



Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium

PPNM at a Glance:

- 1 A planning *process*, not a plan
- 2 Initially, planning will take place over the next three years; then will be ongoing
- 3 All parishes and faith communities (campuses, hospitals, prisons) will participate
- 4 The process will be collaborative - usually involving 4-8 parishes/faith communities. Parishes will benefit from each others' wisdom and resources
- 5 Comprehensive approach: incorporates data on ministry, administrative matters, sacraments, and parish demographic, social, and economic trends
- 6 Two-step process: (1) parish self-assessment based on measure of success in achieving Synod Goals and of sacramental and administrative health; (2) group planning to address common priorities
- 7 Guided by our common mission, goals, and vision statements set forth by the Church of Rochester, especially our Synod Goals and values
- 8 May result in changes in staffing, roles and responsibilities, boundaries, or structures of parishes and regions
- 9 Process was designed in consultation with hundreds of parish staff and leaders, and is grass-roots driven; parish planning teams will be led by lay people and parish consultation is built into both Parish and Group planning phases
- 10 Planning supported by diocesan-compiled data and diocesan staff. Pastoral Center services to parishes will be enhanced

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My Dear People:

This month, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester launched a pastoral planning process designed to ensure the vitality of our parishes into the New Millennium.

Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium is a tool to help the leadership of our parishes and other Catholic faith communities (in jails, campuses, and health care facilities) to discern, in collaboration with others, how best to remain faithful to the Gospel in the changing circumstances of our time.

PPNM continues to focus our prayer and energy on our four Synod goals while recognizing other pastoral responsibilities. It spells out my expectation that (1) parish leaders of each faith community assess its vitality and plan with surrounding parishes how best to achieve our common mission, particularly the Synod goals, and (2) that we conduct a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the Pastoral Center in serving our parishes.

To honor our Synod priorities, we must honor, in the best way, the resources with which we are blessed. Committed to the mission of Jesus, we must offer our God-given talents in order to live out that mission as fully as possible. Some communities will have adequate human, financial, material and spiritual resources to make steady progress toward the mission, but will recognize that working with others brings even more effective results. Other communities may realize that alone they lack sufficient resources. They will most effectively utilize their resources by collaboration with neighboring parishes.

I have no doubt that we have the gifts and the resolve to meet these challenges and opportunities. I invite you to consider becoming involved as your parish assesses itself and identifies priorities for the next several years, and works with neighbors on common concerns.

Peace to all.

Your brother in Christ,

† Matthew H. Clark
Bishop of Rochester

P.S. This version of our planning document presents highlights of the pastoral planning process. The complete document, which includes more background, including a "Vision" statement and "Indicators of Success" for each of the Synod Goals, is available in all the parishes.