

Together in Mission + Convocation of Pastoral Leaders + October 6/9, 2010

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Brothers and sisters and brothers in Christ...it is good to be here! Jesus promised us that wherever two or three were gathered in His name, He would be with us. Our successor of the apostles here present, reminded us of why we are here. However, Archbishop O'Brien and I are both grateful that you have taken the time to join us and one another to reflect on what our lives as disciples are all about.

We gather as disciples of Jesus who have pastoral responsibilities in this premier see. We gather here because of twelve people who said "yes," over 2000 years ago. Just imagine what we can do here in the Archdiocese of Baltimore with over 420 of us gathering over these two days. Just think of the possibilities.

We gather *Together In Mission* to realize that evangelization is not a delegated task to a particular department. It is about our solidarity in mission and how each of us will play a key role in responding to our Archbishop's call to evangelize. I would like to explore some key areas with you.

1. **Snapshot of Evangelization**
2. **Organization of the department**
3. **Collaboration in the Catholic Center**
4. **Collaboration throughout the archdiocese**
5. **A Call to Solidarity and Unity**

SNAPSHOT OF EVANGELIZATION

Many of you know that I was in charge of the USCCB Secretariat for Evangelization for eight years, 1997-2005. With my principal constituencies being diocesan leaders, what was always missing for me personally was collaborating with those on the parish level. I have known and worked with Archbishop O'Brien before coming to our archdiocese. And, I know one thing for sure he means what he says. When he invited me to undertake a reorganization process more than a year ago, I asked him if this re-organization in the formation of a new department of evangelization was just re-organization or was it mission driven. He was quite clear in saying to me, "I have been speaking about evangelization since I arrived in Baltimore and I want to break down the silos so that this mission can grow." Towards the end of the summer when the Catholic Center staff all gathered to enjoy a cookout lunch together, the Archbishop was quite clear after thanking everyone when he said, this whole building exists to evangelize. So, I want to make one thing clear today. I am not in charge of evangelization. The Archbishop is. In my role as head of his new initiative, it is my task on his behalf to make sure all that we do in our archdiocese is done through the lens of evangelization. Everything we do is for the sake of the mission entrusted to us...

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Mt 28:19)

This great commission is what we are about. As my good friend, Msgr. Ray East in Washington, DC often says, “What part of GO, do we not understand?”

Although this mission has been an integral part of our church’s identity since it was first entrusted to the apostles, in our time it was awakened by Pope Paul VI in 1973 when he exhorted the College of Cardinals to focus on evangelization which led to the 1974 Synod on Evangelization and of course his great *Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, Evangelii Nuntiandi*. His words were short and crystal clear.

We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelizing all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent.

Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists to evangelize... (EN, 14)

If the church exists to evangelization, then everything she does must be for one purpose and no other. One way to achieve this is, is to reflect on why we are doing the things that we are doing.

- Why does our parish exist?
- Why do we have a parish school?
- Why am I walking over to the ambo to preach?
- Why am I answering the parish telephone?
- Why do we have the RCIA?
- Why are we doing youth ministry?
- Why do we do adult faith formation in our parish? Or why not?
- Why do I go to the parish offices, to do what?

We must look beyond the tasks and responsibilities and keep the essential mission as part of our ministry.

In accepting this mission, everyone should keep in mind that the vital core of the new evangelization must be a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the person of Jesus Christ, that is, the preaching of his name, his teaching, his life, his promises and the kingdom which he has gained for us by his paschal mystery.” (EIA, 66)

In 1983 at the North American Institute for Catholic Evangelization that my secretariat sponsored, Fr. Donal Senior put it this way...

It is not the church that has a mission; it is the mission that has a church.

Members of the E-Team will be available as resources and will provide resources and programs that foster the work of evangelization. There are many fine tools out there to assist parishes in

their essential mission and we look forward to providing these for your review and to assist you in their implementation.

I called this section, a *Snapshot of Evangelization*, because I want to have many opportunities to address this essential mission in a variety of settings. I am meeting with many pastors individually and have already attended many gatherings throughout the archdiocese. I welcome more. However, I ask that we cluster these gatherings as much as possible.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EVANGELIZATION

It is important to note, the reorganization process began over a year ago when Archbishop asked me to facilitate the process. Our Vicar General, Monsignor Woy was a great partner in working with me throughout this process on behalf of the Archbishop, however the Archbishop made decisions throughout the process that allowed us to move quickly to achieve our task. It was a fluid process and as the conversations evolved other offices were invited to the table. Throughout this process, the Office of Hispanic Ministry and the Office of African American Catholic Ministries were involved. In January, 2010 Archbishop approved the formation and the reorganization began. You have the organizational chart before you.

Office of Deaf Ministry and the Office of Disabilities Ministry

(STORY) One Sunday while standing on the steps of OSM in San Francisco where I was pastor, a family visiting came up to me and said, “that was a great homily father. It is too bad my husband missed it since he is deaf.” Our church had lots of steps to get into it. I was moved to do something about it when a tourist came by in a motorized wheel chair and said, “how do I get into your church?” Yes, deaf and disabilities ministry is key to evangelization!

In the previous structure, you may remember that these two offices were in the Division of Evangelization and Catechesis and each were staffed by coordinators. During the reorganization process, it became apparent that these two ministries were not reaching their full potential because they only had a catechetical perspective. It was decided that Eileen Colarusso and Bill Fleming would be raised to full offices and be called directors.

Our brothers and sisters who are deaf or experiencing disabilities must no longer be marginalized but fully incorporated into the fullness of our communities for we are all enriched by their presence.

Office of Worship

(STORY) Recently, someone made a comment to the Archbishop and said, “I came to the church because of the liturgy here.” Recently, I had an experience of a vibrant liturgical celebration in one of our parishes. I also had the following mass which was filled 15%. It was a downer. It was both hard to preside and preach after the mass that was 85% filled.

The RCIA...story...This is why worship is key to evangelization!

I applaud the Archbishop's addressing our liturgy schedules, yes, because of a shortage of priests but even more importantly for the sake of mission. There is no excuse for churches being less than ¾ full for weekend masses and weekend masses without music. Yes, liturgy is key to evangelization!

This office was previously under the Office of the Archbishop. The Archbishop believed that worship is so crucial to our evangelizing efforts in the church that he wanted to move it to the new department. Msgr. Jaskot was an integral part of our meetings. We have the implementation of the new Roman Missal before us. And, as you can see from the Archbishop's recent columns full churches and good liturgy are key to supporting our efforts in fostering the mission of the church.

We began a search for a worship director prior to my arrival. I gathered a diverse fifteen member interview committee and it was unanimous that the committee had found what we were looking for in capability and vision. The Archbishop concurred. Right after Labor Day, Catherine Combier-Donovan joined the E-Team as our Archdiocesan Director of Worship.

Division of Catechetical and Pastoral Formation

(Story) A young couple wants to get married, uncatechized and open to formation. They are vulnerable to the possibilities. Young children in our schools and parishes who may not be formed in the faith at home due to uncatechized parents need to get the best formation possible. This is why Catechetical and Pastoral Formation is key to evangelization!

In the original plan, this was due to be two divisions, the Division of Catechetical Formation and the Division of Ministry Formation and Development. However, there were two reasons for deciding to merge these two divisions. One, there were significant departures in the catechetical area. Secondly, I wanted to give catechesis the fullness of its focus. Yes, content is a major aspect; however catechesis is about the formation of disciples. Recognizing that I need not look any further, Ruth Puls assumed the directorship of this division. Together we are slowly rebuilding this division.

(EQUIP FOR MINISTRY and its importance.) Explain.

Division of Campus Ministry to colleges and universities

(Story) A young person coming from an active youth ministry program in their parish goes to college and the church is not present... This is why campus ministry is key to evangelization!

In the process leading up to the formation of our department, campus ministry was under the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Recognizing the need for a significant planning process in meeting the needs of campus ministry, it was decided that campus ministry needed to be a separate division. However, as an integral part of the department, it is in regular communications with youth and young adult ministry. Fr. Ed Hendricks who was a part of the planning process is the director of this division. Although he is in Frostburg, he meets regularly with the E-Team at the Catholic Center either in person or by way of the internet.

Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

(Story) A HiLi student shares his story of wanting to get more involved in his parish but keeps being told that the youth ministry program is for youth...This is why youth and young adult ministry is key to evangelization!

This division has gone through significant changes over the past months due to departures and no director in place. However, upon my arrival I did not want to reduce our focus on these two very important constituencies. In recognizing that an additional staff person to assume the directorship was not going to happen, I invited Scott Miller to assume additional responsibilities as the division's director.

The directions of this division will be parish focused, encouraging and supporting youth involvement in many aspects of parish life.

Our young adult ministry is growing under Georgina Vaca's leadership. Much of the focus has been with Hispanic young adults; however we are expanding this ministry to include the richness of diversity among all our young adults. It is my hope within the year that Georgina will be coordinator for young adult ministry which will be all inclusive. As we move forward, it is our hope that youth ministry in our parishes can be expanded and youth can assume more leadership roles in the parish and not just be pigeonholed in youth masses and programs. Our youth are not the future of the church, but the future of the church depends on our youth.

O'Dwyer Retreat Center

(Story) I have had many opportunities....This is why O'Dwyer is key to evangelization!

Over 8,000 youth pass through O'Dwyer in the course of a year. This retreat center complements the work of our division of youth and young adults. Recognizing the reality that a full-time priest director is not a reality, I am in the process of forming a clergy council made up of primarily of priests and some deacons. Mass on weekends will be at 7:30 pm which will make it possible for more priests to volunteer to assist. Our team will make sure that we will do all that we can to ensure that the Center continues its vital role in youth ministry.

Prison Ministry

(Story) Letter received yesterday...This is why prison ministry is key to evangelization!

Soon to be welcomed into this department is prison ministry. This is currently located in Bishop Rozanski's office. We look forward to expanding this ministry recognizing that there are over 40 prisons in our archdiocese. We look forward to working with the parishes in which these prisons are located and our deacons in the areas of ongoing formation for those who seek to be involved in this important ministry.

COLLABORATION AT THE CATHOLIC CENTER

As previously mentioned, everyone at the Catholic Center is involved in some aspect of evangelization. Each week at our staff meeting, a different office is invited to have a conversation with the E-Team. This is proving very helpful in creating a cohesive approach to evangelization. As a member of the Vicar General's management team, I am able to seize upon opportunities to collaborate with other offices and department in fostering the mission of the archdiocese. I applaud the Archbishop's decision to make evangelization a department so that this kind of collaboration is possible.

Our E-Team is involved in many programs and collaborative efforts with other departments and offices and this will continue.

COLLABORATION THROUGHOUT THE ARCHDIOCESE

The E-Team is here to serve our pastoral leadership. With the closing of the Western Maryland Center, our directors and coordinators met with the pastoral leaders at their September CALMM meeting. It was our assurance that we are here to serve and one of the members of our team will be regularly attending these meetings. However, there is much talent throughout this archdiocese which is evident to me in the short time that I have been here. Although we are here to be of service to you, we also want to work with you in serving the needs of all our pastoral leaders.

The E-Team is currently in the process of forming two commissions and eight councils which will be made up of the richness of diversity in our archdiocese. This includes ethnic, regional and generational diversity. I am requesting the directors to nominate two young people for each of these advisory groups. The following are the groups being formed:

Evangelization Commissions and Councils

Two commissions will be established: Archdiocesan Evangelization and Worship Commissions. After consultation with appropriate parties, I will make nominations to the Archbishop for his appointment to these commissions. Frameworks for these commissions are being worked on as we speak.

Evangelization Commission (formed between January and March 2011)
Liturgical/Worship Commission (formed between October and January)

The following councils will be established between now and January:

Deaf and Disabilities Ministries Council
Catechetical and Pastoral Formation Council
Campus Ministry Council
Youth Ministry Council
Young Adult Ministry Council
O'Dwyer Clergy Council

Prison Ministry Council

Members of these councils will be appointed by me after consultation with the Vicar General, Monsignor Woy.

We will be appointing co-chairs to each of these commissions and councils. Directors will determine the necessary numbers and criteria for membership on these advisory groups.

A CALL TO SOLIDARITY AND UNITY

These are indeed challenging times for us in the Catholic Church. However, we must look at all that we do through the lens of evangelization with much hope and light. We must be hopeful voices in these challenging times. Pope Paul VI said in 1975,

The power of evangelization will find itself considerably diminished if those who proclaim the Gospel are divided among themselves in all sorts of ways. Is this not perhaps one of the great sicknesses of evangelization today?

Indeed, if the Gospel that we proclaim is seen to be rest by doctrinal disputes, ideological polarizations or mutual condemnations among Christians...how can those to whom we address our preaching fail to be disturbed, disoriented, even scandalized?

Yes, these are challenging times for us in pastoral leadership. However, they must be exciting times for us since we said YES as Jesus' disciples. That yes is filled with much hope and light that you and I can bring to a world that is longing for it.

Let us be attentive to the Holy Spirit as we enrich this ministry of evangelization entrusted to us in ways we may not even imagine.

Come Holy Spirit...Fill the hearts of your faithful, kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created and you shall renew the face of the earth.