

Go Out and Make Disciples



**Discipleship
Evangelization
Charity**

A FRAMEWORK FOR PASTORAL ACTION

THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Discipleship

Cultivate. Inspire. Embrace.

Evangelization

Seek. Welcome. Proclaim.

Charity

Care for. Advocate.

“The pastoral charge seems simple. Care for people in need. Embrace the lost and drifting. Encourage immigrant Catholics. Inspire young adults. Advocate for the voiceless. Cultivate lay discipleship. Proclaim the sacraments.

What can you as a faithful Catholic do as a response to these entreaties? Just take a first step, whether it's within your family, as an individual in your neighborhood, or as part of a ministry team in your parish. Take a first step and keep going.”

Framework for Pastoral Action Planning Committee

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Prayer For the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

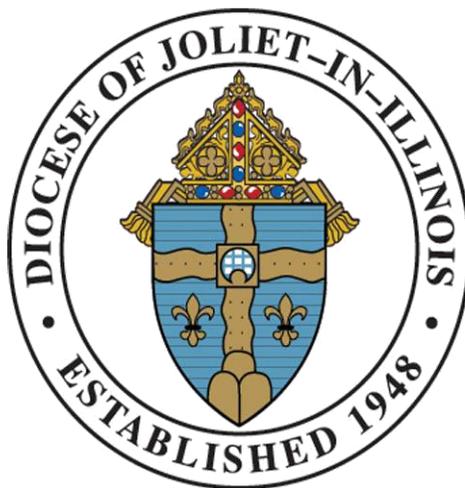
God our loving Father,
Pour out on us
the gifts of your Holy Spirit.

Open our ears to hear your Word.
Open our eyes to see your presence.
Open our minds to understand your wisdom.
And open our hearts to be more available
for your mission so that strengthened by your grace
we can truly be a sign and instrument
of your presence in our world today.

Strengthen our diocese, our parishes,
our bishop, priests, deacons, religious and laypeople.

Help us always to know your will.
Give us the courage we need to accept your will,
and the wisdom to know that we can accomplish nothing without you.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Table of Contents

Prayer for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Page 3
What is a Framework for Pastoral Action?	Page 5
Mission Statement, Pillars, Pastoral Areas of Focus	Page 7
Our Vision and Our Call	Page 12
Determining Progress and Success	Page 16
• Appendix 1 – Guidance and Prayer Reflection for Areas of Focus	Page 19
• Appendix 2 – Ideas and Actions From the Parish Forums	Page 27
• Appendix 3 – The Planning Process and a Road Map	Page 41
• Appendix 4 – A Snapshot of Our Diocese	Page 47
• Appendix 5 – Diocesan and Regional Demographics	Page 50

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

What Is a Framework for Pastoral Action?

“This Framework for Pastoral Action is not focused on our financial or strategic needs. Instead, it looks at ways to build community and to strengthen faith. In fact, it delineates, as well as we can, how Christ and the Holy Spirit are fulfilling their mission through us here and now.”

Bishop R. Daniel Conlon

Our Framework for Pastoral Action centers on the pastoral and ministerial needs of Catholics within the diocese at all levels of faith and participation. It is divided into categories that build upon each other:

Issues – Who we are and what pastoral topics are part of our world?

Aims and Priorities – The big pastoral goals that we have.

Strategies – The various ways we can accomplish our pastoral goals.

Actions – The many specific ways we can push a strategy forward.

Future Vision – What should our future look like in terms of pastoral concerns?

Here is an example of how aims, priorities, strategies, and actions work together in the Framework for Pastoral Action:

- Let’s say our aim (or priority) is to evangelize to all in our Catholic community.
- One strategy we can use to evangelize is to educate Catholics about their faith and about the sacraments.
- A specific action we can take to educate Catholics is to dedicate a portion of the diocesan magazine to articles about the sacraments and about faith issues.

As you can see, a priority could be accomplished by several strategies, and each strategy can be pushed forward by numerous actions.

During the fall and winter of 2012, a Framework for Pastoral Action Planning Committee gathered lists of pastoral topics highlighted by the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the diocesan Curia and religious and began the task of organizing them within five aims: Live the Faith, Build community, Celebrate our unity through the Sacraments, Embrace and Share the Word, and Serve others, especially those in need.

In early 2013, the committee developed an online survey that asked the diocesan Curia, clergy, deacons, and directors of religious education to prioritize numerous strategies. The survey received a strong response and, based on the results, the committee focused the larger group into a “Top-12” list of essential strategies. We then used these strategies as the basis for a diocesan-wide survey and for discussions in more than two dozen parish forums held throughout the diocese from November 2013 to January 2014.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

From this input, we revised and condensed the strategies to a final list, developed an overall pastoral theme – “**Go Out and Make Disciples**” -- and summarized the strategies even further into three overarching priorities (or pillars): Discipleship, Evangelization, and Charity.

These pillars, along with areas of focus, guidance, and a prayer reflection, can be found in subsequent pages. Proposed actions linked to the areas of focus also were gathered from the parish forums and are listed in an appendix within this document.

This Framework for Pastoral Action is not just for clergy within the diocese, or staff employees, or lay ministry leaders. It is a call for every Catholic in the diocese. It is a call to join in the missionary spirit and work of the Church. Moving forward together, we can reach our pastoral goals and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

See Appendix 3 for more information about the planning process and a timeline of actions.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Mission Statement,

Pillars,

Pastoral Areas of Focus

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Mission Statement for the Framework for Pastoral Action

We, the Roman Catholic Church of Joliet,
a people of diverse races and cultures within seven counties,
strive to be the Body of Christ
by living the Faith,
preaching the Word,
building community,
serving others, especially the poor,
and celebrating our unity through the sacraments.

From the mission statement of the diocese, we created five simple and straight-forward pastoral aims for the Framework for Pastoral Action. We then used these as the basis for organizing and shaping our strategies. They are listed below:

Pastoral Aims For Our Diocese

Live the Faith

Build community

Embrace and share the Word

Celebrate our unity through the sacraments

Serve others, especially those in need

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Defining the Pillars

The overarching priorities of the Framework for Pastoral Action focus on discipleship, evangelization, and charity. We hear these words nearly every day, but we may need a better understanding of what they mean and how important they are in our pastoral efforts.

Catholic discipleship means encountering Jesus Christ within and through the Church. We strive to learn more about Jesus, receiving Him fully in our lives and taking seriously our responsibility to share His love with others. “To be true disciples of Christ,” says Pope Francis, “one must stay true to Jesus' teachings, welcome His Light and profess our faith beyond our own individualism. Jesus speaks in the silence of the mystery of the Eucharist and reminds us each time that following Him means going out of ourselves and making our lives not something we ‘possess,’ but a gift to Him and to others. Our lives don’t belong to us.”

But at the same time, the pope adds “Our baptism makes us ‘missionary disciples’ within the communion of the Church. On the one hand, we never stop being disciples – learning, receiving. On the other hand, we are also called to the mission, to share what we have received, what we live, which is the experience of love, and of faith in the Trinity.”

As disciples, we embrace Christ’s love, and we form ourselves through piety and study, but our discipleship also must point outward. As Pope Francis describes it, “If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life.”

As disciples, we not only must cultivate our own Catholic faith, we must also reach out to others, share our faith with them and encourage them.

Catholic evangelization can be described simply as “sharing our joy.” As Pope Francis explains, “. . . It would be wrong to see our evangelization efforts as a heroic individual undertaking, for it is first and foremost the Lord’s work. Jesus is the first and greatest evangelizer. In every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God, who has called us to cooperate with Him and who leads us on by the power of His Spirit.”

While we may feel unprepared and inadequate to be evangelizers, the pope observes, “All of us are called to mature in our work as evangelizers. We all want to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel. In this sense, we ought to let others be constantly evangelizing us. But this does not mean that we should postpone the evangelizing mission; rather, each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are.”

Most importantly, “instead of our efforts seeming to impose new obligations, we should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but ‘by attraction.’ ”

Discipleship Evangelization Charity

We invite; we welcome; we listen; we embrace, and as the pope explains, we must reach out: “We cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings; we need to move from a pastoral ministry to a decidedly missionary ministry.”

Catholic charity places our actions at God’s disposal and allows Him to multiply what is being given. Pope Francis recently said that he is “always struck by the disciples asking Jesus to send the crowd away to find their own food and lodging and Jesus telling them, ‘give them some food yourselves.’ In the face of the crowd’s needs, this is the disciples’ solution: Everyone takes care of himself; just dismiss the crowd. Many times we Christians have that same temptation; we don’t take on the needs of others, but dismiss them with a compassionate ‘May God help you’ or a not-so-compassionate ‘Good luck.’ ”

He goes on to explain, “What Jesus encouraged the disciples to do was an act of ‘solidarity,’ ” which is nothing other than “placing at God’s disposal what little we have, and our humble abilities, because only in sharing and in giving will our own lives be fruitful.”

The pope also observes, “My hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, and within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and there stands Jesus never tiring of saying to us: ‘Give them something to eat.’ ”

We must not dismiss our brothers and sisters with empty “compassion.” With our humble abilities, we are charged to care for them, to give them a voice, and to share Christ’s love with them.

See Appendix 1 for guidance and prayer reflection regarding the pillars and areas of focus.

References

Pope Francis Explains That to be True Disciples of Christ, One Must Stay True to Jesus’ Teachings, Rome Reports.com, March 14, 2013.

“Our Lives Don’t Belong to Us,” Pope Francis says on Feast of Corpus Christi, Catholic Herald, May 31, 2013.

Selected Quotes of Pope Francis, USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, June 2013.

Pope Francis: Our Faith is ‘Not an Ornament,’ Catholic News Agency, Jan. 15, 2014.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Pastoral Areas of Focus

Discipleship

- Cultivate a personal encounter with Jesus in order to joyfully share the Gospel as a knowledgeable and responsible disciple.
- Inspire young adults to participate as lay leaders in the mission of the Catholic Church.
- Embrace immigrant Catholics and encourage their development as leaders in the Church.

Evangelization

- Seek, invite, and welcome Catholics who have drifted away from the Church.
- Emphasize and outwardly proclaim the importance of the sacraments and all vocations.

Charity

- Go outside your church doors to care for people in need.
- Advocate for and with people in need as the Gospel instructs you to do.



Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Our Vision

and

Our Call

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Our Vision and Our Call

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. These *marks* of the Church describe not only the Catholic institution, but also the path that every member of the Church must follow.

We should personally strive to be one Church that unifies people of different backgrounds in one baptism. We should focus on living a holy life that strengthens us to accomplish Jesus' mission in the world. We define ourselves as catholic as our perspective must be universal and all-embracing. And our faith is apostolic, which gives us the same mission as the apostles chosen by Jesus – to go forth and share the Good News with others. This inheritance of power and authority requires a genuine effort to understand what the Church teaches and why its tenets are essential.

For Catholic laity, this path has a simple, but challenging, goal: Bring Jesus Christ into the everyday world. This is our vocation and our calling.

At the moment of our baptism, when we are made “priest, prophet and king,” we are commissioned to join in the missionary spirit and work of the Church. With an understanding of our faith and the Eucharist as our spiritual food, we are formed as disciples and sent out beyond our doors to carry on the mission of Jesus.

This is our pastoral vision. Nurture our own faith and our knowledge of the Truth. Reach outside our homes and our churches, bring the love of Jesus to others, and feed those who hunger for the Word of God.

Jesus told the Apostles, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15). He was not only speaking to the Apostles. He is speaking to us today. As Catholics, we must stand up; we must act; we must go out and make disciples.

“If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32).

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Our Call: Go Out And Make Disciples

Discipleship	Cultivate lay discipleship. Inspire young adults. Embrace immigrant Catholics.
Evangelization	Welcome the lost and drifting. Proclaim the sacraments.
Charity	Care for people in need. Advocate for and with the voiceless.

Cultivate. Inspire. Embrace. Welcome. Proclaim. Care for. Advocate. These are steps that all Catholics must take in order to mature into a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.

This plan is an invitation for not only for clergy, or parish staff, or ministry leader, but for every individual Catholic to carry on the mission of Jesus – in our parishes, our homes, our neighborhoods, in every aspect of our lives.

We all have a responsibility to welcome, to embrace and to care. We all must strive to inspire, to cultivate, and to proclaim. It is not just the deacon's job, or the teacher's responsibility, or someone else's mission. It is our individual mission as baptized and confirmed Catholics.

Doctor of the Church, St. Francis de Sales, understood well that all Catholics need to share their unique gifts and that every gift is important to the Body of Christ:

“When God the Creator made all things, He commanded the plants to bring forth fruit each according to its own kind; He has likewise commanded Christians, who are the living plants of His Church, to bring forth the fruits of devotion, each one in accord with his character, his station and his calling.

“I say that devotion must be practiced in different ways by the nobleman and by the working man, by the servant and by the prince, by the widow, by the unmarried girl and by the married woman. But even this distinction is not sufficient; for the practice of devotion must be adapted to the strength, to the occupation and to the duties of each one in particular” (“The Introduction to the Devout Life”).

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

The Framework for Pastoral Action echoes the challenge set down by St. Francis de Sales. We must “bring forth fruit each according to our own kind . . . and each according to our calling.”

In the Diocese of Joliet, there is much pastoral work to be accomplished by every Catholic. The Framework for Pastoral Action, along with constant guidance from the Holy Spirit, will help to focus and unite our efforts so that all the individual works will help make our pastoral vision come to life.

The pastoral charge is simple and clear. Care for people in need. Welcome the lost and drifting. Embrace immigrant Catholics. Inspire young adults. Advocate for the voiceless. Cultivate lay discipleship. Proclaim the sacraments.

What can you as a faithful Catholic do in a response to these entreaties? Just take a first step, whether it's within your family, helping a neighbor in need, or as part of a ministry team in your parish. Take a first step and keep going.

We know that the work will be challenging, but also rewarding. We must remember to take courage for we are not alone in our efforts. Jesus is with us every step of the way.

The Framework for Pastoral Action offers strategies, guidance, prayer reflection and suggested action steps. Pore over all of it. Pray about your role in it. Decide to act, even if it's just in a small way. Even small steps can reveal God's plan for us to fulfill our Catholic calling and make disciples for Christ.

Each of us has a mission in life. Jesus prays to His Father for His followers, saying: "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18).

“We seldom realize fully that we are sent to fulfill God-given tasks. We act as if we have to choose how, where, and with whom to live. We act as if we were simply plopped down in creation and have to decide how to entertain ourselves until we die. But we were sent into the world by God, just as Jesus was. Once we start living our lives with that conviction, we will soon know what we were sent to do.”

-- Father Henri Nouwen

“The way we came to know love was that He laid down His life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech, but in deed and truth.”

-- 1 John 4:16-18

See Appendix 2 for more information about ideas and actions from the parish forums and surveys.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Determining Progress and Success

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Reviewing Progress Made by the Diocese and by Parishes

After the Framework for Pastoral Action is distributed throughout the diocese, the planning committee will request that the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) annually review the progress of the focus areas and actions and also manage periodic updates of the plan.

To support this, we are advocating that members from each parish pastoral council participate in pastoral workshops hosted by the diocese and the DPC in the fall of 2015, 2016, and 2017 that will focus on parish and diocesan progress involving each pastoral pillar. The workshops also will serve as a venue to trade successful ideas. Three workshops would be offered each year – on discipleship issues, evangelization issues, and charity issues – and each parish will choose to participate in a different workshop each year.

From these workshops, every parish pastoral council and designated ministries within the diocese will develop a brief report describing the actions that were taken and the progress that was made during the past year in relation to discipleship, evangelization, or charity.

These brief progress reports will be submitted to the DPC by **Nov. 2, 2015** and will include the following information:

- Offer a one-to-two paragraph description of the NEW actions taken during the past 12 months to move forward on the specific strategy.
- If possible, describe or quantify any specific accomplishments.
- Explain roadblocks and difficulties involved in implementing any of the actions/ideas.
- The progress reports are to be created by parish pastoral councils and not by parish staff.
- The progress reports are to be signed by every member of the parish pastoral council.

The DPC will look at all the progress reports and information from the workshops to create a Pastoral Annual Report describing pastoral life and development within the diocese. The first Pastoral Annual Report should be completed by **Jan. 31, 2016**.

Subsequently, the workshops and progress reports completed in the fall of 2016 will be used for a Pastoral Annual Report to be completed in January 2017. And finally, the workshops and progress reports completed in the fall of 2017 will be used for a Pastoral Annual Report to be completed in January 2018.

All progress reports from the parishes and the Pastoral Annual Reports will be publicly available in the DPC section of the diocesan web site so that useful ideas and actions can be communicated throughout the diocese.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

UPDATING THE PASTORAL PLAN

In addition to highlighting pastoral successes in their annual report, the DPC will use the progress reports to determine where pastoral actions are falling short of our goals and where roadblocks are impeding the achievement of our strategies.

During 2016-18, the work of the DPC will include:

- Analyzing how each pillar – discipleship, evangelization, charity – is progressing and closely examining the success of each supporting focus area: Cultivate lay discipleship. Inspire young adults. Embrace immigrant Catholics. Seek the lost and drifting. Proclaim the sacraments. Care for people in need. Advocate for the voiceless.
- Determining and targeting which major pillar or supporting focus area is proving to be the most difficult to implement within the diocese.
- Developing actions to support parishes or diocesan ministries encountering difficulties with a targeted pastoral focus area.
- Use information in the progress reports from the parishes to update and improve the pastoral plan.
- Analyze three years of annual progress reports and DPC Pastoral Annual Reports as the basis for developing the next Framework for Pastoral Action.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Appendix 1

Guidance and Prayer Reflection for Areas of Focus

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Aim I: Live the Faith

Focus Area for Discipleship:

Cultivate a personal encounter with Jesus in order to joyfully share the Gospel as a knowledgeable and responsible disciple.

Guidance: Participating in the life of the Church means being actively involved in any number of aspects involving faith, community-building, or service. It includes an active prayer life and involvement in the Mass, in ministries, in social events, or in outreach to the community or to those in need on at least a semi-regular basis. We want to especially target Catholics who are seen at weekend Mass, but are not involved in the work of the Catholic community.

Reflection: *“God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next... I have a part in a great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons...”*

-- Cardinal John Henry Newman

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Aim II: Build Community

Focus Area for Discipleship:

Inspire young adults to participate as lay leaders in the mission of the Catholic Church.

Guidance: With visible actions by local Catholic leadership and changes in organizational structures within our churches, we need to build valuable roles for young adult and teen Catholics so that their input and leadership will grow. Young adults range in age from 18 to 39. Their single lifestyles and their married lifestyles and faith needs can be very different from older Catholic faithful. We need to identify and meet these needs.

Guidance: Target actions toward at least three separate groups: college students, and single young adults and married young adults in the working world. Determine how to do a better job of inviting and reaching out so that these Catholics can fully participate in parish life. Resolve to do this more often. Invite and reach out more frequently.

Reflection: *“Even though you are young, the time for action is now! It is time to let your light shine! Remember, Christ is calling you; the Church needs you; the pope believes in you, and he expects great things of you!”*

-- Saint John Paul II

Reflection: *“I hope there will be noise. ... I want you to make yourselves heard in your dioceses. I want the noise to go out. I want the Church to go out onto the streets. I want us to resist everything worldly, everything static, everything comfortable, everything to do with clericalism, everything that might make us closed in on ourselves.”*

— Pope Francis (July 25, 2013, Meeting With Youth, Cathedral of San Sebastián, Rio de Janeiro)

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Aim II: Build Community

Focus Area for Discipleship:

Embrace immigrant Catholics and encourage their development as leaders in the Church.

Guidance: We should continue to encourage and celebrate the numerous cultural heritages that are part of our Roman Catholic Church in the United States while making sure that all cultures act in unison as part of the Body of Christ. A proactive attitude should be developed that focuses on communicating, listening, and engaging with Catholic immigrants living and worshipping within every parish. In the Diocese of Joliet, initial focus could be aimed at first- and second-generation Latino, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Polish Catholics.

Reflection: *“The presence of brothers and sisters from different cultures should be celebrated as a gift to the Church.”*

-- *“Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity,” a statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops.*

Reflection: *“As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. . . . Indeed, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are all the more necessary, and those parts of the body that we consider less honorable we surround with greater honor, and our less presentable parts are treated with greater propriety, whereas our more presentable parts do not need this. . . . But God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.”*

-- *1 Corinthians 12*

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Aim III: Embrace and Share the Word

Focus Area for Evangelization:

Seek, invite and welcome Catholics who have drifted away from the Church.

Guidance: Be more welcoming not only at Mass, but in all aspects of the Catholic faith and the parish community. Determine how all Catholic faithful can better intersect with people's daily lives and make changes to accomplish this. Find ways for Catholics to move forward and actually meet people at where they are in their spiritual lives.

Guidance: Evangelization can be carried out in many ways: Share your faith with others. Be an advocate for your Catholic faith. Encourage faith in others. Build relationships by being a sincere and attentive listener. We can also go beyond one-on-one evangelization by placing emphasis on using current media methods to evangelize from our local faith community.

Reflection: *"Let your door stand open to receive Him, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. Throw wide the gate of your heart, stand before the sun of the everlasting light..."*
-- St. Ambrose

Reflection: *"Let us not shrink from entering the public square to proclaim the person of Christ, to teach the values that flow from reason and faith, to uphold our right to go about our daily work in accord with our teachings and values."*
-- Archbishop William E. Lori

Aim IV: Celebrate Our Unity through the Sacraments

Focus Area for Evangelization:

Emphasize and outwardly proclaim the importance of the sacraments and all vocations.

Guidance: Focus on why the sacraments (baptism, Eucharist, reconciliation, confirmation, matrimony, holy orders, anointing of the sick) are important to our faith and to the Catholic Church. Look at actions that can spur spiritual growth in active Catholics and can encourage participation in uninvolved Catholics.

Guidance: Marriage and family are foundational institutions for our Catholic beliefs. They provide the means by which our faith is nourished and they are a conduit that helps us pass on our faith to future generations. We want to highlight the importance of married life to all Catholic faithful.

Reflection: *"The sacraments infuse holiness into the terrain of man's humanity: they penetrate the soul and body, the femininity and masculinity of the personal subject, with the power of holiness."*
-- Saint John Paul II

Reflection: *"It takes three to make love, not two: you, your spouse, and God. Without God people only succeed in bringing out the worst in one another. Lovers who have nothing else to do but love each other soon find there is nothing else. Without a central loyalty, life is unfinished."*
-- Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

Reflection: *"The world looks to the priest, because it looks to Jesus! No one can see Christ; but everyone sees the priest, and through him they wish to catch a glimpse of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur and dignity of the priest!"*
-- Saint John Paul II

Aim V: Serve Others, Especially Those in Need

Focus Area for Charity:

Go outside your church doors to care for people in need.

Guidance: To all Catholics, act in order to give a voice to the voiceless. Get out from inside the church walls in order to do this. Take heed of recent comments by Pope Francis: “It’s key that we Catholics, both clergy and laity, go out to meet the people. This is not only because our mission is to announce the Gospel, but because failing to do so harms us. . . . A Church that limits herself to administering parish work, that lives enclosed within a community, experiences what someone in prison does: physical and mental atrophy.” A Church that merely protects its small flock, that gives all or most of its attention to its faithful clientele, he believes, “is a Church that is sick.”

“We cannot fall into that trap . . . becoming too self-referential rather than missionary. It afflicts lay people worse, when they begin to believe that the fundamental service God is asking of them is to become greeters, lectors or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion at Church rather than to live and spread the faith in their families, in workplaces, in schools, in neighborhoods and beyond.”

Reflection: *“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*
-- *Philippians 2:1-11 RSV*

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Aim V: Serve Others, Especially Those in Need

Focus Area for Charity:

Advocate for and with people in need as the Gospel instructs you to do.

Guidance: Catholic social teaching in the Diocese of Joliet encompasses abundant areas for service: social justice, peace advocacy, restorative justice, anti-poverty, hunger relief, respect for life, fair-income advocacy, disaster recovery, faithful citizenship, environmental stewardship. Work on these issues from the parish community to the wider community, at the local, national or international levels. We must get out to the wider community, says Pope Francis: “You can’t speak of poverty without having experience with the poor. You can’t speak of poverty in the abstract. That doesn’t exist.”

Reflection: *“We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty.”*

-- *Blessed Mother Teresa*

Reflection: *“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”*

-- *Blessed Mother Teresa*

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Appendix 2

Ideas and Actions From the Parish Forums and Surveys

These lists of proposed actions were compiled from nearly 20 parish forums held throughout the Diocese of Joliet and from hundreds of survey responses of clergy, religious, and laity. We have organized them somewhat by subject matter, but for the most part the ideas are unedited as they are presented here.

These are meant as guidelines and for individual Catholics and ministry leaders to use as they determine how to accomplish the strategies laid out in this Framework for Pastoral Action. Some actions are focused at individual levels, some at parish levels, and others at the diocesan level.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Discipleship - Ideas and actions to cultivate lay discipleship.

Know Your Faith

- Educate all parish ministry members about the reasons for Catholic Church beliefs and traditions so they can be a source of knowledge in the community.
- Make sure parishioners are aware of Catholic resources available to them like Relevant Radio, *Word Among Us*, Vatican News, Wheaton Religious supply store/bookstore, etc.
- Introduce people to different styles of prayer (Ignatian, charismatic, Benedictine, etc.), and help them develop a mature relationship with God.
- Encourage programs/retreats/movements/initiatives, such as Cursillo or Christ Renews His Parish, and find leaders for these initiatives.
- Every parish should have a paid youth minister or at least a youth minister who is shared among smaller parishes so that teen parishioners can experience more about their faith.
- Encourage new people to participate in leadership roles instead of one person trying to "run everything" so that more people get involved in responsible leadership.
- Sponsor traditional Catholic activities such as adoration, Marian processions, benediction and First Friday devotions – all the special things that makes Roman Catholicism unique.
- Encourage parishes to have a trained adult faith formation leader.
- Emphasize catechesis of parents of children in religious education, so that entire families are formed in faith.
- Form and encourage small groups for sharing witness about where God is active in everyday life.
- Offer parish retreats and other opportunities for conversion of adults.

Know the Faithful

- Have a place for people to gather after Mass for hospitality/coffee and to meet and greet each other.
- Let all people in the surrounding community, not just parishioners, know what ministries are available at our churches.
- Offer ways that people can help within the parish and in the community without long-term obligations.
- Create "small bite" opportunities that aren't a big commitment for a full year. Invite people to try out a ministry for a few months to see what it's like.
- Highlight specific ministries in need of help each week with a few words during Mass from someone involved in that ministry.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Invite young adults, especially young married couples without children to participate in parish life activities and ministries.
- Create a volunteer position of Ministry Coordinator to maintain organization and communications between ministry leaders.
- Or use a Leadership Team approach to maintain lay ministry organization and facilitate communications between ministry leaders.
- Measure and keep track of how many people are involved in parish life and determine what actions are and are not working to increase the numbers.
- Create and maintain a database about parishioners and all external relations (businesses, skills, etc.). Use this data to reach out as pastoral needs come up.
- Identify leaders in the African-American community (in the parish and/or the local community) and engage them in sharing their talents and information about the strengths and needs of their community.
- Strengthen Catholic schools in African-American and Latino communities.
- Offer scholarships to encourage African-American students to attend Catholic schools.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Discipleship - Ideas and actions to inspire young adults.

Parish Leadership

- Encourage each parish to have a designated youth minister as well as a young adult minister. If needed, coordinate this with neighboring parishes.
- Recruit more lay volunteers to get involved in young adult ministry.
- Get parishioners involved in supporting youth mission trips
- Encourage pastors to get involved with the youth ministry program
- Build mentor teams of young adults supporting college students and college students supporting high school students in ministry efforts.

Communications

- Focus on homilies that get to the point quickly and teach life lessons.
- Communicate more on Facebook and on other social media
- Publicize the volunteering needs and projects in the community
- Obtain input from young adults by listening to them at every opportunity.
- Provide more education about the diocese and how it operates
- Use infographics to communicate with young adults about the diocese, pastoral issues, etc.
- Be more bilingual in parish communications
- Help young adults in their discernment as they consider marriage.
- Launch a marketing campaign in the seven-county region of the diocese that explains the benefits and core values of Catholic education and supports the diocese's pre-schools, elementary schools and high schools.

Social Connections

- Instead of "segregating" teens, blend their participation into the weekend Masses and adult ministries.
- Publicly celebrate service works by teens as nominated by parishioners.
- Develop social events and sports-related events for young adults
- Provide programs such as Theology on Tap all year long
- Make music during Mass more engaging
- Create Christian music concerts within the diocese

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Discipleship - Ideas and actions to embrace immigrant Catholics.

Actions for the entire parish

- Identify the different cultural groups within the parish community.
 - Invite representatives from these groups to parish council meetings.
 - Ask representative group members if they might like to include their Catholic cultural traditions into the parish and into the Mass.
 - Become familiar with how various cultures celebrate weddings and baptisms, as well as how they grieve for the departed.
- Use “Welcoming the Stranger” discussion materials from USCCB (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/>) to start cross-cultural discussion groups for adult formation within parishes.
- If you are able, informally assess the social economic status of parish members who are first-generation immigrants. Ask community members to become involved in creating a plan especially for those who may need assistance.
- Reflect on the membership of the parish council and the different ministries. Do the members of the parishes’ organizational structure represent all races, cultures, languages etc. of the parish community? What inclusive practices are needed to include multi-cultural group representation?
- In parishes where Masses are divided by language and offered in one-language only, consider designating one Mass a combination of the two languages. After such a Mass, create a tradition of hospitality by bringing participants together socially.
- Develop an annual international event to initiate a more direct cultural experience for all parishioners. Some parishes create a multi-cultural event around All Saints that incorporates songs such as Sa Yo Lamong, Malo Malo and Siahumba, or invite African drummers, Vietnamese dancers, Irish dancers and the like to perform and provide tables of ethnic food.
- Showcase parish cooks of different cultures with a “Taste of St. (Parish)” event. Plan a pot-luck dinner to try new foods and share stories. Ask people to bring dishes reflecting their cultural heritage: Irish, Polish, German, Mexican, Vietnamese, etc.
- Have English-speaking volunteers serve as the welcoming committee for other language Masses or Non-English speaking volunteers serve as the welcome committee for English language masses.
- Educate everyone about the importance of diversity in the Church and nation. Many wonderful speakers are available. Also check the USCCB website for documents to discuss.
- Schedule culture competency training for clergy, parish staff and leaders. Follow up with readings from and about the cultures found in your community (fiction or non-fiction).
- Offer short talks about modern saints from different cultures: Latin America, Japan, China, etc. Be sure to honor the saints celebrated by the various cultures in the parish – both at Mass and in religious education: for instance, Our Lady of Guadalupe is patroness of the Americas.
- Tables of Eight: In a multi-cultural parish, you can invite parishioners interested in building relationships with those of different cultural backgrounds and divide them into tables of eight mixed groups. If there are some members who do not speak English, make sure at least one person in each table is bilingual and willing to serve as interpreter. Then you can ask each group to choose a time and place (restaurant or home) to meet for dinner three times. Or you can

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

schedule three nights where all the groups meet for a pot-luck and conversation in the parish hall. Perhaps scheduling the dinners one month apart would be best. The organizers could prepare three conversation starters for each dinner. Sample questions are available online.

- Are there members in your parish community who might benefit from an English language instruction program? Contact local junior colleges or local community organization that could provide English language instruction on site.
- Address racism and discrimination immediately through prayer, dialogue, and education when they are evident in parish life. Do not allow these sins to fester. Practice reconciliation and forgiveness.
- Visit and worship at churches (Catholic or not) where members of other cultures are in the majority, such as Sacred Heart in Pembroke, St. Joseph in Addison, or Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Joliet. Then invite them to visit your church and celebrate Mass together. Do a choir swap! Involve youth ministry!
- Coordinate non-English Sunday evening Mass with other parishes
- Create a parish ministry directory to help new volunteers choose which ministry they want to join. Translate it. Tip: include a separate page with the contact information of ministry leaders. That is easier to update than redoing the whole directory.
- Encourage teens from various backgrounds to become lectors and Eucharistic ministers after confirmation. Then move them into other leadership roles as they mature and their talents become known.
- Put a welcome/peace sign in several languages near the door of the church.
- Publicize the diocesan initiative to increase Latino/Hispanic enrollment in Catholic schools.

Actions for Parishes with multi-lingual, first-generation members who are naturalized citizens, legal residents, DREAMERS, and those who are undocumented.

- Encourage young people from first-generation families to participate in parish life and service-focused activities.
- Provide adult formation events in other languages, such as talks, retreats and Bible study.
- Hold training courses at the parish in the language(s) of the parish community. Assess the needs of the first-generation parishioners and locate community resources to provide services
- Translate event invitations and bulletin/pulpit announcements to be sure everyone is included. Make it clear what language the event will be in.
- For first-generation Latino/Hispanic families publicize the diocesan initiative to increase Latino enrollment in Catholic schools. Contact the Catholic Education Foundation for information.
www.cefjoliet.org

Actions for the Diocesan Office of Hispanic and Ethnic Ministry

- Make a calendar of multicultural activities around the diocese. Share on the diocesan website.
- Designate a multi-cultural month and provide bulletin articles, links to share on Facebook, and tips on how to get to know people of different backgrounds.
- Provide training for parish facilitators of “Welcoming the Stranger” discussion groups.
- Provide cultural competency training for clergy, parish staff and leaders on a regular basis. Send trainers to USCCB cultural competency training.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Provide ESL classes free of charge in parishes. Provide conversational foreign languages to be taught for free.
- Partner with community colleges to offer English language classes in parish facilities.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Evangelization - Ideas and actions to welcome the lost and drifting.

Opening Our Arms and Welcoming

- Read the book “Rebuilt: Awakening the Faithful, Reaching the Lost, and Making Church Matter” by Father Michael White for ideas on how to reach out to Catholics in your community and welcome them back to the parish.
- Create a ministry that is available during weekend Masses and is specifically focused on personally welcoming new parishioners and answering questions of potential parishioners.
- Create a ministry that answers questions about the parish and about parish ministries. Get to know people in the community and find out about their needs, wants; skills and talents.
- Request that a priest or deacon is in the narthex before Mass to greet people.
- Suggest that some lectors and extraordinary ministers of communion greet and welcome people in the narthex before Mass.
- Develop "Know Your Parish" weekends where representatives from all parish ministries are present to welcome new parishioners and answer questions. Offer light snacks to encourage old and new parishioners to attend.
- Proactively reach out to parish members who are experiencing serious marital issues or who are recovering from a divorce.
- Provide education about the Church’s viewpoint about divorce and annulment.
- Proactively reach out to the recently widowed.
- Have “welcome breakfasts” for new parishioners at least once a month.
- Be actively part of community events with booths, tables, displays and people who increase awareness of the presence of the parish.
- Be actively involved in non-denominational social outreach events to increase awareness of the parish.
- Place small business-card size ads once a month in local papers. Feature time of services and add a one-line thought-provoking message.
- Allow for funeral lunches at church facilities.
- Have established parishioners support new parishioners as a type of adopt-a-parishioner or mentoring initiative.
- Provide information about Catholic “guidelines” on a card for non-Catholic visitors to Mass.
- Provide home blessings for all new parishioners.
- Create an email list of parishioners and let them know about events, special services.
- Provide greeters at all church events and not just a Mass. Target unfamiliar faces and be inviting and welcoming.
- Install coat racks or invest in portable racks to use at church events and at Masses.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- A welcome ministry could visit homes of new parishioners and present them with a small gift and answer any questions.
- Develop a bulletin board in the narthex that shows the names and email addresses of ministry leaders or publish this regularly in the weekly bulletin.
- Provide information about mobile apps, such as the “We Parent More” app to young families.
- Promote our Catholic colleges in our diocese.
- Develop some type of food pantry at all of our churches.

A Stronger Voice through Parish Cooperation

- Cluster together ministries in rural areas or develop “twin” parishes in cities so that the resources of two or more parishes can be combined to accomplish a stronger social outreach.
- Tie a larger, more active parish to a smaller less active parish within the diocese (“adopt a parish”) that needs resources and advice.
- Two or three parishes could share a website.
- Develop parish pods within the deaneries to get numbers needed for larger events and missions.
- Use parish pods for singles’ groups, couples’ groups, seniors’ groups
- Identify a pastoral mission that three or four parishes can accomplish together. (Youth ministries partner on mission trips but other outreach ministries tend not to partner with each other.)
- Share Christ Renews His Parish, cell groups, etc., among multiple parishes
- Create a parish partner Mass that happens annually, followed by a get-together party.
- Share staff between parishes and encourage staff to create shared events.
- Share bulletins between two parishes to save on resources.
- Have pastors switch parishes for one Sunday to help build a relationship.
- Switch music ministries for one Sunday with a sister parish.

A Stronger Voice through Diocesan Cooperation

- A diocesan “Geek Squad” should travel around to help parishes develop their websites.
- Gather together information on outreach efforts and faith strengthening efforts by each parish and distribute it to all churches within the deaneries. Also place this information on the diocesan website.
- Every parish should celebrate the Feast Day of St. Francis Xavier – the patron saint of our diocese.
- Every parish bulletin needs to have a consistent spot for diocesan news/events.
- Create a diocesan speaker’s bureau with speakers willing to travel to parishes to talk about pastoral issues, actions, and stewardship.
- Provide a map of the diocese to every parish showing every church, high school, and university.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Evangelization - Ideas and actions to proclaim the Sacraments.

For Married Couples

- The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website on marriage offers a great deal of information. <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/index.cfm>
- Focus on three stages of married life – newly married and without children, families with young children, and beyond.
- Provide religious related activities for couples married long term, not just for newlyweds
 - Post-Cana retreats
 - Reunion for married couples who were married in 2013, 2014, etc. (the pre-Cana groups)
- Provide sponsors for newly married couples.
- Introduce the diocesan program, “50 ways to Strengthen Marriages at Your Parish” into your parish.
- Develop referral “notebook” that lists trusted marriage and family counselors, locations of 12-step groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, pertinent Catholic Charities' services and phone numbers, and other sources of assistance for families in need.
- Take advantage of groups such as Catholic Engaged Encounter, Retrouvaille for troubled marriages, Joyful Again! for the widowed, and Marriage Encounter, all supported by the Office of Family Ministry.
- The Pontifical Council for the Family is planning the World Meeting of Families for September 22 - 27, 2015, in Philadelphia, PA. The theme is "Love Is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive." Plan a parish version or take a busload to Philadelphia!
- Invite couples who are celebrating 25 years or 50 years – or more – in terms of their wedding anniversaries to the annual diocesan wedding anniversary Mass.
- Offer special blessings during weekend Masses for the newly engaged and recently married.
- Shift the focus of marriage prep and baptism prep from logistics to evangelization.
- Host motivational speakers on marriage enrichment.
- Promote the USCCB website for married couples, which features relevant articles on quieting children during Mass, planning your wedding, and dealing with serious issues, such as infidelity: <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/> In Spanish the website is <http://www.portumatrimonio.org/>
- Host courses/seminars/talks on skills all couples need, such as conflict management and communication, as well as subjects that adversely affect a married life, such as sickness, dealing with aging parents, financial issues.
- Provide opportunities for married couples to meet:
 - Those married 5-10 years, 10-15 years, less than 5 years, etc. (can cluster with other neighboring parishes)
 - After Mass groups for young couples
 - Meetings for moms
 - Small groups to meet in houses for fellowship, prayer, Bible study
 - 10 Great Dates
 - Married couple “get together” to socialize, share tips, life experiences, ups and downs, mini retreats, etc.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Proclaim “prayers of the faithful” petitions for vocations and marriage
- Display photos of newly married couples and couples celebrating landmark anniversaries in a prominent area in the church
- Create a ministry for widowed, divorced Catholics.
- Host financial planning seminars for young married couples.
- Celebrate and renew marriage vows for couples married 25 years and more.
- Use the marriage blog <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/> for bulletin articles.

Family Life

- Provide parents with tangible tools and resources to help children learn the faith and supplement/support formal religious education, such as blessings before bed or going out, prayers at meals, Mass preparation, how to read the Bible with your children, etc.
- Provide baptism preparation that focuses on the faith journey and the potential for conversion of the parents.
- Connect with families of recently baptized children on a regular basis.
- Increase family programs, such as Family Fun Nights.
- Provide child care at events.
- Encourage parents to organize and petition local sports associations to eliminate Sunday morning sports and to place Sunday Mass above sports in its priorities.
- Consider developing a diocesan policy regarding family attendance at Mass – welcoming children and providing child care during Mass.
- Present adult witnesses to children regarding the transforming power of the sacraments.
- Encourage children to share their experiences with the sacraments.
- Encourage "Prayer Partners" with confirmation teens. Pray for them, send them cards of support throughout the year, bake snacks and goodies for them during their retreat weekend, and attend the confirmation Mass.
- Integrate baptisms into the Sunday Mass at least four times a year.
- Add photos of baptisms, communion, confirmation, and weddings in church bulletins and display
- Photos near the worship space.
- Publicize communion and confirmation ceremonies in local papers
- Invite all parishioners to communion and confirmation

Prayer

- Increase your devotion to the Eucharist. Open a Eucharistic Adoration chapel if your parish doesn't already have one. Sign up people to come pray for an hour a week. Children also benefit from time in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Create an initiative that focuses on prayer and celebrating marriage – use prayers, prayer cards; identify a month to celebrate marriages
- Provide daily devotions/scripture of the day. Offer parishioners sample issues of the *Word Among Us* (www.wau.org) or other daily meditation magazines during Lent or Advent. Spanish versions are also available.
- Encourage families to pray together. Intercede for and with one another
- Offer a workshop on different styles of prayer or publicize workshops offered by local retreat centers, such as Mayslake, Carmelite Center, etc. Publicize Taize prayer services in your area.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Add a prayer for vocations at the end of Sunday Mass. Keep the prayer going all week by sending a traveling statue home with a different family each week to pray for vocations.

Education

- Participate in the Parish Book Program offered by DynamicCatholic.com.
- Show and discuss the Catholicism videos created by Father Robert Barron (available from www.CatholicismSeries.com), especially during religious education classes, which may be a convenient time for parents.
- Provide instruction about the Church's Natural Family Planning as part of the pre-Cana process.
- Introduce small faith-sharing groups as a community/parish learning experience.
- Encourage attendance at conferences for married couples. Be sure to involve husbands.
- Host theology discussions for young adults modeled after Theology On Tap. Consult the diocesan director of Young Adult and Campus Ministry for suggestions and support.
- Help teens and young adults prepare for marriage by offering relationship workshops which equip them for healthy relationships and choosing a suitable spouse.
- Explain the history and meaning of sacraments in homilies.
- Educate all parishioners about the parts of the Mass. Consider hosting a teaching Mass where the priest explains the meaning of each prayer and item he uses.
- Highlight the sacrament of the sick at a Sunday Mass.
- Educate involved parishioners about sacraments so they can discuss with uninvolved parishioners.
- Divorce is one of the reasons many people leave the Church, believing they are excommunicated immediately. A well-crafted homily explaining the Church's teachings on divorce and annulment could prevent much misunderstanding. Check out www.foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage/church-teachings/divorce/
- Host speakers to educate the parish about the sacraments.
- Conduct brief sacrament classes for parents of children making communion and confirmation.
- Develop a display showcasing the sacraments during certain times of the year and have pamphlets available about the sacraments.
- Encourage parishes to create parish libraries and provide books about the sacraments in each library.
- For every sacrament, create a parish ritual or educational event around it to include the parish members, such as prayer cards for Confirmandi.
- Develop a parish mission on the sacraments that connects with people on all levels and all ages.
- Develop a follow-up ministry with new married couples and couples baptizing children.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Charity - Ideas and actions to care and advocate for people in need.

General Actions

- Offer short-term social mission activities (1 or 2 days instead of a year-long commitment) to entice busy parish members.
- Develop and offer family missions where the entire family can serve together.
- Create a ministry in cooperation with other local churches, non-profits and government which helps the needy with practical skills, such as budgeting and job hunting, instead of just donating money and goods.
- Offer frequent instruction about the Church's social doctrine for adults and youth. Invite speakers from the diocesan Office of Human Dignity. Information on all social justice issues, such as poverty, the environment, assisted suicide and restorative justice, is available from <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/index.cfm>
- Create a social justice ministry in the parish, which prepares people spiritually and forms them in Church social teachings before sending them out to serve the community, and advocate for those in need.
- When new families register in the parish, build a relationship with them and find out what type of community service interests them. Focus on getting them involved.
- Use the Sunday homilies to stir the congregation to action in the community. Provide stories of people in need in the bulletin. Afterwards, include success stories and photos in the bulletin.
- Prior to elections, educate parishioners on Catholic social teachings and their obligation to participate in the political process. Faithful citizenship materials are available at <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/index.cfm>.
- The Cursillo movement and Christ Renews His Parish may help motivate people to serve others.
- Prepare young people to serve the community. Use their talents and energy to benefit the poor and the elderly. Long-term projects should give them the opportunity to build relationships with the people they serve and lead to spiritual growth.
- Be more united in all aspects. Work closely with nearby churches, Catholic Charities, and the diocese to reach the needy in your area.
- Ask underserved groups in your parish and community, such as those caring for elderly parents, African American families, and immigrants, to share information about the needs of their group. Develop a prioritized plan to address those needs. Ask them to recruit volunteers to help carry it out in partnership with other parishioners.
- Open the doors of your parish and host a weekly meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Alateen, Narcotics Anonymous or NAMI (for the mentally ill).
- Partner with a parish in a low-income area. Develop personal relationships between parishioners and ask them about the needs of families in their area. Match families from one parish to families from the other parish to meet those needs on a long-term basis.
- Publicize the parish's tuition assistance plan for the religious education program and sacramental preparation so that all children will attend classes. Families are often reluctant to ask for help.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Help people seeking employment by forming a job club or referring them to another church's job club. A list is available on the diocesan website. Job clubs offer moral support as well as networking and resume reviews. Be sure to reach out to recent graduates.
- Call the regional food bank to find out if there are enough food pantries in your area. If not, start one. The Northern Illinois Food Bank serves a large part of the Joliet diocese.
- The elderly and disabled often need someone to talk with to make sure they are eating properly or remind them of their doctor appointments. Develop a phone friend program to supplement your parish's ministry to the homebound and those in nursing homes.
- As a parish, get involved with PADS or a transitional housing group or a soup kitchen. Take turns cooking and serving food. Not only will you help people but the volunteer teams involved will also form community.
- Reach out to single parents in your community, perhaps through the local school. They often have many needs, such as car repairs and oil changes, babysitting, coats and shoes. Invite them to pray with you – and to come to Mass too!
- Provide support for all families such as educational programs about parenting and marriage, or counseling for couples, single mothers, and teens. Use the bulletin to publicize local resources for families in English and other languages represented in the parish. Building stronger families will help prevent substance abuse and violence.
- Start a support group of parents of children with special needs or adults caring for aging parents.
- Teach ministry volunteers and parish staff how to be more effective when serving the mentally ill. Work with the National Alliance on Mental Health and the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities. In addition the Interfaith Mental Health Coalition offers training for churches in English and Spanish. Check out <http://interfaithmhc.org>
- Many prisons and county jails have volunteer programs for teaching Bible study or English lessons, helping prisoners connect with their children, or writing encouraging letters. Some even allow volunteer groups to conduct retreats and evangelize inmates.
- Educate parishioners about the tenets of our social justice teachings.
- Create a parish health clinic and also recruit parishioners in the medical or health care field to provide pro-bono services in the parish community or deanery.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Appendix 3

The Planning Process and a Road Map

Discipleship Evangelization Charity

The Planning Process

(A brief explanation of the process used and the actions taken by the diocese to develop this plan.)

In October 2011, Bishop R. Daniel Conlon reconvened the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) and discussed a fresh direction and focus for the group -- the development of a Framework for Pastoral Action for the Diocese of Joliet.

The bishop requested that this plan center on the pastoral and ministerial needs of Catholics throughout the Diocese of Joliet and not be a strategic document. It would not, for instance, suggest what schools need to be opened or what facilities need improvements. The scope of the framework includes guidelines for parishioners and the diocese, and it does not limit how parishes can accomplish the pastoral goals. It is also our hope that the framework should be a living instrument rather than a report to sit on a shelf in a bookcase.

In February 2012, 50 designated representatives from the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Presbyteral Council, the diocesan Curia, other diocesan leaders, and Bishop Conlon met at the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center, in Romeoville, with a planning specialist to discuss a process for building a plan. Facilitator Nancy Wisdo introduced the “E.A.S.Y.” method to the group, an acronym for Expectations, Assumptions, Stakeholders, and Yardsticks. According to Wisdo, the keys in the planning process are to set expectations, identify assumptions about our diocese and the stakeholders, and finally, establish yardsticks to measure the plan’s progress. Specifically, the group concentrated on these questions:

Expectations – What do you want to accomplish; who will be involved; how will participants be engaged?

Assumptions – What are the current conditions (economic, demographic and other)? How will they impact the plan (both plusses and minuses)? What are key pastoral issues and how will they affect a strategic plan?

Stakeholders – Besides the DPC members, what other stakeholders are key to the process and how can they be energized? Determine their role in the process. Identify which stakeholders will most likely embrace the process and who may present a challenge.

Yardsticks: What does success look like and how can it be measured objectively? How do we know we have accomplished what we set out to do?

This group identified these pastoral topics of importance:

- Better understand our diocesan culture – especially the increasing secularization in our culture.
- Deal with and meet the pastoral challenges of the economic downturn.
- Address the diminishing number of sacraments being celebrated.
- Determine how to engage and welcome back those who left the Church.
- Improve communication between the diocese and parishes, between the parishes, and between agencies and parishes.
- Create a better understanding of the diocese by parishioners.
- Foster more collaboration and less of a sense of “territorial” thinking.
- Create greater efficiency and less duplicating of resources.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

The next step was creation of a Framework for Pastoral Action Committee. Eight members attended the first meeting, organized by Tony Molinaro, the Diocesan Pastoral Council representative.

The Framework for Pastoral Action Planning Committee was made up of laity and clergy from across the Diocese of Joliet. It included:

James Broline, Notre Dame, Clarendon Hills
Alison Chandler, St. Joseph, Downers Grove
Greg Cummins, Immaculate Conception, Braidwood
Dennis Donnellan, St. Patrick, Yorkville
Barbara Linek, St. Dominic, Bolingbrook
* Tony Molinaro, Corpus Christi, Carol Stream (team leader)
Sharon Pierscionek, Christ the King, Lombard
Jeff Werner, St. Pius X, Lombard
Rev. Steven Bondi, St. Rose, Wilmington
Rev. Albert Heidecke, St. Joseph, Manteno
Carlos Briceno, editor, *Christ is our Hope* magazine
Mark Janus, director, Office of Parish Finance
Alex Rechenmacher, executive assistant to Bishop Conlon
Madonna Turner, assistant superintendent of Catholic Schools
Jurate Harris, St. Bernard, Homer Glen

During the spring and summer of 2012, the committee laid out a proposed structure for the Framework for Pastoral Action. The committee continued to meet throughout 2013 and 2014.

The committee determined that the following topics would be included in the plan:

Pastoral Mission - A brief mission statement based on pastoral topics.

The Planning Process - A brief explanation of the process used and the actions taken by the diocese and the DPC to develop this plan.

Pastoral Issues - A narrative explaining the big issues facing our diocese and our Catholic communities. What is the overall situation? Talk about what is good and address our challenges.

Pastoral Priorities - What are the big pastoral issues we want to focus on? Faith education? Liturgy? Sacraments? Parish connections? The committee looked at the lists developed at prior DPC meetings, at discovery from research and surveys, and at the changing makeup of the Diocese of Joliet in order to create the priorities.

Strategies and Actions - This would be the "core" of the framework. Create and link strategies to the priorities, then determine types of actions to be linked to each strategy.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Framework Engagement from Pastors and Parish Leadership - How will we get "buy-in" for the Framework for Pastoral Action by all the clergy and by the lay leadership in the parishes? What steps need to be taken for pastor/parish engagement and for welcoming and tracking comments as the planning process moves forward?

Dissemination of the Framework - How will the framework be distributed and explained to diocesan personnel, the parishioners and the schools?

Periodic Review of Actions - After the framework was approved, how will the progress of the framework be reviewed and renewed for years forward? The framework includes a feedback component between parishioners, parish leaders and the Diocese of Joliet. The process itself will be periodically reviewed by the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

A Road Map For Planning

Phase 1 – Development

Phase 2 – Participation and Input

Phase 3 – Refinement and Pre-Launch

Phase 4 – Presentation and Communication

Phase 5 - Implementation

PHASE 1 - DEVELOPMENT

Feb. 2012	Diocesan leadership lays groundwork and develops pastoral topics
April-Dec. 2012	Planning team develops structure for a plan, researches pastoral and demographic issues, refines pastoral topics into initial goals and strategies.
Jan. 2013	Prayer and reflection gathering with Bishop Conlon
Feb.-May 2013	Planning team discusses and prioritizes strategies. Diocesan leadership prioritizes strategies via online survey. Planning team uses survey results to focus strategies.
Summer 2013	Planning team develops a pastoral vision based on preferred strategies. Pastoral vision is refined via online survey to diocesan leadership. Pastoral vision is refined in meetings with key laity groups. Develop presentation on pastoral vision based on goals and strategies.

PHASE 2 - PARTICIPATION AND INPUT

July-Dec. 2013	(concurrent actions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present pastoral vision to pastors and other priests, discuss possible actions by parishes • Discuss “parish forum” concepts and goals with Diocesan Pastoral Council. DPC members manage and schedule 1st set of forum sessions at selected parishes and solicit action item input regarding pastoral strategies at forum sessions. • Develop interactive web page for plan, publicize web pages and request comments/input.
Jan.-March 2014	Planning team refines pastoral vision and develops action items for plan from all the input gathered.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Jan.-March 2014 DPC members participate in clergy's deanery meetings to discuss proposed strategies and to receive more input on possible action items.

PHASE 3 - REFINEMENT AND PRE-LAUNCH

April-June 2014 Request input and comments from the bishop and from members of the diocesan Curia.

May-Oct. 2014 Develop brief articles for publication in *Christ is our Hope* magazine that explain different sections of the framework

Nov. 2014 Translate Pastoral Plan and all collateral materials into Spanish.

PHASE 4 - PRESENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Nov. 2014 Print excerpts of the framework in a special issue of *Christ is our Hope* magazine so that it can be distributed to every household in the diocese.

Nov. 2014 Distribute collateral materials, such as prayer cards, parishioner pins, and banners throughout churches and households in the diocese.

Nov. 2014 Implement communications plan which involves the diocesan assembly, the DPC web page, letters from the bishop, articles for parish bulletins, taped messages for Masses, and press releases.

PHASE 5 - IMPLEMENTATION

2015 See section on "Reviewing Progress Made by the Diocese and by Parishes" for implementation details.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Appendix 4

A Snapshot of Our Catholic Faith

Diocesan and National Trends

The Diocese of Joliet and the Catholic Church in the United States are facing significant issues that are impacting our ability to live our faith, share the Word, and build a Christian community. According to research conducted by the Pew Research Center and cited below, our diocese is typical of national religious trends.

Faith & Commitment

Participation:

- Mass attendance is declining in most parishes within the diocese.
- In one out of four churches in our diocese, weekend Mass is attended by less than 20 percent of all registered parishioners.
- In two out of three churches in our diocese, weekend Mass is attended by less than 33 percent of all registered parishioners.
- As a consequence of declining attendance, financial support of many parishes within the diocese is decreasing.
- More pastoral and communication efforts need to be accomplished within the diocese while using decreased budgets.
- Fewer Catholics are participating in sacraments and many view the sacraments as a “service” rather than a rite.

Constant Movement:

- There is constant movement in the American religious “marketplace.”
- Every major religious group is simultaneously gaining new members AND losing its longtime faithful.
- Roughly half of the U.S. population has changed religion at some point in life.
- Catholicism has experienced the greatest net loss of members as a result of affiliation changes. But the impact of immigration from Latin America to the U.S. has offset these losses for now.
- Catholics recruit fewer new members compared to other Christian religions.

Faith and Relationships:

- 61% of Catholics attend Sunday Mass at least once a month. This is a lower rate than Mormons and Evangelicals, but a higher rate than Orthodox and mainline Protestants.
- Of people who consider themselves to be Catholic, 20% are highly-committed Catholics, 65% have a medium commitment, and 15% have low commitment.
- Catholic laity expect to be leaders and peers, not followers of the staff in their parish.

Teens & Young Adults

Commitment:

- Changes in religious identity begin early in life. Most people who leave Catholicism do so by age 23.
- Many fallen-away Catholics say they left because they lost their belief in God and in Catholic religious teachings.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

- Religious Education classes and youth group participation have had no significant effect on keeping Catholics within the Church, possibly because of a lack of resources and funding from parishes and dioceses.
- Attending a Catholic high school has had a slight positive effect on keeping Catholics within the Church.
- Religious illiteracy (or ignorance) is highest among pre-Vatican II Catholics and not among young adults.
- Older Catholics have a harder time explaining their faith than younger Catholics.

Latino Faithful

Growing Share:

- The Latino share within the Catholic Church will continue to increase.
- Currently, Latinos account for 45% of all Catholics nationwide ages 18 to 29.

Renewalist and Spirit-Filled:

- Latino-oriented worship is not simply a product of immigration or language; it involves a broader and more lasting form of ethnic identification.
- More than half of all Latino Catholics (54%) identify themselves as “charismatics,” compared to about 13% of non-Latino Catholics who identify themselves as “charismatic.”
- Many Latino Catholics have witnessed or experienced spirit-filled or renewalist movements, such as divine healing and direct revelations from God. (Gifts of the Spirit)
- 1 in 3 Latino Catholics participate in Spirit-centered prayer groups.

See Appendix 5 for additional information about Diocese demographics.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Appendix 5

Diocesan and Regional Demographics

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Economic and Racial Demographics of the 7-County Region

(This narrative looks at the demographic composition of the counties that make up our diocese and briefly touches on the issues affecting our pastoral efforts.)

The Catholic Diocese of Joliet encompasses seven Chicago-area counties which are culturally, economically, and statistically diverse. The diocese includes DuPage County, Ford County, Grundy County, Iroquois County, Kankakee County, Kendall County, and Will County. Comparisons between the counties range widely in terms of geographic size, total population, population growth, population density, median household income, and poverty levels. These statistics are shown below:

	Median Household Income	Indiv. Under Pov. Line	Total Pop.	People per Sq. Mile	Pop. Growth (2000 v. 2010)
DuPage County	\$77,000	3%	917,000	2,700	+1%
Kendall County	\$65,000	3%	115,000	170	+110%
Will County	\$62,000	5%	678,000	600	+35%
Grundy County	\$52,000	5%	50,000	89	+33%
Kankakee County	\$42,000	11%	113,000	153	+9%
Ford County	\$38,000	7%	14,000	29	-1%
Iroquois County	\$38,000	9%	30,000	28	-5%

The statistics above represent the entire population within the counties, not just Catholics. We are assuming that the Catholic population mirrors the general residents in terms of economics and demographics.

Based on the 2010 census data, the seven counties that comprise the Joliet diocese grew by 16.3 percent since 2000, representing an increase of 268,803 people. Ford and Iroquois counties declined in population, but all others saw growth, with Will County leading the way with an increase of more than 200,000.

The general population within the boundaries of the diocese is very concentrated in two counties. More than 80 percent of the population lives in DuPage and Will counties. There also is a large disparity in suburban population density vs. rural population density. With 2,700 people per square mile, DuPage County is 1,000 times denser than Ford and Iroquois Counties. Population growth also reflects two opposite ends of a spectrum. During the past 10 years, Ford and Iroquois counties have lost residents, and the population within DuPage has held steady. During this same time period, Kendall County has been the fastest-growing county in the nation.

In terms of economic matters, there is a large disparity in household income among the seven counties within the Diocese. DuPage County is one of the wealthiest counties in the nation, while other areas within the diocesan boundaries have a median household income that is half of the income in DuPage.

	Discipleship	Evangelization			Charity
	Total Pop.	Euro. Ethnic Pop.	Latino Pop.	Afr.-Amer. Pop.	Asian-Pac. Pop.
DuPage County	917,000	72%	13%	5%	10%
Kendall County	115,000	92%	7%	1%	---
Will County	678,000	82%	8%	10%	---
Grundy County	50,000	96%	4%	---	---
Kankakee County	113,000	80%	5%	15%	---
Ford County	14,000	99%	1%	---	---
Iroquois County	30,000	95%	4%	1%	---
	----- 1,917,000				

As for the racial and ethnic make-up of the Diocese, some areas have expanding racial and ethnic diversity, specifically in DuPage, Will, and Kankakee Counties. Within the general population, 10 percent are Latino, 7 percent are African-American, and about 5 percent have an Asian-Pacific background. The Catholic population may be different and may include a higher percentage of Latinos and a lower percentage of African-Americans. DuPage County is the most diverse in terms of race and ethnicity.

In addition, all counties experienced growth in all ethnic categories with the exception of Ford and Iroquois. Latino and African-American populations grew the greatest in Will County at 113,500 and 62,000 respectively. The Asian population grew the greatest in DuPage County followed closely by Will.

Along with the population expansion several other related categories grew as well. Poverty levels rose 7.5 percent in Kankakee County to a total level of 16.1 percent and single mother poverty levels increased to 45.3 percent. Kendall County had the smallest increase -- up just 1.9 percent to a level of 3.9 percent. However, average household income rose in the seven-county area, reflecting a growing disparity between haves and have-nots. Average household income in Kendall County grew the most -- more than \$19,000 to an average of \$83,835 and the lowest increase was in Kankakee County with an 8,900 rise to \$50,484.

Median age moved very little in each of the counties, with Kendall having the lowest average age at 32.9 years and Iroquois having the oldest age at 43.4. All counties experienced a decline in the percentage of married households with a range from 52.8 percent married households in Ford County to a high of 65.8 percent in Kendall.

The seven counties have a combined population of about 1.92 million and Catholics total about 665,000. This is about 35 percent of the total seven-county population. In all of Illinois, Catholics make up about 30 percent of the total population, so our diocesan area has a slightly higher share of Catholic faithful.

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

Resources:

Survey of U.S. Catholics, The National Catholic Reporter. (2005).

Attitudes of Catholics Highly Committed to the Church, by Dean R. Hoge. The National Catholic Reporter. (2005).

Challenging Assumptions About Young Catholics, by James D. Davidson. The National Catholic Reporter. (2005).

Jesus Was a Young Adult, by Mary Jansen. Young Adult Catechesis. (2006).

Turning On the Light, by Paul Jarzembowski. Young Adult Catechesis. (2006).

Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion, The Pew Hispanic Center. (2007).

U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, The Pew Forum. (2008).

In America's Religious Marketplace, the Real Catholic Problem is New Sales, by John L. Allen Jr. The National Catholic Reporter. (2011).

Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization. U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2012).

Are Catholics Super-Friends? The Problem with Parish Life, by Steven D. Greydanus. The National Catholic Register. (2012).

100 Days of Francis, John Carr. America magazine. (2013).

Other Resource Documents:

Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis,
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops,
<http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1244>

Forming Intentional Disciples, Sherry A. Weddell,
<https://www.osv.com/Shop/Product?ProductCode=T1286>

Discipleship

Evangelization

Charity

*And he said to them,
“Go into all the world and proclaim the good news
to the whole creation.”*

Mark 16:15

