

Discovering Our Future: a review and visioning process for the Diocese of Southeast Florida

Charge and Purpose

“Many of the ways we organize ourselves to do the necessary business of the Church as an organization and to share our resources have been with us for well over a century; I am sure that you will agree that we must be prepared to be more nimble in the ways we serve as the Body of Christ in this 21st Century... To respond to these challenges I am calling for a workgroup composed of representatives from around our diocese to begin analyzing our existing diocesan structures and proposing (opportunities for change)... we need to look at what has worked in the past and what may serve us in the future, and also proceed to begin implementing those changes .”

--Bishop Frade's Convention 2011 Address

Overview

The review and analysis of our diocese called for by Bishop Frade has three general areas: FINANCE, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, and DEMOGRAPHICS, with leaders for each area appointed by Bishop Frade. These three workgroups will be open to members of the diocese and will make progress reports along the way. A part of the final report will include strategic questions and ideas about how the strategic questions could be answered. After the final reports, there will be time for discussions in the diocese of the data collected and opportunities identified. The last step in the process will be a visioning process, building on the data and questions from the original workgroups, to identify models for our diocese in the future.

This process is based on the following assumptions:

- God is calling us to a nimble, mission-based future
- we are looking toward the future, not just to the past and the present
- we desire the healthy and creative involvement of our diocese in this process with a minimum of conflict

- we are concerned about the good stewardship of people and money
- we are continuing to build a strong, informed, and committed diocese
- we are looking for the profound questions for our future, not the easy answers.

Timeline:

February 2012- Bishop appoints key leaders for the review and analysis groups

March, April, and May 2012- Interim Reports

June 2012- Final Reports

Fall 2012- Planning for Futures - regional diocesan day events

Finance Group

The Finance Group will review and analyze our diocesan income and expenses, project the trends of the current budget to 2015, and draft several balanced budgets showing both expanding and static income.

The work will include:

- each congregation's financial trends with five year projections of those trends
- trends of diocesan income from both congregations and endowments
- trends of diocesan expenses by category
- the assessment formula: identify alternative formulas and their effect on the budget and how other contributions to operating budget affect the assessment

The final report will include documented financial trends of our diocese, the effect assessment changes would make on income and expenses, and a five year projection report of congregations that are able to sustain a full-time priest, those which will likely move to alternate forms of priestly ministry, and those which have already moved to alternate forms of priestly ministry.

Organizational Structure Group

The Organizational Structure Group will review and analyze all units of our diocesan structure through the lens of how nimble, efficient and effective each unit is, flagging where it works well and where there are opportunities for improvement.

The work will include:

- creating a diocesan organizational flow chart

- ways the structure can be streamlined
- how decisions are made, especially as mandated by diocesan canons and practice
- number and diversity of people (gender, ethnicity, region, age, class/tribe, etc) serving in the structure and an assessment of how inclusive and representative of our diocese that participation is
- examine (Survey Monkey) the motivation of those who serve, the cost in time and dollars to them, and what they like best and least about serving their diocese
- explore how we can expand our use of technology to open and streamline our structure

The final report will include a detailed analysis of the parts of our organization and identify key ways it can be adapted to be nimble, efficient and effective in our rapidly changing and increasingly diverse world.

Demographics Group

The Demographics Group will review and analyze a professionally developed demographic report for the geographic area comprising the Diocese of Southeast Florida. These data will be compared with available data on the congregations and people of our diocese. Five-year projections for both the area and the diocese will be the basis for identifying implications and challenges for the future.

The work will include:

- gathering data about the profiles of the people and congregations of the diocese
- creating an ongoing dialogue between the profile of the area and the profile of our diocese
- testing data in other contexts (ie the business and municipal planning departments)
- testing data with your own eyes and feet

The final report will be concise and people friendly, capturing of the richness of the south Florida community and of our diocese now and into the near future, including the implications and challenges for the future ministry of our diocese.

Participation



Interim reports of learnings and information will be shared and response invited through a process including opportunities for participation in congregations, deaneries, convocations, board meetings, committees, etc. The goal is that as many people as possible have input and become more informed and knowledgeable about how things work in our diocese and what the challenges and opportunities are in the present and near future of our diocese.

Planning for Futures

In the fall of 2012, after we have a new appreciation of the issues, opportunities, and challenges of our ministry in the Diocese of Southeast Florida, there will be day-long regional meetings to identify and prioritize the driving forces which will determine the future context of our diocesan ministry and to envision how we would do ministry in different circumstances. Agenda and details about these regional Planning for Futures days will be available by June 2012.