

Archdiocese of Regina Pastoral Plan



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VISION

Faith Alive in a Dynamic Church

October 7, 2008
Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

In 2001 the Archdiocese undertook a process of study and reflection on the state of our diocesan church. Its purpose was to examine our ability to move into the future with a plan to effectively minister to the people who make up the Church in our Archdiocese of Regina.

A committee was formed to study this question and to give recommendations for actions to be taken. Through various consultations we have been able to establish priorities for the Archdiocese and that has given us a vision for the future.

Through the work of the Vision Quest Committee we are now able to present the fruits of these deliberations that involved all levels of our diocesan church. I express my sincerest thanks to Fr. John Weckend and the members of the Vision Quest Committee for their work in bringing us to this stage.

As a result of this work and the input of priests, Archdiocesan staff, religious and the laity, we are now ready to implement the vision that has been presented to us. The Pastoral Plan to carry out this implementation is outlined in this document. Fr. Weckend is now appointed as the Archdiocesan Co-ordinator of the implementation of this vision. I thank him for this generous willingness to serve the needs of our Church.

We move forward confident of the Father's loving care, the presence of Jesus with us and the power of the Holy Spirit to give us the energy and perseverance needed to renew our diocesan Church. We continually place ourselves under the protection and the intercession of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, who is the patron of our Archdiocesan Church.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



+Daniel J Bohan
Archbishop of Regina



Implementation of the Vision

Document Overview

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the Services of the
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B. Addressing the Priorities

established through the
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 - Programs of adult education and catechesis
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 - Structure to enable catechesis of children and of youth.
 - The parish, the prime centre for faith formation and for living as Church
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 - Stewardship as a way of living our faith introduced into our parishes
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 - Continued Eucharistic renewal

Implementation of the Vision

Document Overview

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B. Addressing the Priorities

established through the consultations:
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4. Liturgy

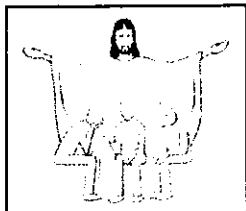
- Promote and improve the full, conscious and active participation of the community at the Liturgy
- Deaneries promote and facilitate sessions of ongoing formation in liturgy both for clergy and laity to help bring about meaningful and life-giving liturgical celebrations
- Ministries of Lector and Acolyte
- Mutual help and encouragement to the pastors who act in the person of Christ, the Head of the Church
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

III. CLOSING AND REALIGNMENT OF PARISHES

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- When parishes need to be closed, have a clear plan in place to care for the spiritual needs and pastoral care of the people in these communities
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IV. CONCLUSION

- Renewed vision for the Church in the Archdiocese of Regina.
- Proceed with decentralizing in providing diocesan services to the parishes.
- The Deaneries, with the help, guidance and direction of Diocesan Staff will organize events and opportunities of enrichment.
- Focus on four priorities: Evangelization, Education, Enabling the Laity and Liturgy.
- Deanery Pastoral Councils will be essential bodies in making this happen. The Archdiocesan Offices will be mandated to give leadership, assistance and direction to the Deaneries in this process.
- Recognize the valuable resources that are found in our people who have received training and formation
- Person at the diocesan level will oversee the ongoing process
- Set out with faith in God who calls and enables us and with reliance on the intercession of Mary, Patroness of our Archdiocese



I. Introduction

In 2001 the Council of Priests expressed a concern as to whether the Archdiocese had a long-range plan or pastoral strategy to meet the contemporary challenges of effectively ministering to our people in the territorially large and sparsely populated area that is our Archdiocese.

A committee was formed, later named the Vision Quest Committee, to study this matter and to submit recommendations. Criteria were established for recognizing what constituted a viable and vibrant parish faith community. Consultations were held with pastors and the faithful regarding the state of health of their church communities.

In a gathering of the pastors, parish administrators and parish ministers of the Archdiocese held in March of 2007, a listing of priorities for our Archdiocesan Church emerged and was made public. Using these, the faithful of the Archdiocese were invited to contribute their opinions in order to determine the most pressing of these priorities that would be addressed in the immediate future. Priests, Deanery Pastoral Councils and Parish Pastoral Councils were consulted.

The results of these consultations were compiled into a report by the Vision Quest Committee and presented as its final report in May 2008. We are now able to give a concrete answer to the request brought forth in 2001 and to articulate a vision for the Archdiocese.

This vision will bring us into the future with the hope of revitalizing our local Church, deepening the faith of our people, and enabling the Church in our Archdiocese to become stronger in carrying out our share in the mission of the Church through being witnesses to the world of the Good News of Jesus Christ to all around us.

We must now look to the actions we will need to carry out in order to set the implementation of the vision in motion.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VISION

II. A Plan of Action

A. Decentralization

The strongest and most agreed upon priority that was expressed in our visioning process was the need to *decentralize the services of the Archdiocese* and to revitalize the Deanery structures. This action will enable the Deanery to become a centre of faith-filled church life and vitality. This call to move away from providing the diocesan programs, activities and formation, primarily in the city of Regina, is a challenging vision for our local church, which we now will undertake.

Each Deanery, under the leadership of the Dean, with the participation of the Deanery Pastoral Council and the cooperation of the pastors in his region, will find it necessary to set up structures and initiate activities that will allow this transformation to take place.

In doing this, the Archdiocesan Staff will now be charged to work on the deanery level to provide training, programs, and assistance to the various deaneries.

For example, with the help and direction of the Archdiocesan Staff, the organization of adult education and faith formation will be carried out on the deanery level. Liturgical training will be planned at the deanery level. The development of programs and finding resources for training the lay people of our diocese to carry out the catechesis of children and young people will be carried out on the deanery level. Training and support of youth ministry will be carried out on the deanery level. With this formation taking place at the Deanery level, all the parishes of the Deanery will then be enabled to carry out these works of the Church in their own communities. All of these will bear fruit in the parish communities of each deanery.

To make the first steps in implementing this vision, the following actions are to be undertaken:

1. In each deanery, the Deans, with the help and advice of the Deanery Pastoral Council, will call an **assembly of all their constituent parish councils** to an inaugural half-day conference before the end of the calendar year 2008. The Dean may look to the pastor of each parish grouping to help assure that as many members as possible of the parish pastoral councils will be present.
 - i. The purpose of this gathering is to present this document, *The Implementation of the Vision* to the people of the Deanery so that its vision for the Archdiocese is understood.
 - ii. To establish some basic foundations upon which a strong deanery structure can be built.
2. The Deanery is to come to an agreement on a **centre** (or **centres** if the distances are large in the Deanery) that is the best equipped and centrally located to host future conference/training/renewal events in their deanery territory.
3. It is to establish the identity of a **primary contact person** in every parish. (An individual with e-mail and Internet capability is preferred.)

With these in place, the Deaneries will undertake to address the priorities that have been established for the diocese.

B. Addressing the Priorities

Following upon the consultation of the faithful of the Archdiocese, the Council of Priests together with the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council proposed the following as the most pressing of the priorities presented:

1. Evangelization
2. Education
3. Enabling the Laity
4. Liturgy

1. Evangelization

The Proclamation of Christ by Word and the Testimony of Life

Witness and Mission: The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that Christ establishes the faithful "as witnesses, and provides them with the sense of the faith and the grace of the word." (Catechism of the Catholic Church 904) It goes on to say: "Lay people also fulfill their prophetic mission by evangelization, that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life." (CCC 905)

Witness and mission then are Gospel demands for those who follow Christ. (CCC 2471) It is important that we understand their importance and seek to live them out in our daily lives.

The witness of a life lived with faith and love shows others a life filled with the fruits of the Spirit. (Gal.5: 22-23) This is Good News and it draws those who seek a fullness of life to Christ. Parish communities are privileged places where the Catholic faithful can learn ways to be witnesses of the Gospel to those around them and to grow in understanding of their part in the mission of the Church. In our parishes we help each other to carry out our calling to be witnesses of Jesus' Good News.

The Deaneries will look for ways to help the parishes hold programs and activities that help the faithful understand that they are called to fulfill the mission that Christ has conferred upon all who are Jesus' disciples. The members of the parishes will thus grow in the understanding that this mission is carried out through the witness and evangelization given by each Catholic.

Reaching Out: Parishes also need to have a plan to reach out with a sense of giftedness and stewardship to inactive Catholics and to those who seek to follow the Gospel. A life lived by faith

takes up the mission of the church: *to spread the Kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God.* (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 1.2) Parishes need to look for ways to be most effective in this way of reaching out to others. In particular we would reach out to First Nations people, troubled youth, young families, those in non-traditional marriages, Catholics in irregular marriages and Catholics who have drifted away from the Church.

Welcoming Communities: People who are drawn to Christ will approach a parish community. More than ever, each parish needs to clearly be a welcoming community to all who come to it. (Mt. 10:40) Parish communities are to look again at the ways in which they make people who come to them feel welcome.

Social Justice: Also parishes need to have programs to promote social justice, to actively help those who lack the necessities of life, (Mt. 25:40) and to deal with contemporary issues.

Vocation: Parishes must see as part of their mission the call to promote the belief in vocation. Parishes must be places where the Catholic faithful help one another to be attentive to the ongoing call of God in their lives and have this call affirmed and encouraged. This especially would include supporting those called to the priesthood, to the consecrated life and the single state, encouraging our young couples particularly to see the beauty of Christ's call to the married life.

The Deanery, with the help of the Diocesan personnel, will become the place where programs, training and encouragement will be offered to the parishes to achieve these goals.

2. Education

Adult Education and Catechesis: The consultation carried out in the diocese strongly called for programs of adult education and catechesis with a particular focus on assisting young families to take ownership of their faith lives. St. Paul in his Letter to the Romans (10:13-14) wrote: "...all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?"

As Catholic people we are called to proclaim Jesus in our lives and in our words. We then must know the words of Jesus and the teaching of the Church. This is particularly important for parents who carry the great responsibility of raising their children in the practice of the Catholic faith.

The Deaneries will be asked to undertake programs of adult education, catechesis and Scripture study with the goal that these programs will be available to each parish. This will allow the faithful of the Archdiocese to better know the teachings of our faith, and thus become better witnesses of the Gospel and take up more effectively their part in the mission of the Church. To help realize this goal, the Archdiocesan staff will develop programs that teach the beliefs of the Catholic Church that can be used in the deaneries and will help to train leaders who can carry out these programs in the parishes.

Lay Leadership Training: Within this area of education, the deaneries will be centres where diocesan programs of adult education and faith formation will be organized in order to provide a resource and help to the parishes. Here people can be trained for leadership roles in the Church.

Catechesis of Children and Youth: A prime responsibility of every parish community is to set in place a structure to enable *catechesis* of children and of youth. (Mt. 19:14) Under the leadership of their pastor, the parish community is to assure that its children are educated in the doctrine and practices of the Catholic Church. In this way it offers assistance to parents who have the primary responsibility to educate their children in the teachings of the Gospel and the practices

of their religion. The parish community above all is the place where people of all ages are led to and prepared for the Sacraments of Initiation.

Parish as Centre of Faith Formation: Communities in which Catholic Schools are present have a rich resource in the teaching of doctrine and Christian life to children and young people. The parish however remains the prime centre for faith formation and for living as Church. Catholic Schools, together with the parish community and the parents of the children, are encouraged to continue to build the important relationship that must exist between them for the fullest benefit to our children.

Children who do not attend Catholic Schools need to be provided with a full catechetical program that will teach them the doctrine and beliefs of the Catholic Church, as well as the preparation for involvement in the life of the church community through the sacraments of initiation. Where there are children and youth who are not in Catholic Schools, the catechetical formation must take place in the parish. (Can 528.1, RCIA Introduction #9) For small parishes with less resources, ways of providing catechesis can be found in collaboration with other parishes with the assistance of the Deanery.

Youth Ministry: Parishes need to establish youth ministry programs and activities so that our young people can gather to find mutual support and encouragement in living their faith and learning to be disciples of Jesus.

Use of Technology: It is also important to educate ourselves in the advancements of technology so that we can better communicate with each other. The avenues of not only teleconferencing but also video conferencing and presentation of programs of education will help our smaller parishes overcome the expense of traveling long distances.

In these matters the Deaneries will receive assistance, guidance and direction from the appropriate Diocesan Offices particularly in finding ways to help small parishes that have limited resources to provide for these pastoral needs of their people.

3. Enabling the Laity



Stewardship: To help all the faithful of the Archdiocese to live their faith as witnesses to the Gospel and to take up their share in the mission of the Church, stewardship as a way of living our faith is being introduced into our parishes. Two sessions of formation have been held for the priests and pastoral ministers of the Archdiocese. Another session for the faithful of the Archdiocese took place at the recent Family Gathering.

The Deaneries will undertake the promotion of stewardship and help the parishes within their territories to set out on this path. Thus they will come to see in stewardship a way of living as a disciple of Jesus so that all may use the gifts God has given each of us in a way that will bear fruit for God.

Training of the Laity for Ministry & Collaborative Teamwork: It is important that sessions of training be held to provide trained lay people to carry out ministry in parishes both where there is no priest, and in parishes where they will work in collaboration with the pastor in order to provide the important pastoral care and pastoral services that are needed to promote healthy parish life. Means need to be taken to strengthen collaborative teamwork between clergy and laity.

Priesthood of the Baptized: With the assistance of the Diocesan Pastoral Team, ongoing formation and encouragement will be given to the lay faithful of each Deanery so that they may more fully live out the dignity, calling and mission of their Baptismal Priesthood. (Lumen Gentium 10) This is accomplished in part through lay ministry in the parish communities but especially through their call to make their world holy and to bring their world into the presence of God. Each person contributes to this in a most effective way as they offer all aspects of their daily lives and the world in which they are living and working as spiritual sacrifices joined to the Sacrifice of Jesus in the celebration of the Eucharist. (Lumen Gentium 34)

Continued Eucharistic Renewal: During the year in preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec, our diocese focused on the Eucharist in a very positive way. It will be beneficial for our Diocesan Church to build on what we have begun during this special time of preparation. Programs and projects of Eucharistic renewal will help the laity better understand their place in God's plan for our world.

4. Liturgy

Meaningful and Life Giving Liturgical Celebrations: For the spiritual health of its members, and indeed for a truly human development of God's People, it is important that each parish have meaningful and life-giving liturgical celebrations. The community of faith is made holy through the celebration of the Sacraments. (Can. 528) Many parishes at present hold effective formation sessions in Liturgy for their parishioners. It will be of great advantage that Deaneries also undertake sessions of ongoing formation in liturgy both for clergy and laity so that all parishes will become skilled in well-planned and prayerful preparation of liturgical celebrations.

Workshops on Liturgy: Full, conscious and active participation of the faithful in the liturgy is both a right and a duty for each member of the faithful in the church. (Sacrosanctum Concilium 14) It is very important that liturgical workshops continue to be held and expanded to promote this participation and to help parish communities find appropriate resources to assist them in this important and ongoing goal.

Ministries of Lector and Acolyte: One part of the living out of our baptismal priesthood is the call to lay ministry directed towards the church community, particularly through the lay ministries of Lector and Acolyte. (CCC 903) It is clearly of value that ongoing formation and deepening of the spirituality necessary for these ministries be offered to the laity.

Role of the Pastor: The role of the priest is to preside over the community in its liturgical celebrations and to lead the people in living out that which God works in them by the sacraments. It is important that the Deanery provide mutual help and encouragement to the parish priests in this aspect of their vocation to act in the person of Christ, the Head of the Church, in the liturgical and spiritual life of their parish community.

Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults: Adults who come to the Church seeking baptism and initiation into the life of the Christian Community are brought into the Church through the Catechuminate and its accompanying Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults which are to be fully celebrated within the parish community. With the assistance of Diocesan personnel each Deanery will arrange workshops and information sessions so that the Rites will be carried out according to the liturgical directives. These Rites become a rich resource of parish renewal as the community accompanies its newest members on their journey of faith.



III. Closing and Realignment of Parishes

To be able to take part in the carrying out of this vision for our Archdiocese of Regina, parish communities need to have both the vitality and the viability necessary to do this. A list of criteria has been formulated by the Visioning committee and can be found below and on the next page. These criteria of vitality and viability, along with the factors of distance, make up of the community and financial viability that will be used to determine what parishes should be closed.

When parishes need to be closed, a clear plan to care for the spiritual needs and pastoral care of the people in these communities must be prepared and carried out. Jesus clearly taught that no members of his flock are to be lost because of lack of care on the part of their Bishop and their Priest who are their shepherds.

The Archdiocese continues to study the question of closures and realignment in order to find the most effective and equitable solution to the challenges of the diminishment of the size and vitality of our smallest parishes.

Parish Vitality and Viability

Vitality	Viability	
People are actively involved in building community, reaching out to inactive, marginal Catholics and to those who feel they do not belong; recognizing the diversity of talents and needs of the parish	<i>Community</i>	Sufficient number of parishioners, diversity in ages, capacity to maintain or increase in the next 20 years; sufficient number of envelope users; sufficient resources for evangelization and hospitality (geographic space from neighboring parish).
Good liturgical celebrations, sacraments, efforts toward renewal, devotions, prayer activities, etc.	<i>Liturgy</i>	Sunday attendance adequate for community experience; adequate number of baptisms, marriages, confirmations; adequate resources to support ministries in liturgical celebrations.
Concern for the poor, marginalized, elderly, hurting; involved with peace and justice issues.	<i>Service</i>	Providing the means of outreach to the most vulnerable members of the community.
Ongoing formation available in faith and Church teaching.	<i>Faith Enrichment</i>	Necessary resources to provide and afford ministries to respond to the needs of the people.
Leadership in administration, management, decision making processes in relationship to the rest of universal church.	<i>Structural & Stewardship</i>	Financially stable, buildings and facilities properly maintained, sufficient resources to support ministries of administration and leadership.

Parish Vitality and Viability (continued from previous page)

Church	Parish
The mission of the Church is to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom. This is accomplished through:	The vital and viable parish is typified by the following constructs:
Worship	Sacrament and Worship
	Through liturgy we celebrate God in our lives. The major liturgy of the New Testament is the Eucharist.
Proclamation of the Gospel	Prayer and Spirituality
	Through catechesis we interpret how God moves in our lives. Holy Scripture is one of the main sources of catechesis.
Offering of healing service to people in need	Ministry, Charity, and Justice
	Through social justice initiatives we respond to the call to be just.
Building of community	Community
	Central to life of a Catholic is membership in a parish community. Parish is to be understood in terms of its people and not in terms of its structures.

*Parish is the Church in a local situation.
Church happens in parish.*

IV. Conclusion

We are aware that there are other important priorities yet to be dealt with, such as Native Ministry, transparency within the Archdiocese, and preaching, to mention some. These will be touched on in this implementation and will remain as priorities to be addressed.

In summary then, we set out now on this renewed vision for the Church in the Archdiocese of Regina. Because of the size and distances involved in our local church, we need to bring about a decentralization in providing diocesan services and identifying centres of church life.

Many of our parishes are very small and do not have the resources to provide the training and spiritual enrichment that are needed to keep the faith alive and thriving in the local community. Therefore it will be incumbent on the Deaneries, with the help of Diocesan Staff, to organize such events and opportunities of enrichment.

We will begin this process by focusing on four priorities: Evangelization, Education, Enabling the Laity and Liturgy. A complete list of all the needs and priorities that were first identified may be found on the back page. These will be taken up over the years ahead and provide us with an ongoing plan for the future.

Deanery Pastoral Councils will be essential bodies in making this happen. The Archdiocesan Offices will be mandated to give leadership and assistance to the Deaneries in this process.

The Dean will have an important responsibility in this process. Each Dean will be asked to provide an annual review to the Council of Priests of the progress being made in the implementation of this renewed vision. The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council will hold an annual review as well.

We have a long history of conscientious and effective formation of our laity in our parish communities. Parishes have been providing retreats, workshops and formation for their people. We are rich in our resources of skilled people. Over the last twenty or so years, hundreds of people have taken the Lay Ministry Formation Program and have received formation at the John Paul II Centre. Such people are a valuable resource in building on what has been achieved and bringing this vision to fruition. Their present involvement in the life of the Church and their training provide the church with a rich resource for renewal and strengthening of the life of the community that is the Roman Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Regina.

God's Word teaches us that we are the Body of Christ in our world. We are God's holy people, called by Jesus, the Lord, to continue in our world and in our time the mission he began during his ministry here on earth. We set out on this new venture confident that Christ is always with us. We have faith that the power of his Spirit who dwells within each of us with the wind and fire of Pentecost will give us the strength, energy and guidance to bear much fruit for God.

We have always before us Mary, the Mother of God's Son, to be our model and our guide. We commit our diocesan church to her motherly prayers and intercession. As the patroness of our diocese we ask her help:

*Pray for us, O holy mother of God,
that we may be made worthy
of the promises
of Christ.*

The Needs and Priorities emerging from the final report at the Pastoral Gathering March 6 - 7, 2007

facilitated by Greg Fieger and Fr. Gary Kuntz

- Decentralization of the Archdiocese and revitalization of the Deanery structures.
- The use of media and technology in communication and education.
- Clergy replacement, including fostering vocations to the priesthood, and renewed spiritual leadership especially in preaching.

Lay empowerment and teamwork among clergy and between clergy and laity specifically. What we can begin doing immediately to address the top priorities. People need to see some action happening.

- Liturgy (training and education).

Stewardship: The role and size of the Archdiocesan Office. Transparency. Archdiocesan Annual Report.

- Adult Faith Formation: Educating, involving and enlivening the diverse range of the baptized.

Outreach to families

- Cultural interface (Native ministry and enculturation).

Social Justice and refugee outreach

- Ecumenism and interfaith dialogue

- Practical Action: Ensuring something happens after the workshop

- Vocations

- Evangelization

- Youth Ministry

- Sacramental Preparation

Stewardship: Celebrating and sharing God's gifts