

Archdiocesan Pastoral Council Meeting
May 27, 2014

Sister Marian opened the meeting by welcoming back Lou Geoffrion after her surgery.

Cardinal Sean announced with regret the resignation of Thang Pham from Merrimack Region, Vicariate II.

Report of Faith Formation and Evangelization Committee

Jane MacDonald and Ken McCarthy presented the report of the Faith Formation and Evangelization Committee and their reflections on the Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*.

Jane began by thanking Cardinal Seán, Bishop Kennedy and Father Soper for their support for the work of the committee.

For the past several months the Faith Formation and Evangelization Committee Sub-Committee has been reflecting on the Holy Father's Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*. The Committee offered an inspiring presentation that integrated the insights of *Disciples in Mission*, *Forming Intentional Disciples* (Sherry Weddell) and the Joy of the Gospel. The conversation focused on practical ways that each one can be an effective evangelizer. A copy of the Slide Presentation has been forwarded to all members of the APC and is an attachment for these minutes.

PRIME POINTS INCLUDE:

The Pope's 7 key themes for Evangelization include:

- The reform of the Church in her missionary outreach
- The temptations faced by pastoral workers
- A Church, the entire people of God which evangelizes
- The homily and its preparation
- The inclusion of the poor in society
- Peace and dialogue with in society
- The spiritual motivations for the mission.

Evangelization

- Through ordinary Pastoral Ministry to help believers who have a sincere and deep faith to grow spiritually.
- In an outreach to recently Baptized who lives do not yet reflect the demands of Baptism
- Reaching those that have never known Christ.

Forming Intentional Disciples:

- "The Goal is not to create a community of spiritual elites but to create a spiritual culture that recognizes, openly talks about, and honors both the inward and outward dimensions of the sacraments and the liturgy.

Four Sample Pastoral Priorities from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles 2012

- To seek and draw in the unbelieving and the unchurched
- To foster lifelong discipleship and spiritual growth
- To assist the baptized in the discernment of their spiritual gifts and vocations
- To equip and support extraordinary apostles.

Some Sample Programs include:

- Prayer
- Identifying the unbelieving and Unchurched
- Sharing the Good News
- Evangelization
- Forming and equipping Disciples
- Transforming Society to be more compassionate
- Parish Resources

Closing:

- “To make the New Evangelization a reality is to become pilgrims on a journey or pilgrimage with Jesus Christ...much like the journey of Jesus meeting the disciples along the road to Emmaus. The journey or pilgrimage includes moments for a deepening of our faith, increasing our participation in the sacramental life of the church, and leads finally to our destination of being Christian witnesses.”

Evangelization Training Presentation

Several APC members participated in the Evangelization Training offered through the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for the New Evangelization. It was a shortened version of a program offered through out the Archdiocese to help those with Evangelization.

Program focused on the various ways of Evangelization:

- Reaching out to one person at a time
- Sharing our faith through experiences...not preaching
- Being familiar with the basic Gospel
- A Testimony of Faith through our actions
- New ways of Hospitality including hosting a Prayer Group, a Bible Study or Book Club with religious themes
- Opportunities to share personal experiences...after Mass, meeting with parents, time with others while driving in a car and general conversation.
- Witness Talks

Two APC members offered witness talks. Maureen O'Brien shared the witness talk that she developed during the Archdiocesan training. Casey Grant shared the talk that he had given during Lent as part of "What's Your Next Step?", offered by the Belmont Collaborative (the parishes of Saint Joseph and Saint Luke

Cardinal Seán offered the following response to the witness talks and other important ways of Evangelization.

- At times Catholics tend to be very cerebral. We need to present doctrines as they relate to one another and life as we know it.

- The personal witness of people's lives can be very moving and sometimes the best way of Evangelization. For example funeral homilies or general conversation can be opportunities that touch people's hearts.
- Witness talks are often offered during cursillo to allow someone to share their personal experience and spiritual growth.
- The Lives of the Saints are wonderful witness talks and should be discussed more often.
- Witness talks can offer a positive outreach to others and are an important part of our evangelization efforts.

What Do I Need To Hear?

- The Holy Hour at Harvard was a beautiful Catholic moment.
- Witness talks at St. Peter's have been very effective.
- The Immigration Video on the Catholic TV website is beautifully done.
- Sincere thanks to Cardinal Seán for your assistance with the Safe House.
- Are there diocesan guidelines regarding the age/grade level for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation?
- Many high school students in Lawrence are now evangelizing their parents.

After a short break, APC members sat by region to review and make suggestions for their APC parish assignments.

Closing Remarks – Cardinal Seán

- The Holy Hour at Harvard was a beautiful expression of Love for the Eucharist.
- The Priests' Convocation was held on May 21. Bishop Christopher Coyne was the keynote speaker. In his remarks, Bishop Coyne spoke about the changes priests face as the Church is no longer at the heart of a Judeo-Christian culture, but is now on the periphery of a secular-relativistic culture.
- Bishop Coyne mentioned said we are in mission territory and explained how, in a way, we are reaching out to invite people to our faith, rather than simply trying to encourage people who are already with us in the faith.
- Cardinal Seán ordained nine men to the Priesthood on May 24 – this is the highest number of Ordinations in the last 10 years.
- The MAM and MTS Graduation was held at the Seminary on May 22. There were twenty graduates of the programs.
- On June 7th at 4:00 p.m. Cardinal Seán will celebrated the Vigil of Pentecost at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross.
- Cardinal Seán celebrated Confirmation for the Brazilian Community on Pentecost Sunday.

Cardinal Seán thanked all the APC members for their participation and dedication. Cardinal Seán offered the Closing Prayer and Blessing!

Next Meeting is scheduled for October 14.