



# The Parish Pastoral Council: The Engine for Building Communities of Disciples

Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston

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# Morning Overview

Part I – Mission of  
the Parish & the  
Pastoral Council

Part II – Building  
Communities of  
Disciples

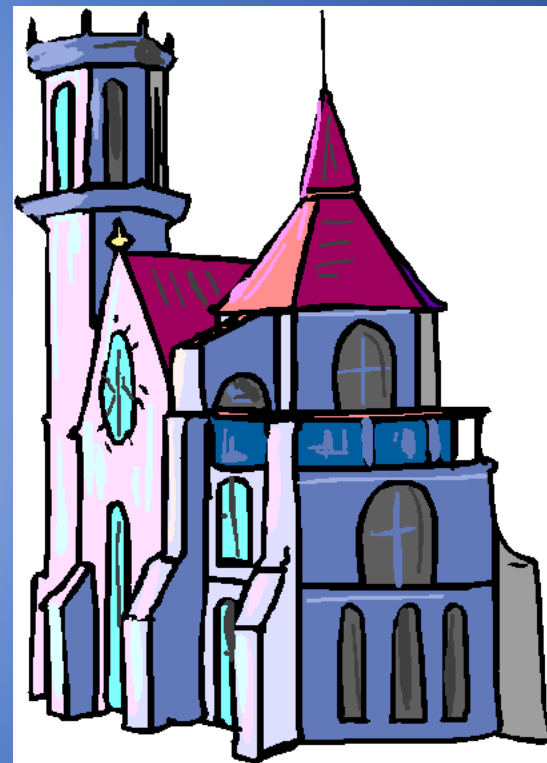
# Part One – Overview

- Big Picture – Universal & Archdiocesan Mission of Parish
- Your Parish Mission
- The Pastoral Council – The Engine



# Universal Church Vision – Parish

1. A **community**, entrusted to a pastor as shepherd
2. Place where faithful gather for **Eucharist**
3. Where Christ's saving **doctrine** taught
4. Where **charity**, good works are **practiced**
5. Encourages & trains **evangelizers**\*



Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2179

\*Pope Francis – *Evangelii Gaudium* 2013

# Archdiocesan Foundational Parish Life Elements

- Worship (Eucharist)
- Community (Community)
- Evangelization (Trains Evangelizers)
- Service (Charity)
- Word (Doctrine)
- *Leadership*
- *Stewardship*





# Archdiocesan Pastoral Objectives

## I. Live our Faith

Spirituality of Communion (1)  
Spiritual Growth in Liturgy (4)  
Adult Formation (7)

## II. Share our Faith

Engage Parishioners (2)  
Intercultural Connections (5)  
Assist Parents (8)

## III. Nurture our Faith

Welcoming Environment (3)  
Partner With Another Parish (6)  
Youth Ministry (9)



**See Archdiocesan  
Web Site – [archgh.org](http://archgh.org)**

# Parish Mission

- Does your parish have a parish mission statement?

**Can you  
recite it?**



# Great Mission Statements...,

- 12-15 words
- Easily memorized
- Answer Question – why do we exist?
- Have life and passion!  
(audacious love)





# Sample Parish Mission Statements

- To be a Christ centered community of disciples who worship God, love and serve. (14)
- Becoming Disciples of Jesus and Stewards of God's gifts. (9)

**To live the Gospel...**

**Whatever it Takes! (7)**

# Co-Responsibility of Laity

The Laity –

“They should not be considered as merely ‘collaborators’ of the clergy, but as people truly

***‘co-responsible’***

in the work of the Church”



Pope Benedict XVI – Message to  
International Forum for Catholic Action

August 2012

# Pastoral Council – The Organizational Engine that Drives Mission

What is your definition of a Pastoral Council?



# A Pastoral Council Is...,

“A community of disciples, called by God, to work in close consultation with the pastor and staff, to prayerfully discern the Will of God for this parish now and into the future”






# A Community ...,

- Spirituality of Communion
- Can't force community
- Provide space for building and nurturing relationships – sharing life and faith
- *Shared Prayer*
- *Council Formation*



# Community of *Disciples*...

- To what extent are you a follower of Jesus?
- Where is *Jesus* in your web of relationships?



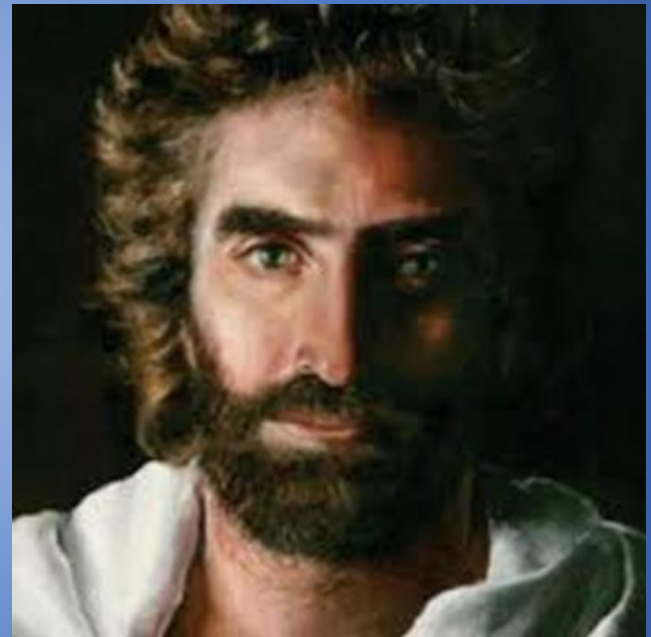
**Are you a follower  
or are you a fan?**

# What Does a Missionary Disciple Look Like?

**Live Our Faith**

**Share Our Faith**

**Nurture Our Faith**



**Archdiocesan Planning Pathways**

A community of disciples,  
*Called by God*

How did you  
end up on  
the Pastoral  
Council?





# The Call – Old Testament

- And the prophets said,

“I am too young”	(Jeremiah)
“I am too old”	(Sarah)
“I am not a speaker”	(Moses)
“I am just a farmer”	(Gideon)
“I am not in the mood”	(Jonah)

Only Acceptable Response!

**“I will go! Send me!” (Isaiah)**

# To work in close *consultation* with the *pastor* and *staff*...

- Is the Pastoral Council “merely advisory” or is it a “Board of Directors”?
- How do members of the staff consult/work with the pastoral council?



To Prayerfully *discern...*,  
the (Will of God)

How does the

**Holy Spirit**  
*(fuel for the engine)*

influence/impact the  
efforts of *your*  
pastoral council?



# Discern, and *carry out* (Will of God)

- What *actions* – what *witness* do members of the pastoral council provide for the parish?
- *Accomplishments?*
- *Witness?*





# Example – Witness of Pope Francis



# For the parish *now*..

- How does the Pastoral Council Listen & Respond?
  - 4X6 Cards
  - Surveys & Assessments
  - Town Hall – Listening
  - Focus Groups
  - Leadership Summit



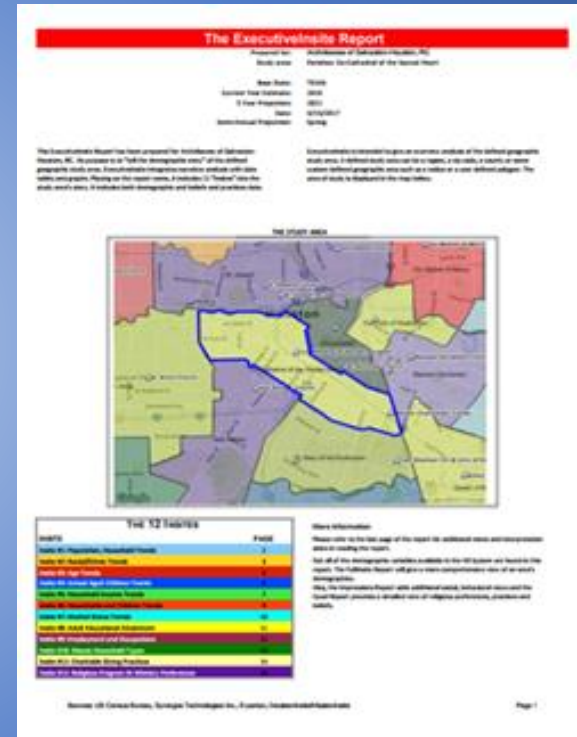
**Don't Forget to Respond!**

# Listening to Broader Community

- Do you know your parish's boundaries?

*(primary mission field)*

- In what ways does your parish engage the broader community?
- Partnership with another parish? Intercultural connections?

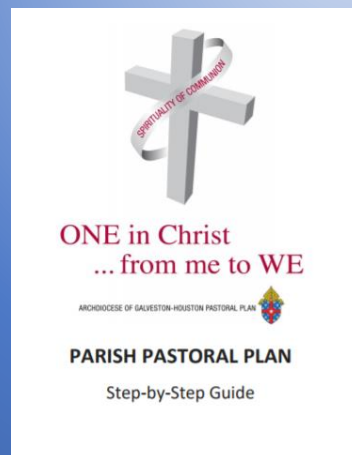
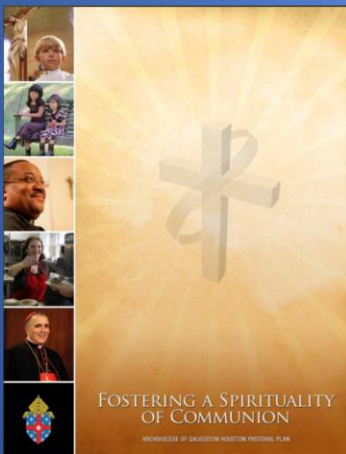


Archdiocesan Demographics Report



# Now, and *into the future*.

- How has the pastoral council helped the parish *pastorally plan* for the future?





# Planning and Action Tracking Resources

- Archgh.org/ (home page)
- /About
- /Pastoral-Plan
- /We-are-here-to-help
- /Planning + Action Tracking Resources

- Step by Step [Planning Guide](#)
- Pastoral Planning [Booklet](#)
- [Spirituality of Communion](#) one-pager
- Pastoral [Objectives](#) Diagram
- Sample [Demographics](#) Report
- Kickoff Meeting [Agenda](#)
- Spirituality of Communion [Prayer](#)
- Pastoral Planning [Prayer](#)
- Pastoral Planning [Intercessions](#)
- Parish Life Assessment [Forms](#) and Analytic [Model](#)
- [Action Plan](#) & Tracking Form
- [Checklist](#) for Completed Action Plan

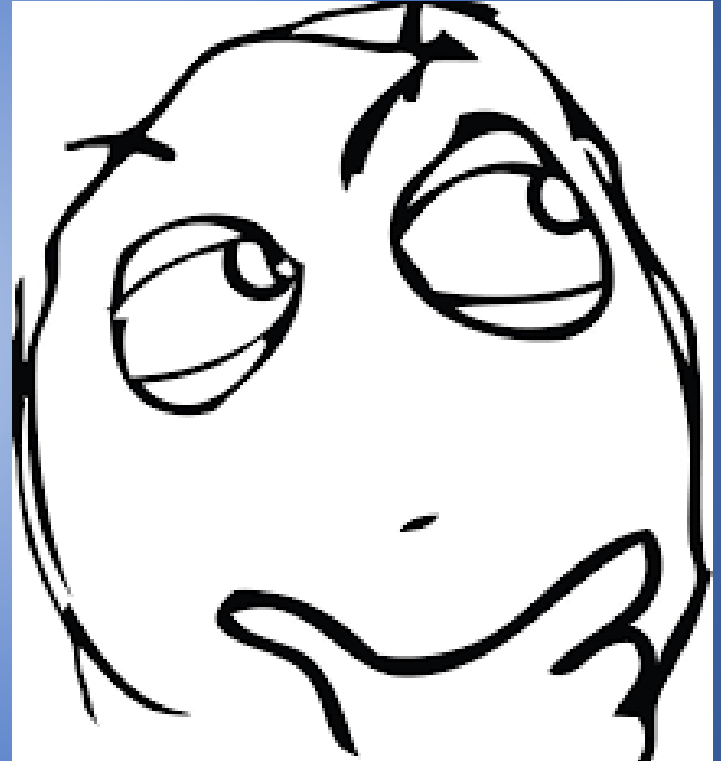
# A Pastoral Council Is...,

“A community of disciples, called by God, to work in close consultation with the pastor and staff, to prayerfully discern the Will of God for this parish now and into the future”



# So..., In Silence...,

- What are 1 – 2 things that struck you in this presentation that you would like to take back to your parish?



Thank you!





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