The Parish Pastoral Council: The Engine for Building Communities of Disciples

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
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Morning Overview

Part I – Mission of the Parish & the Pastoral Council

Part II – Building Communities of Disciples
Part One – Overview

- Big Picture – Universal & Archdiocesan Mission of Parish
- Your Parish Mission
- The Pastoral Council – The Engine
Universal Church Vision – Parish

1. A **community**, entrusted to a pastor as shepherd
2. Place where faithful gather for **Eucharist**
3. Where Christ’s saving **doctrine** taught
4. Where **charity**, good works are **practiced**
5. Encourages & trains **evangelizers***

*Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2179

*Pope Francis – Evangelii Gaudium 2013
Archdiocesan Foundational Parish Life Elements

- Worship (Eucharist)
- Community (Community)
- Evangelization (Trains Evangelizers)
- Service (Charity)
- Word (Doctrine)
- Leadership
- Stewardship
Archdiocesan Pastoral Objectives

I. Live our Faith
   Spirituality of Communion (1)
   Spiritual Growth in Liturgy (4)
   Adult Formation (7)

II. Share our Faith
   Engage Parishioners (2)
   Intercultural Connections (5)
   Assist Parents (8)

III. Nurture our Faith
   Welcoming Environment (3)
   Partner With Another Parish (6)
   Youth Ministry (9)

See Archdiocesan Web Site – archgh.org
Parish Mission

- Does your parish have a parish mission statement?

Can you recite it?
Great Mission Statements...,

• 12-15 words

• Easily memorized

• Answer Question – why do we exist?

• Have life and passion! (audacious love)
Sample Parish Mission Statements

- To be a Christ centered community of disciples who worship God, love and serve. (14)

- Becoming Disciples of Jesus and Stewards of God’s gifts. (9)

To live the Gospel...,
Whatever it Takes! (7)
Co-Responsibility of Laity

The Laity –
“They should not be considered as merely ‘collaborators’ of the clergy, but as people truly
‘co-responsible’
in the work of the Church”

Pope Benedict XVI – Message to
International Forum for Catholic Action
August 2012
Pastoral Council – The Organizational Engine that Drives Mission

What is your definition of a Pastoral Council?
A Pastoral Council Is…,

“A community of disciples, called by God, to work in close consultation with the pastor and staff, to prayerfully discern the Will of God for this parish now and into the future”
A Community …,

• Spirituality of Communion
• Can’t force community
• Provide space for building and nurturing relationships – sharing life and faith
• *Shared* Prayer
• Council *Formation*
Community of *Disciples*...,

- To what extent are you a follower of Jesus?
- Where is *Jesus* in your web of relationships?
What Does a Missionary Disciple Look Like?

- Live Our Faith
- Share Our Faith
- Nurture Our Faith

Archdiocesan Planning Pathways
A community of disciples, *Called by God*

How did you end up on the Pastoral Council?
The Call – Old Testament

• And the prophets said,
  
  “I am too young” (Jeremiah)
  
  “I am too old” (Sarah)
  
  “I am not a speaker” (Moses)
  
  “I am just a farmer” (Gideon)
  
  “I am not in the mood” (Jonah)

Only Acceptable Response!

“I will go! Send me!” (Isaiah)
To work in close *consultation* with the *pastor* and *staff*..., 

- Is the Pastoral Council “merely advisory” or is it a “Board of Directors”?  
- How do members of the staff consult/work with the pastoral council?
To Prayerfully discern..., the (Will of God)

How does the Holy Spirit (fuel for the engine) influence/impact the efforts of your pastoral council?
Discern, and *carry out* (Will of God)

- What *actions* – what *witness* do members of the pastoral council provide for the parish?
  - *Accomplishments*?
  - *Witness*?
For the parish now...

- How does the Pastoral Council Listen & Respond?
  - 4X6 Cards
  - Surveys & Assessments
  - Town Hall – Listening
  - Focus Groups
  - Leadership Summit

Don’t Forget to Respond!
Listening to Broader Community

• Do you know your parish’s boundaries?

(\textit{primary mission field})

• In what ways does your parish engage the broader community?

• Partnership with another parish? Intercultural connections?

Archdiocesan Demographics Report
Now, and into the future.

- How has the pastoral council helped the parish *pastorally plan* for the future?
Planning and Action Tracking Resources

• Archgh.org/ (home page)
• /About
• /Pastoral-Plan
• /We-are-here-to-help
• /Planning + Action Tracking Resources

- Step by Step Planning Guide
- Pastoral Planning Booklet
- Spirituality of Communion one-pager
- Pastoral Objectives Diagram
- Sample Demographics Report
- Kickoff Meeting Agenda
- Spirituality of Communion Prayer
- Pastoral Planning Prayer
- Pastoral Planning Intercessions
- Parish Life Assessment Forms and Analytic Model
- Action Plan & Tracking Form
- Checklist for Completed Action Plan
A Pastoral Council Is..., 

“A community of disciples, called by God, to work in close consultation with the pastor and staff, to prayerfully discern the Will of God for this parish now and into the future”
So..., In Silence..., 

• What are 1 – 2 things that struck you in this presentation that you would like to take back to your parish?
Thank you!
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“Smarter Decisions – Stronger Mission”

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