



Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Church Alive!

Pastoral Plan 2015-2020

Evaluation Report for the
Year One Action Plan

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Year One Action Plan

Preface

The Church Alive! Pastoral Plan is the fruit of a two-year process of consultation and planning that culminated in the Archdiocesan Congress: Church Alive! in April 2015.

It began in 2013, when Archbishop Pettipas established an organizing and planning committee for an archdiocesan congress. The committee sought input from parishioners and priests, in the form of a survey that was collected and collated by the Chancery office. The results of the survey formed the basis for discussion by meetings, in the fall of 2014, in each of the five deaneries. The committee then took the additional input, analysed it and proposed pastoral goals for the Archdiocese and its parishes. (cf. *White Paper on Goals of the Pastoral Plan*, issued by Archbishop Pettipas in November 2014).

Finally, the collated information and the proposed goals were reviewed by the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC). The results of this review were used by the organizing committee and the APC to put together a working document for the Congress.

A mission and a vision statement were produced for the Archdiocese by a focus group of parish leaders and priests.

The purpose of the Congress was to produce a pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. The purpose of the pastoral plan is to put into concrete terms what the people and their parishes can do to grow and deepen their faith, their understanding of the teachings of the Church and to live the mission and the vision of the Archdiocese.

The input from the Congress was taken by the APC and moulded into the Pastoral Plan 2015 - 2020. The APC reviewed the Congress input and the Pastoral Plan document, ensuring the strategies and actions of the plan are directly relevant to achieving the overriding objective.

In May 2015, the APC agreed that the plan should be broken down into annual components, with some of the strategies and actions to be worked on in each of the five years. The organizing committee selected the essential actions for the Year One Action Plan. These were considered necessary to ensuring the foundation would be in place in parishes for the entire plan to unfold and shape the growth of the Church in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan for the ensuing four years. In September 2015, the APC ratified these choices and the plan came to life.

Role of the APC

At the September 2015 meeting of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC), it was decided by Archbishop Pettipas with the full agreement of the members of the APC that all further responsibility for the Pastoral Plan would be taken on by the APC.

The APC decided to take responsibility for promoting the implementation of the plan, supporting the actors identified by the plan, and responding to any unanticipated situations and results that arise from the strategies and actions of the plan.

As well, the APC is the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Pastoral Plan across the Archdiocese. This includes: performing annual evaluations of the implementation and impact of those strategies and actions in parishes; and, directing committees and parishes to assist them in the work of the Pastoral Plan. It also requires that the members of the APC, as representative of archdiocesan, parish, and extra-diocesan organizations, to communicate with their groups about the Pastoral Plan.

The evaluation

A fundamental need for any organization is to know if the actions and strategies are working. This helps the organization to ensure it is living out its mission and vision and that its goals and objectives are met or, if things are not happening as expected, allows corrective actions to be taken.

In the first two years of the Pastoral Plan, the APC has determined it is necessary to evaluate the implementation of the various strategies. In the last three years, the evaluation will shift to the impact of the actions and strategies on people and groups in the Archdiocese.

What is being evaluated in Year One?

The Year One Action Plan identified strategies and their respective actions for each of the six goals of the Pastoral Plan. The implementation of these strategies and actions is what the APC undertook to evaluate, asking the questions: were the planned actions completed by those named to complete them, did each action contribute to meeting the objective, and, if not, why not?

In addition, the quality of the implementation was examined. That is, was the implementation methodical? Was there a commitment and follow through by those who were the actors identified in the Pastoral Plan? Could or should the APC or the Archdiocese provide training or other resources to improve the quality of implementation of the Pastoral Plan?

Data Collection

At the meeting on February 27, 2016, the APC identified the data to be collected and from whom. The Chancery office prepared and distributed questionnaires on April 17, 2016 to parish priests (26), the chairperson of two archdiocesan committees responsible for one or more of the

actions in Year One; and archdiocesan employees (1) responsible for one or more of the actions in Year One.

Parish priests were also asked to forward questionnaires to the parish leaders, such as members of the Parish Finance Committee and Parish Pastoral Council.

The questions were Yes/No, seeking information about whether the identified actions were implemented in parishes or by parishes and/or committees.

19 parish priests provided responses. Completed surveys were received from 15 parish leaders. The chairperson of the Archdiocesan Liturgy Committee (ALC) and the chairperson of the Faith Formation Committee responded, as did the Director of the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis (OEC). The data for the actions assigned to the Archdiocese (usually the Office of the Archbishop) was provided by the Executive Assistant to the Archbishop.

Recommendations

On May 28, 2016, the APC discussed the results of the data collection and made a number of recommendations to: (1) improve the implementation of strategies to attain pastoral objectives; (2) guide further actions identified in the Pastoral Plan, to improve the likelihood of attaining the related pastoral objective or objectives; or, (3) address general needs, weaknesses and gaps that have arisen during the implementation of the Pastoral Plan.

Finally, the draft evaluation report and recommendations was shared at a reunion of the delegates to the Church Alive! Congress 2015. Twenty-two people gathered at the Catholic Conference Centre in Peace River on June 4, 2016 and contributed several additional recommendations for improving the implementation of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan.

We hope this report will, in turn, give our priests and parishioners in the Archdiocese a clear picture of how the Pastoral Plan is progressing and underline the commitment of the Archbishop and the APC to ensuring the most and best fruits are borne from it.

Results (by Objective)

Preliminary Goal: Building leadership capacity in parishes

Strategy:

Provide leadership formation for the people in parishes who will have responsibility for implementing the pastoral plan

Actions:

- Effective Meeting Skills workshop for priests
- Effective Meeting Skills workshop for chairs of Parish Finance Committees and Parish Pastoral Councils

October 21, 2015: workshop for priests at Presbyterium

October 24, 2015: workshop for parish leaders in Peace River

October 7, 2015: workshop at deanery 4 council meeting in High Prairie

December 1, 2015: workshop at deanery 3 council meeting in Grande Prairie

Analysis:

The preliminary goal is to build leadership capacity, among clergy and laity. Three workshops for developing leadership skills are included in this goal: Effective Meeting Skills, Communication, and Facilitation.

In Year One, the workshop for effective meetings was selected because it focuses on leadership traits and the tools for making and recording decisions. In addition, most of the work we do in our parishes and for the Archdiocese requires meetings and these meetings need to be well run and well attended to be productive.

The APC suggested there be one workshop offered to the priests of the Archdiocese and at least one workshop offered in each deanery. The APC believed that the structure of the Archdiocese would make it most efficient to offer the workshop to deanery councils, as part of the agenda of a regular meeting.

The workshop was provided, at no charge, by Alberta Culture and Larry Stewart, Community Liaison Officer, was invited to facilitate one for priests (on October 21, 2015), and one each for Deanery 2 (October 24, 2015), Deanery 3 (December 1, 2015), and Deanery 4 (October 7, 2015). Lauri Friesen helped with the scheduling and invited the deans of all the deaneries to put it on the schedule.

The survey data indicates that workshops were not held in every deanery, as was intended. Deanery 1 and Deanery 5 were the ones that did not host a workshop. According to information from the Archdiocese, the deans were contacted more than once but no workshops were scheduled.

Recommendation 1:

Actions related to building leadership are of utmost importance and steps need to be taken to ensure the minority groups in the Archdiocese have reasonable access to programs and resources. There should be attempts to incorporate significant elements of Aboriginal culture in the tools and activities used.

Recommendation 2:

The workshop on Effective Meetings, and any other workshops offered to build parish leadership, should be available in French for Deanery 1. They should also be adjusted in order to accommodate Aboriginal culture, especially for Deanery 5. The effort needed to accommodate these particular needs should not be such as to put undue pressure on archdiocesan resources.

Recommendation 3:

Packages of materials and learnings from the Effective Meetings workshop should be compiled and provided to all parishes in the Archdiocese.

Recommendation 4:

Future workshops for building leadership, including any on running effective meetings, should be available to all parishioners and clergy. They should also be well-promoted in parishes, to ensure people are aware of them and can then choose to attend or not.

1. Objective: Good liturgy: To foster more active participation in our liturgical celebrations

Strategy:

Provide catechesis on the meaning of “good liturgy”

Actions:

- Formation of an Archdiocesan Liturgy Committee
- Liturgical Music workshops (preparatory steps)

Analysis:

In February 2015, Archbishop Pettipas drafted the Terms of Reference for a new standing committee in the Archdiocese: the Archdiocesan Liturgy Committee (ALC). By August 2015, he had assembled the members and the inaugural meeting was held in Fairview on Saturday, September 26, 2015.

Pursuant to its mandate to plan for liturgies proper to the Archdiocese as a whole, the ALC took responsibility for planning the liturgy for the Rite of Election Mass in McLennan on February 14, 2016.

Pursuant to its mandate to offer training to parish liturgical ministries, the ALC is developing Liturgical Music Workshops, to be held in parishes in the fall of 2016.

Recommendation 5:

The liturgies of parishes in the Archdiocese should reflect the cultures lived in those parishes. We recommend specifically that the ALC ensure that the Liturgical Music Workshops take into account these cultures and that they do not simply dictate that specific music styles or “approved lists of hymns” be used in every parish.

Recommendation 6:

The archdiocesan liturgical celebrations, such as the Rite of Election and the Chrism Mass, should be viewed as teaching opportunities. The ALC could prepare, for use in parish bulletins, short texts about the upcoming celebration. These could provide information about the historical development of the rite or liturgy, significant theological elements, or any other relevant detail that would increase the knowledge and understanding of parishioners.

Recommendation 7:

Our Catholic schools need to be involved in the planning of archdiocesan liturgical celebrations. In the next year, the ALC should propose ways to include students and staff in schools around the Archdiocese in the planning of these liturgies.

Recommendation 8:

The existence and work of the ALC should be better publicized across the Archdiocese.

Recommendation 9:

The Archdiocese would benefit from the creation of an independent Aboriginal Liturgy Committee.

2. Objective: Good teaching: To promote a deeper understanding of the Christian life and encourage living the gospel values according to the teachings of the Catholic Church

Strategy:

Establish parish RCIA communities that will also function as Adult Faith Formation Committees

Actions:

- RCIA in each parish, with at least one parish-hosted adult faith formation event per year, in addition to running RCIA program
- Program resource identified for RCIA and work with parishes' RCIA to build understanding of the *Catechumenate* in the Church

Analysis:

The Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis (OEC) is a resource for parishes in the Archdiocese for adult faith formation. It was identified by the organizing committee to take responsibility for raising awareness and activities of RCIA teams in parishes in the Archdiocese.

OEC has reviewed different RCIA resources, to have information available that will allow parish RCIA teams to select a resource or a number of the resources suited to their style and circumstances. For online resource, the first choice is TeamRCIA.

OEC is currently planning an important workshop on RCIA, in September 2016, to be led by Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner, in Peace River. All priests are expected to attend. They are also expected to have RCIA team members identified to OEC (especially if no such team is extant) well before the workshop so that preparatory work can be done.

The Faith Formation Committee intends to use the workshop to make contact and build relationships with parish RCIA teams.

Recommendation 10:

To maximize participation in the fall RCIA workshop, the members of the APC are called on to help their parish priest to assemble an RCIA team, as needed, and to register himself and the RCIA team members in the workshop before the end of June 2016.

Recommendation 11:

In each parish, parish RCIA team members are encouraged to build their own relationship, with team meetings 3-4 times per year.

Recommendation 12:

With support from OEC, parish RCIA teams should develop a parish program to continue (for the first year?) to walk with those newly received in the Church.

Recommendation 13:

The Archdiocese provides opportunities for RCIA parish team networking in order to contribute to the development and growth of members and the sharing of knowledge and resources.

Recommendation 14:

The call for at least one adult faith formation activity in every parish each year needs the direct involvement of the OEC to assist parishes who are inexperienced and likely uncertain about how this should look. The OEC could work closely with deanery councils to develop materials and make suggestions that parishes would then use. The parishes should be reporting on the activities to their deanery council.

3. Objective: Community: To build welcoming and inclusive communities of faith

Strategy:

Create a Pastoral Care of Families strategy in each parish

Actions:

- Promote Family Prayer Movement – initiated by the Archdiocese

Analysis:

The Archdiocese provided parishes with two principal resources for a Family Prayer Movement: *Building the Domestic Church* (a publication by the Knights of Columbus) and *Prayer in Our Home* prayer package, developed by the Archbishop and the Faith Formation Committee.

The Chancery received, from the State Council of Alberta Knights of Columbus, 100 copies of *Building the Domestic Church* in September 2015. These were offered to the priests of the Archdiocese at their presbyteral meeting on October 21, 2015. 33 copies remain in the Chancery office for parish distribution

The prayer packages comprise three documents: the daily prayer booklet, created by Archbishop Pettipas, *Prayer in Our Home*; the collection of prayers for before and after meals, compiled by the Faith Formation Committee, *Prayers for Family Meals*; and, the prayer card, *Family Prayer*, created by the Faith Formation Committee.

The Archbishop requested financial assistance from parish councils of the Catholic Women's League and the Knights of Columbus, as well as the Grande Prairie and Holy Family Catholic School Boards to publish the family prayer booklets. They came through with donations that make it possible for 10,000 packages to be made and distributed across the Archdiocese.

The English-language prayers were introduced at the Chrism Mass on March 22, 2016. All priests were given some copies to take back to their parishes, with instructions from the

Archbishop to be strategic in their distribution. Further copies have been requested by Peace River, Grimshaw, Manning and Falher.

Following the announcement, the Chancery received requests to provide prayer resources to the Archdiocese's French-speaking parishioners.

The French-language editions are still being developed, with a target date of May 31, 2016 for getting the booklet to the printer and then parish distribution to follow. The Archdiocese has determined that 500 copies will be produced, with the possibility of more should demand require it.

The Faith Formation Committee is currently developing a resource for prayers. It will be available on the website and updated on a regular, i.e. quarterly, basis.

Survey results indicate that the resources were distributed and are available in many parishes, but there are some gaps. The gaps are most likely the result of using only the presbyteral gatherings for (the initial or the only) distribution. The survey cannot tell us how well they have been received.

Recommendation 15:

More promotion needs to be done of the publication *Building the Domestic Church*. We recommend advertising it in parish bulletins, making the link on the website more visible, and using archdiocesan gatherings like the RCIA workshop for laity, to ensure it is better known by laity.

Recommendation 16:

The northern Missions should be the principal recipients of hard copies of the publication *Building the Domestic Church*, as they have less internet access than other communities.

Recommendation 17:

In order to assure that the information and resources being distributed to (and through) parish priests reaches its intended recipients, the Archdiocese should ensure that the deans of each deanery council make the Pastoral Plan 2015-2020 a standing item on the council's meeting agenda. This will make the parishes more accountable for implementing the actions of the plan and expand opportunities for access to information and resources.

4. Objective: Ministry: to identify the needs and gifts present in the community and to facilitate greater ministry involvement

Not included in the Year One Action Plan.

5. Objective: Communication: to employ all media available in our society in order to lend greater connection between parishes and Archdiocese

Strategy:

Develop further the Archdiocese's web site

Actions:

- Ensure current information about each parish, including physical location/address, Mass times and name of parish priest, Easter and Christmas details, as required

Analysis:

According to the Chancery, the parish information on priests and addresses is correct. However, no systematic approach/procedure has been established to ensure regular review and updating of the parish information on the website.

Strategy:

Establish parishioner database in each parish

Actions:

- Use parish census form and other registration tools to collect, among other details, email addresses and cellphone with texting capabilities of parishioners
- Set parish boundaries and publish a map of the archdiocese

Analysis:

According to the Archdiocese, the work is mostly incomplete, with registration forms from 23, out of a total 60, parishes, quasi-parishes and missions submitted to the Archdiocese, to date.

There are seven missions in Deanery 4 and five missions in Deanery 5 for which it may be too much to expect parishioner registration.

There are six parishes that use Parish Friendly who have not yet submitted their parishioner registration records. This may be due to a misunderstanding about how that information is delivered to the Chancery.

In all these situations, the Vice-chancellor is taking steps to gather the data or, at least, the explanation for why the data has not been furnished to the Chancery.

The survey data supports the information provided by the Archdiocese that only 23 communities undertook parishioner registration in 2015.

Strategy:

Make it easier to hold meetings across the Archdiocese

Actions:

- Investigate video conferencing options for use in the Archdiocese

Analysis:

In October 2015, the Archdiocese purchased a subscription for an account with Zoom video conferencing platform. Meetings using this technology have been successfully held by the Archdiocesan Liturgy Committee, the Faith Formation Committee, the Archdiocesan Finance Committee, the Archbishop, Chancery staff, and Peace Retreats team.

[Note: The ALC also used Facetime to include the priest from High Level in one of the committee's meetings. This may be an alternative to Zoom in places where the infrastructure for internet access does not provide the necessary speeds for the video conference to be used.]

Recommendation 18:

Each parish should name a contact person, who is not the parish priest, to take responsibility for receiving information from the Archdiocese related to the Pastoral Plan and to send related parish information to the Archdiocese, as well.

Recommendation 19:

The Archdiocese should recruit one person to take responsibility for up-to-date website content.

Recommendation 20:

The Archdiocese will develop a protocol or policy to ensure that parishes are equipped to register new parishioners as needed.

Recommendation 21:

The Archdiocese will develop a protocol for ensuring the parishioner database, housed at the chancery, is updated annually.

Recommendation 22:

The APC could benefit from making Zoom video conferencing available to representatives to the APC who find it difficult to travel to Peace River. The Archdiocese should, as soon as financially possible, invest in the necessary hardware to permit using Zoom video conferencing for APC meetings.

Recommendation 23:

The Archdiocese should prepare and publish an “Instruction and Tips” sheet for using Zoom video conferencing. The Archdiocese should also have experienced people available to assist with practice sessions for the meeting attendants who will be using the software for the first time.

6. Objective: Accountability: To increase the level of trust and to grow in a spirit of unity as a diocesan family

Strategy:

Evaluate these strategies

Actions:

- Create a tool to evaluate the success of the pastoral plan

Analysis:

At the February 27, 2016 meeting of the APC, it was agreed that there will be an annual evaluation for the five years of the Pastoral Plan. For the first two years, the evaluation will focus on a process evaluation which analyzes the implementation of the plan. For the final three years, the evaluation will focus on the impact and outcomes of the Pastoral Plan. The Chancery office will take responsibility for producing the data collection tools that will be used, upon approval of the APC each year. The Chancery office will produce a draft evaluation report for review and approval of the APC at the end of each operational year, i.e. at the May meeting of the APC.

Strategy:

Provide for spiritual and professional growth of priests

Actions:

- Develop growth plan for priests, with the plan proposed by the priest and reviewed with the Archbishop (each year, by the priests of deanery of that year’s canonical visitation)

Analysis:

In December 2015, three priests of the Archdiocese met with a facilitator from the organizing committee for the Congress, to develop an evaluation tool for priests. This tool was reviewed by the APC at its February 27, 2016 meeting. A number of amendments were identified and incorporated into the tool. It was also agreed that it would not be considered an “evaluation” but would be a tool for creating an individual growth plan to enhance the ministry of priests in the Archdiocese. It was also agreed that each year, the tool would be used by the priests in the deanery of that year’s canonical visitation.

Archbishop Pettipas and three, of a possible seven, priests of Deanery 3 used the tool in the canonical visitation, April 7 to May 3, 2016.

[Note: The “Enhancing My Ministry” tool used by the Archbishop during the Deanery 3 visitation was still in draft form. The APC learned that the priests of the Archdiocese will be invited to provide input for further refinements at the presbyteral meeting scheduled for May 30, 2016. The APC will review the comments and suggestions and finalize the form in September 2016.]

Recommendation 24:

The Archdiocese should commit to providing to priests, on an annual basis, tools and resources that will contribute to their on-going ministerial, personal and spiritual development and growth.