Be Missionary Disciples

The joyful commemoration of our 225th anniversary has filled us with hope as we look to the future. After extensive consultation, Archbishop Lori has presented the following principles by which we will continue our pastoral planning in the Archdiocese of Baltimore:

1. **The mission of evangelization requires each member of the Archdiocese to be true "missionary" disciples.**
   Evangelization is by its very nature "outward bound." Drawing upon the vision and teaching set forth by Pope Francis in Evangelii Gaudium, each member of the faithful is invited to grow stronger in discipleship in order to invite others to an encounter with the Risen Lord, especially those whose faith has been weakened or lost as well as those who do not know Jesus Christ. Such missionary discipleship transforms how we live out our respective vocations of marriage, priesthood, diaconate, consecrated life, and single life. Ongoing formation in evangelization is essential for all the faithful, especially within families as they are primary in the mission of evangelization.

2. **The Catholic Church not only will maintain, but also seek to enhance her missionary presence in in the Archdiocese**
   There is no question of whether we will be present, but rather a need thoughtfully to consider how we can best be present, recognizing that our presence takes many forms, including through our parishes, schools, charities, and health care institutions. These institutions themselves must undergo a missionary transformation so that everything they do is "channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for [their] self-preservation" (EG 27).

3. **In light of this missionary impulse, we must configure our presence in a way that is pastorally and organizationally effective, sustainable, and responsive to the changing needs of God's people. Our presence must seek to support the pastoral, spiritual, educational and service needs of our communities in ways that are a dynamic witness to the Spirit of the Gospel.**
   Gratefully acknowledging that regional planning has long been underway and in many instances has borne much fruit, parishes, schools, charities and healthcare ministries will now be involved in a facilitated process that will determine the means by which the Church's presence will be enhanced throughout the whole Archdiocese. The goal of this process is to envision our future and concretely plan how to make that vision a reality.

This will be accomplished by the following means:

I. **Identify Parish Clusters to Engage the Process**
   - All current clusters will be reviewed by the vicariate offices to determine if each represents the most appropriate grouping of parishes.
   - Acting upon the recommendation from the vicariate offices of those clusters most prepared to engage the facilitated process, Archbishop Lori will identify an inaugural cluster or group of clusters to enter the process. An order of entry for subsequent clusters will be developed so that every parish will participate. Parish clusters that are actively engaged in the facilitated process at the same time will be referred to as 'blocks.' The clusters in any given block may or may not be geographically close to one another. A facilitator will be appointed to each cluster to assist with the process.

II. Educate and Form

- Remote preparation occurs in an ongoing fashion at the parish level to ensure unity within ethnically diverse communities. This preparation may begin immediately under the leadership of the pastor or pastoral life director.
- The Archdiocese and parish leaders will provide further education at the parish level to provide any necessary background and clarification of the vision, spirit, and goals of the planning process.
- The Department of Evangelization will continue to provide opportunities for education and formation in the New Evangelization on an ongoing basis.

III. Assess

- The facilitator will present the data we already have at the parish level and cluster level. The purpose will be to ensure accuracy of this data and to receive feedback from the community regarding its own aspirations and needs in order to get a full picture of the Church's presence in the community.
- A broader community assessment will be done by the cluster and the planning office in order to identify community assets, needs and opportunities for the Church to be more fully present and engaged in the community.

IV. Plan

- With a view toward having a sustainable number of vibrant worshipping communities along with educational and charitable/healthcare services, the facilitator and cluster leadership will determine the parameters of the cluster plan. These parameters may include, but are not limited to, location of faith formation programs, location of worship sites, forms of charitable outreach, number of clergy, number of pastoral and support staff, and number of Masses.
- With the active participation of members of the community and drawing upon its resources, each cluster within the block develops a plan within its determined parameters.
- The plan is proposed to the vicariate office within a year of the initial meeting of the planning group, which then will study the plan, engage in further consultation, and send back observations to the cluster for revision to the plan as needed.
- The cluster presents its plan to the Archbishop.

V. Communication

- Broad communication will occur during every phase of the planning process including at every parish, block and throughout the Archdiocese using multiple communications platforms.
- The Archdiocesan Communication Department will assist in coordinating communication plans with each cluster and block;
- Communication will take into account the cultural and linguistic needs of individual communities;
- Communication will include all kinds of media including traditional mailings, bulletins and on-line options.

VI. Implementation

- Implementation will ensure that the proper canonical processes have been observed.
- Implementation for clusters and blocks will occur under an established timeline as outlined in each plan.