

**SYNOD INITIATIVES  
DIOCESAN RESPONSE  
OCTOBER 9, 2006**

What has happened?

- The Diocese has codified the intent of the Synod Initiatives in a revised set of statutes to insure that all of the faithful operate in a consistent manner.
- There are nine deaneries and they have held collaborative meetings on three of the initiatives since January 2006:
  - Initiative #2 – Vocations
  - Initiative #5 – Lay Ministry and the Lay Formation Institute
  - Initiative #6 – Youth and Young Adults
- The Deaneries will continue to meet and will now concentrate on Synod Initiative #8 – Cultural Diversity.
- Many of the parishes have acted on their own to implement the intent of the initiatives within their own area of responsibility.

**Synod Initiative #1 – Evangelization-Faith Formation**

***Educate and improve evangelization and catechesis at all ages,  
genders, ethnicity and cultures.***

Statutes, Policies and Practices

- Statute #8 It is the mission of every baptized person to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- §2 Parents, as the primary teachers and first instructors of the faith...
  - §3 Parishes are to provide catechetical instruction...
  - §4 Catholic Schools...are to be promoted and supported by...the Christian faithful
  - §5 The diocesan Department of Evangelization and Catechesis and the Catholic School Department assist and facilitate parishes and schools...
- Statute #79 Pastors have the duty of making provisions so that all the faithful are adequately educated in the Catholic faith...
- Statute #82 Catholic schools...are to be supported by the whole community of faith.
- Statute #83 The Diocese and parishes are to make appropriate use of all emerging technologies and communication media...

## Ongoing Implementation

Department of Evangelization and Catechesis:

- Provided: Camp ReCreation, new director and facilities at Camp Pendola, Rachel's Vineyard retreats, "Embracing our Dying," Mass of Hope and Healing, Hispanic faith formation, assistance in Hispanic RCIA, migrant ministry, single adult Mass support, Christian Initiation of Adults & Children, catechetical leader workshops, summer in-service...

## **Synod Initiative #2 – Vocations**

***Increase efforts to inform and recruit more vocations to priestly and religious life.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

- |              |    |                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Statute #8   | §2 | Parents, as the primary teachers and first instructors of the faith, are to be assisted with appropriate means in supporting and strengthening the family... |
| Statute #9   |    | The Christian faithful have an obligation to foster vocations to the priesthood and the religious life...                                                    |
| Statute #34  |    | It is an important role of every priest actively to nurture and identify vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life...                            |
| Statute #37  |    | On-going education of priests...                                                                                                                             |
| Statute #60  |    | ...each parish in the Diocese of Sacramento is to have an active Parish Vocation Committee...                                                                |
| Statute #101 |    | Prayer for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life is to be included routinely in parish services and gatherings...                               |

### Ongoing Implementation

- Father Brian Atienza and Sister Maria Campos assigned to the Office of Vocations.
- Detailed plans in place and being implemented.
- Father Brian is actively visiting deaneries and parishes when invited.
- Diocesan youth convention
- Plans for a vocations rally
- Bishop directed all deaneries to hold meetings focusing on this subject.
- Re-emphasis on the Vocation Cross program

## **Initiative #3 – Collaborative Ministry and Shared Responsibility**

***Foster and promote collaboration at all levels, ministries and cultures.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

Statute #10 While each member of the Christian faithful has his or her distinct role in the life of the Church, all are called to collaborate with each other in the mission of the Church.

§2 Parishes are to strive to provide broad opportunities for parishioners to share appropriately in pastoral planning and ministries.

§3 Parishioners are urged to exercise responsible stewardship...

§4 Parishes are urged to engage actively with neighboring parishes...to share ideas and best practices...

§5 The Diocese is to facilitate and assist ...parishes and deaneries in... collaboration and shared responsibility.

Statute #58 A functioning Parish Pastoral Council is required in each parish...

Statute #59 A functioning Parish Finance Council is required in each parish...

Statute #69 The deanery structure provides an important link between the parishes and the Diocese for collaborative efforts and the sharing of best-practices...

Statute #71 The Deans convene meetings of leaders of the deanery, a minimum of two times a year, including priests, chairs of parish pastoral councils...and other prominent leaders.

Statute #94 Neighboring parishes should strive to coordinate schedules of liturgical celebrations...

### Ongoing Implementation

- Provide assistance to deans in conducting deanery meetings (footnote 64).
- Many more parishes are working together in many areas – hiring youth ministers
- The Diocesan Pastoral Council encourages collaboration and cooperation.
- Diocesan Youth Coordinator created an advisory board from several parishes.
- Conducted a Northstate All-Ministries Conference. Small Christian Communities workshop.
- A review and evaluation of parishes is to be conducted periodically (Statute #63)

## **Initiative #4 – Eucharist and Sacraments**

***Provide and foster opportunities for sacramental catechesis at all levels of church life.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

- Statute #11 Opportunities for sacramental catechesis at all levels of church life are to be provided and fostered...
- Statute #91 All parishes are encouraged to have a liturgy committee...Members of the liturgy committee are to be well acquainted with liturgical principles and all pertinent liturgical documents.
- Statute #92 Neighboring parishes should strive to coordinate schedules of liturgical celebrations and to work collaboratively on liturgical life in other ways.

### Policies and Pastoral Guidelines, Section 2 on Worship and Prayer: I,B.9:

The Parish Liturgy Committee may help to prepare parish liturgies,...and promote the training of liturgical ministers. ...the Parish Liturgy Committee shall seek out means to assist in the formation of the community as a whole to increase understanding and appreciation of the Liturgy, as well as in other spiritual, prayer and devotional expressions.

### Ongoing Implementation

- Annual Liturgical Congress
- Marriage Preparation
- Parish Liturgical emphasis as a result of the Synod

## **Initiative #5 – Formation for Lay Ministry and Lay Apostolate**

***Design and establish a lay training program that is affordable and provides certification and encourage the laity to assume leadership as Apostles where they work and live.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

- Statute #12 The diocese and its parishes and institutions are to equip the lay faithful with the knowledge and skills to be apostles... where they work and live and recreate...
- Statute #13 Ministries by competent lay people in the parish community are to be fostered. Appropriate and adequate training shall be provided by the diocese and parishes...

Statute #77 Pastors have the duty of making provisions so that all the faithful are adequately educated in the Catholic faith.

Statute #82 The Diocese and parishes are to make appropriate use of all emerging technologies and communication media for teaching the faith...

Policies and Pastoral Guidelines, Section 2 on Worship and Prayer: II. B.57

...full, conscious, and active participation is grounded in appropriate formation and catechesis of the assembly,...

### Ongoing Implementation

- The revitalized Lay Formation Institute in English and Spanish continues with a new format of 7 in-depth weekend courses spread geographically.
- The first year of the Institute (offered annually) is for both the catechist and the lay person interested in personal faith formation
- The new Instituto Hispano de Formacion offers certification after two years of attendance at workshops meeting for five hours, once a month, for ten months each year, a total of 100 hours. I
- In addition, the Instituto Hispano de Formacion offers a four-year program for Parish Ministry Coordinators as Ecclesial Lay Ministers in specialized areas. Certification in this area requires attendance at workshops meeting three hours, once a month, for ten months each year, a total of 120 hours.
- Over 450 of the faithful have attended Lay Formation Institute classes in the Diocese.
- The Diocese and LFI are coordinating/publicizing deanery and parish based courses
- Bishop directed all deaneries to hold meeting concentrating on this subject.

### **Initiative #6 – Youth and Young Adults**

***Establish as a priority the development, support and funding of Youth and Young Adult ministries.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

Statute #14 It is imperative that the faith-life of youth and young adults be fostered.

- §1. Development, support and funding of a comprehensive youth and young adult ministry is to be a priority for parishes and the diocese...
- §2. ...include evangelization catechesis, prayer and worship, community life, justice and service, pastoral care, leadership development, and advocacy...
- §3. ...a systematic program of catechesis to educate youth...

§4. Ministry to young adults is to be supported and provided at Catholic Campus Ministry Newman Centers and in a collaborative way...clusters of parishes.

§5. Adult ministers are to be offered and avail themselves of training programs...

Statute #80 The Diocesan Bishop and pastors have the duty of providing education in the Catholic faith for the faithful.

Statute #129 All the faithful of the Diocese have a responsibility to support Catholic Education

### Ongoing Implementation

- Fourteen youth ministers hired and a new Diocesan Youth director (Victor Alvarez) hired
- Diocesan Youth Convention (grades 9 -12) and middle school (grades 6 - 8)
- Restarted several youth programs in parishes and developing web site
- Participation in Regional Youth Days, National Catholic Youth Conf. And World Youth Day
- Training workshops and retreats for adults serving as youth ministry leaders
- Bishop directed all deaneries to hold meetings concentrating on this subject.

### **Initiative #7 – Social Service and Social Justice Ministry**

***Promote, encourage and ensure the commitment to the social mission of the church.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

Statute #15 Ministry to those on the margins of society, ... are at the heart of the Christian Gospel.

§1. An ongoing commitment to the advancement of the social mission of the Church...is to be cultivated.

§2. Education in the social teaching of the Church is to be promoted at every level...

§3. The defense and protection of human life, from conception to natural death, is to be promoted vigorously.

§4. The Christian faithful, as individuals and in collaboration with one another at all levels, are to provide for the pastoral care of the sick, the poor, and the vulnerable through works of charity and mercy.

Statute #123 Days of...prayer for human rights and equality, prayer for world justice and peace, ...are to be observed.

Every parish is to have meaningful outreach to the poor.

## Ongoing Implementation

- Several parish presentations on models of parish social ministry
- Continuing education day for deacons
- Respect for Life Essay Contest, meetings and retreats
- Conduct Pro Life Mass
- JustFaith groups begun in two parishes

## **Initiative #8 – Cultural Diversity**

***Recognize, celebrate and promote our multi-cultural diversity while striving to achieve unity.***

### Statutes, Policies and Practices

- Statute #16      The multi-cultural diversity of the Diocese is to be recognized and celebrated while, at the same time, fostering unity among the People of God...
- Statute #28      ...any priest...for the Diocese of Sacramento...must be fully fluent in English and also have sufficient fluency in Spanish to minister effectively...
- Statute #94      The schedule of liturgical celebrations...is to be arranged with regard...to the multi-cultural reality of the community.
- Statute #103      ...pastors should...provide for...particular physical or developmental needs.

### Policies and Pastoral Guidelines, Worship and Prayer: I.B.6.

Diocesan liturgies...shall adhere...to...liturgical principles, while recognizing and honoring the cultural diversity of the local Church...

### Policies and Pastoral Guidelines, Worship and Prayer: II. B.56

...each parish community should...acknowledge the multi-cultural and inter-generational make-up of the worshiping assembly...and of particular devotions, feasts, and other celebrations of the various cultural communities.

## Ongoing Implementation

- Provided: Campo de Davis, migrant ministry
- Promotion of *Justice for Immigrants* campaign
- Youth convention and Catechetical Kickoffs are bilingual and multi-cultural.
- This will be a major concentration area for next year.
- Conducted Diocesan Encuentro for Hispanic youth and young adults.
- Participation in the regional and national Encuentro gatherings
- We offer 4 SEARCH retreats annually (3 Spanish and 1 English).

## **Summary**

- This was an overview of how the Diocese has responded to the Synod Initiatives via the new Statutes and other actions.
- When the Statutes are promulgated, they will become diocesan law. The policies and practices will then be updated to reflect the statutes.
- We ask that you be proactive and lead the actions necessary in the parishes and deaneries to achieve the intent of the Initiatives and the Statutes.
- Collaborate, Collaborate, Collaborate.