

## **DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL**

### **Highlights**

**January 17, 2009**

#### **ATTENDEES**

Bishop Howard Hubbard, Jack Manning, David Amico, Diane Berning, Fred Burdick, Earle Flatt, Jeanne Gracon, Julie Hasselbarth, Marianne Lee, Mary Ann Louison, John McDonough, Peter Mead, Inez Migliore, Maureen Murray, Shirley O'Neil, Donald Quinn, Frank Ridzi, Harry Schmitz, Mary White

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Diane Berning led the opening prayer.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS – INEZ MIGLIORE**

- For Public Policy Network information, consult handouts from Shirley O'Neil.
- The DPC page on the diocesan website has been updated.
- DPC members were sent 2008 Parish Convening Evaluation Report and revised Procedural Guidelines as email attachments. Members preferring paper copies, please see David Amico.

#### **PARISH CONVENING 2008 AND 2009 – DAVID AMICO**

- 177 evaluations were received from nearly 400 participants.
- Overall positive feedback.
- Most were informed through *The Evangelist*. More personal invitation by parish leaders is necessary.
- The Convening must be marketed for everyone who is in ministry, not just leadership.
- Many participants wanted two workshops during the day.
- Event may be future venue for Evangelization Task Force as well as the Education Cluster of the Diocese. A broader planning committee will be called together.
- Date for next Convening is November 7, 2009 at Christian Brothers Academy, Albany.

#### **DPC RETREAT – APRIL 25 – CARONDELET HOSPITALITY CENTER**

- Maryanne Tuite, pastoral associate for faith and formation at Our Lady of Victory in Troy, will direct retreat on the theme of evangelization.

#### **DPC YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVES**

- David Stagliano, diocesan director of youth/young adult ministry, plans to reestablish the diocesan youth council and thus provide the DPC more consistent youth representation.
- David Stagliano will also prepare a list of candidates for the new Young Adult representative for Bishop Hubbard to consider. The young adult representative will provide the DPC with the perspective of that age group.

#### **EVANGELIZATION TASK FORCE**

- Bishop Hubbard believes that now is the time to give new focus to our ongoing mission of evangelization.

- There is concern to reach out to those who may be alienated by the decisions of Called to Be Church.
- However, it is also hoped that a renewed focus on evangelization will bring new life and vitality to our parish communities.
- The task force met for the first time in early December.
- It has been divided into three working subcommittees: technology, best practices, and diocesan themes and events.
- The task force will present a plan to the bishop in early spring. It will contain short-term and long-range goals and provide parishes/local planning groups with practical, user-friendly ideas for fostering evangelization on the local level.
- DPC members suggested that the task force build on the evangelization session that all local planning groups did early in the Called to Be Church process. Consideration should also be given to the fact that LPGs will be asked to revise their mission and ministry proposals in light of the final decisions.
- DPC members also suggested to distribute plan widely - to parish leaders, as well as LPGs and deaneries. Involvement of the laity is critical. Evangelization is the mission of the entire parish community, and no one can be exempt from this responsibility.

#### **SURVEY OF DEANS/DEANERY RELATIONSHIPS – MAUREEN MURRAY**

- DPC members offered and discussed suggestions for preparation of the final report on the survey conducted with the deans this past summer.

#### **REPORTS FROM CONSTITUENCIES**

- Reports were received from the following deaneries: Albany Suburban, Columbia, Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Northern Rensselaer, Otsego County, Saratoga, Schenectady, Southern Rensselaer, Washington/Warren.
- Issues raised and discussed included: Parish Convening, media coverage of pending Called to be Church announcements, Catholic schools, pastoral care/outreach in cities, ongoing collaboration in local planning groups, campus ministry, jail ministry, joint Lenten liturgical services and presentations.

#### **BISHOP HUBBARD'S REMARKS**

- Bishop noted that focus of Called to Be Church is now on closures and mergers. However, every LPG's plan is an opportunity for revitalization in prayer and worship, mission, ministry, and faith formation. Every six months, LPGs must submit progress report on implementation.
- Bishop addressed various aspects of the implementation process, including the distribution of financial assets and artifacts of closed parishes.
- A task force, coordinated by diocesan directors of Catholic Charities and Pastoral Care, will assist with the continuation the social/pastoral mission of the church in the cities, with special attention to the elderly, the poor and other vulnerable populations.

- Bishop spoke about the work of the Evangelization Task Force to address use of technology, best practices, and diocesan themes and events to advance the mission of the church.
- Bishop stressed immediate need for tracking parishioners so that they feel welcome in finding a new spiritual home.
- Bishop announced a mandatory all-day workshop on topic of vocations for clergy in the spring. This issue is critical to the future of the church.
- Bishop will soon establish a task force on campus ministry at the various colleges and universities within the diocese.
- Bishop thanked Jack Manning for compiling the implementation manual. This manual has been sent to every parish and contains especially pertinent information for parishes that will close/merge.
- Bishop stated that we must continue to support Catholic schools of the diocese.

#### **PASTORAL PLANNING – JACK MANNING**

- Jack guided us through his most recent memo to all parish leaders.
- Jack elaborated on the 14 General Decisions of Bishop Hubbard in regard to CTBC pastoral planning.
- Jack summarized the contents of the Closing/Merging Manual.

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Diane Berning led the closing prayer.