

Memo

Date: May 11, 2015
To: Pastors
Cc: Parochial Vicars and Parish/Mission Secretaries
From: Peter Faletti, Director of Planning and Research
Re: Pastoral Plan – Parish/Mission Assessment Tool

In his pastoral plan statement, Archbishop Gregory asked each parish and mission to begin implementing the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan with the following three steps:

- Sharing the pastoral vision with all members of their parish or mission.
- Forming a parish/mission team to prioritize the recommendations for each issue for their specific faith community.
- Creating implementation teams to review current practices, develop innovative new approaches, and share the results of their efforts with other parishes and missions.

Many parishes and missions are asking “how do we get started”? An easy way to start is to use the attached Parish/Mission Assessment Tool to establish a beginning benchmark for each recommendation and expectation included in the pastoral plan. The cover sheet to the assessment tool clearly explains how parishes and missions can use the assessment tool not only to create these initial benchmarks but also to measure their progress throughout the five year planning period.

If you need assistance in developing your initial pastoral plan benchmarks, please contact Jenny Miles either by email at jmiles@archatl.com or by telephone at 404-920-7852.

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Where do we start?

After sharing the pastoral plan with parishioners, many parishes/missions have asked: “Where do we start?” The best starting point would be to determine where the parish/mission stands relative to each of the recommendations and expectations that are included in the pastoral plan. *Have we done anything at all, just starting out, need to do more work or are we doing this well?* An easy way for a parish or mission to establish a beginning benchmark would be to use the attached Parish/Mission Assessment Tool. Best of all, this same assessment tool can be used again to measure the parish’s/mission’s forward progress every 6 or 12 months.

How can we use the assessment tool?

- Determine how you want to distribute the assessment tool to your parishioners:
 - Paper form that is included in your weekly bulletin or handed out at your Masses
 - An electronic document (such as a Word document or Excel spreadsheet) that can be downloaded from your parish/mission website and then returned via email
 - An online survey that incorporates the contents of the assessment tool. To do this, the parish will need access to a survey tool such as Survey Monkey.
- Determine how many people will complete the assessment tool.
 - Small group such as a selected group of parish/mission leaders
 - All members of key parish/mission councils, committees or ministries
 - All parishioners through an open survey
- *Note: the more completed forms you receive, the more accurate your benchmarks will be.*
- How to complete the assessment tool:
 - Parishioners enter their rating for each statement on the line provided using this scale:

Indicate how well our parish/mission is addressing each of the statements below on a scale of 1 – 4.

1 = Not at All 2 = Just Beginning 3 = Needs Work 4 = Highly Effective

- At the end of each section, parishioners add up their ratings for all of the statements in the section and enter the total in the box.
- Gather the completed forms from your parishioners.

How do we create our benchmarks?

To create a benchmark for each individual statement and for each section, you will need to add up the ratings from all of the collected forms for that line item and then compute an overall average score. There are several ways to do this depending on the type of form you are using:

- Paper form – you will need to enter the ratings from each collected form into an Excel spreadsheet so that you can compute an accurate average. You can include the list of the statements/section totals in the far left column of the spreadsheet. Then you can enter the ratings from each form into a separate column. When all of the forms are entered, an average can be computed for each row in the spreadsheet to create your benchmarks.
- Electronic document – you will need to enter the ratings from each collected form into an Excel spreadsheet so that you can compute an accurate average. You can include the list the statements/section totals in the far left column of the spreadsheet. Then you can copy and paste the ratings from each form into a separate column. When all of the forms are entered, an average can be computed for each row in the spreadsheet to create your benchmarks.
- Online Survey– the survey tool should be able to provide the calculated average/benchmark for each line item and as well as provide other useful reports.

When should we do this?

Parishes and missions are urged to create their initial benchmarks for the pastoral plan as soon as possible and to reassess their progress on the total plan at least once a year. Additional assessments on one or more sections of the plan could be made as needed to measure the impact of specific parish or mission initiatives.

Where can I get help?

If you need assistance in developing your initial pastoral plan benchmarks, please contact Jenny Miles either by email at jmiles@archatl.com or by telephone at 404-920-7852.

Parish/Mission Assessment Tool

Indicate how well our parish/mission is addressing each of the statements below on a scale of 1 – 4.

1 = Not at All 2 = Just Beginning 3 = Needs Work 4 = Highly Effective

1. Knowing Our Faith

Rating

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1.1 | We have a family formation model that recognizes the diversity of family units today and that emphasizes the head of the family’s role in faith formation. | _____ |
| 1.2 | We prioritize adult catechesis. | _____ |
| 1.3 | We offer enough opportunities to participate in parish/mission life as a family – service days, spiritual activities, social events that are accessible, relevant, and of the highest quality. | _____ |
| 1.4 | Our parish/mission is the center for support of the family through special service opportunities, liturgies, spiritual exercises and family-oriented social events. | _____ |
| 1.5 | We have (with support from the Chancery, parishes and missions) learning options that may be accessed any place, any day, at any time! | _____ |
| 1.6 | Our catechetical offerings help those who are making their first steps into the process as well as those who have been on the journey all their lives. | _____ |

Total Score for Knowing Our Faith

2. Living Our Faith

Rating

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 2.1 | We identify and provide educational opportunities in our parish/mission that promote understanding the “why” behind the Church’s teachings. | _____ |
| 2.2 | Our parish/mission prioritizes charity and service as the epitome of living out the faith. | _____ |
| 2.3 | Our parish/mission encourages everyone to have a deeper personal prayer life. | _____ |
| 2.4 | We build a strong sense of unity within the parish/mission and increase personal connection to the parish/mission. | _____ |
| 2.5 | Our parish/mission is a beacon of faith, living out the Gospel by reaching out in love to all who are in need, all who live on the margins of society, all who live in fear and loneliness. | _____ |
| 2.6 | We identify and support outreach programs in our community and share the successes of those programs so that they may be expanded throughout our local Church. | _____ |
| 2.7 | Our parish/mission is the hub for a life of faith. | _____ |
| 2.8 | We create opportunities that support what is happening in the lives of individuals and families who are part of our faith community. | _____ |
| 2.9 | We insure that our parish/mission is welcoming to all of God’s people. | _____ |

Total Score for Living Our Faith



Parish/Mission Assessment Tool

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3. Spreading/Keeping Our Faith

Rating

- 3.1 Our parish/mission promotes and provides infrastructure for small faith communities to keep people connected to the Church. _____
- 3.2 We use new technology and social media to keep the Church up to date and present in the lives of our parishioners. _____
- 3.3 We foster whole family programs to keep parishioners centered on the parish/mission. _____
- 3.4 We are developing formal outreach programs for groups who feel disenfranchised by the Church. _____
- 3.5 Our liturgy is reverential, welcoming, warm, and inspiring. _____
- 3.6 We build on the strong tradition of small faith group sharing to help build up the life of our parish/mission and support our families as “the privileged place for transmitting the Faith!” _____
- 3.7 We facilitate worthwhile opportunities for all Catholics to answer meaningfully the question: “Who did I help today?” _____
- 3.8 We are expanding our parish/mission outreach to those with special needs and their families. _____
- 3.9 We use all of the means available to us to inform, educate, and encourage our people in their love of Jesus Christ and their involvement in spreading the Good News. _____
- 3.10 We continue to encourage participation in the life of the Church by all members of our families. Programs that support, enliven, and build up family and parish/mission relationships are fostered. _____

Total Score for Spreading/Keeping Our Faith

4. Evolution of Our Parish/mission

Rating

- 4.1 We encourage qualified laity/deacons to do more administration so priests can focus on sacraments/catechesis. _____
- 4.2 We work closely with our Deanery to collaborate and share ministries, staff, and clergy resources. _____
- 4.3 Our parish/mission creates a welcoming and nurturing environment for all cultures in our community. _____
- 4.4 We are working to find new models and tools to help our parish/mission adapt to operating in a multicultural environment. _____
- 4.5 As our parish/mission continues to adapt to changing demographics, we share with other parishes/missions our inclusive and flexible approaches to meeting the pastoral needs of all parishioners. _____

Total Score for Evolution of Our Parish/mission

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5. Implementation

Rating

5.1	Our parish/mission is proposing and piloting ways to begin to address the “how to” in regard to implementing each of the recommendations outlined in the pastoral plan.	_____
5.2	Our parish/mission prays regularly for the success of the Archdiocesan pastoral plan.	_____
5.3	We have shared the Archdiocesan pastoral plan with all members of our parish/mission.	_____
5.4	We have formed a parish/mission team to prioritize the recommendations for each issue for our faith community.	_____
5.5	We have created implementation teams to review current practices, develop innovative new approaches and share the results of our efforts with other parishes/missions.	_____
Total Score for Implementation		