of the grant allocation."*

Parishes receiving such grants are commonly referred to as "IPCC Parishes." The Commission may also recommend certain programs for consideration as recipients of IPCC funds. Classification as an IPCC parish is not permanent but is determined on a yearly basis and based on a parish's ability to meet specific criteria for eligibility. Each year, the Commission recommends to the Vicar for Administration both the listing of eligible parishes and the dollar amount of the grant allocation for each parish, based upon the funds available for such grants.

The results of a particular Cluster Pastoral Planning Process involving IPCC parishes could affect this status. Where parish consolidations take place, the new entity may have a stronger financial standing and, consequently, no longer meet the criteria for eligibility for IPCC funds. If, in subsequent years, the new entity finds it necessary to request IPCC status, it may apply to the Commission for consideration of IPCC funding. In such a case, the new entity will be required to meet the same criteria for eligibility operative at the time of application. In the case of two or more parishes consolidated into one single parish, the new parish must apply for IPCC status as a single entity.