



Disciples in Mission – A Pastoral Plan for the Archdiocese of Boston **Phase Two Implementation – Frequently Asked Questions – September 24, 2013**

What's the reason for all of this?

Parish based evangelization works, and we can train for it, but we need strong Parishes in order to do so.

What's the goal?

The Parishes of the Archdiocese, formed into Collaboratives, are called to be strong, stable, intentional, and effective centers of the New Evangelization.

Tell me about Phase One.

In Phase One, twenty-eight Parishes came together into twelve Collaboratives. The Collaboratives began on June 4, 2013, meaning that as of this date they are about sixteen weeks old. Phase One is being carefully followed, and significant adjustments are being made to the details of implementation as we go along.

Tell me about Phase Two.

In Phase Two, forty-four Parishes will come together into twenty-one Collaboratives. The Collaboratives will begin on June 3, 2014. The Pastors for these Collaboratives will be appointed by Christmas (we hope).

Why are you announcing the Phase Two list so early?

We need time to be sure that, after the Pastors have been named, a good team of Parochial Vicars can also be named for the Collaboratives. This way, the Parochial Vicars can also participate in training for the Pastoral Plan, at the same time as the Pastors are doing so.

How many Phases will there be?

If we continue on the track of implementing about twenty Collaboratives in each Phase, there will be seven Phases.

What does an evangelizing Parish look like?

Evangelizing Parishes exercise radical hospitality. They are always mindful of the lost. They choose their Pastoral Team for their mission, rather than their mission for their team. They pay careful attention to what they look like to people coming through the door for the first time. They make excellent and bold use of social media. They are committed to forming disciples, who in turn form other disciples. They have a strong focus on adult religious experiences, and adult faith formation, especially in small groups.

Please explain the concept of a Collaborative.

In a Collaborative, several Parishes work together in significant ways. They share a Pastor, a team of appointed Clergy (Parochial Vicars and Deacons), a Pastoral Team, a Pastoral Council, and a Local Pastoral Plan which they develop together. Each Parish maintains its own identity – its own name, its own church, its own bank accounts, its own books, its own financial assets, and its own financial obligations. Common costs (staffing, shared programs) are shared between the member Parishes of the Collaborative.

Why does the Pastor or Administrator of my Parish need to resign? Will he be reappointed?

Disciples in Mission states that the Archbishop should give preference to the goal of Evangelization in every assignment of a Pastor. It may be that the best Pastor for Evangelization in the Collaborative is one of the current Pastors or Administrators, or it may be that the best choice is someone totally new. In Phase One, six of the Collaboratives have a totally new Pastor, and six have a Pastor who had been the Pastor of one of the Parishes previously. The characteristic and remarkable generosity of the priests of the Archdiocese of Boston is what makes *Disciples in Mission* possible, and gives it its energy and impetus.

What is the Local Pastoral Plan?

After the Collaborative has been formed and is up and running, the Pastor will appoint a team to write the Local Pastoral Plan for the Collaborative. This Plan will contain the details of how the Parishes of the Collaborative will engage in the work of the New Evangelization – how will they run their programs, how will they promote vocations, how will they engage in radical hospitality. The Plan will contain goals, and ways to measure the movement toward those goals. This plan will differ from Collaborative to Collaborative. Each plan will need to be approved by the Archbishop.

What does the training for the Pastoral Plan look like?

The training began in 2013 with the employees of Central Ministries of the Archdiocese. After the Collaborative Pastors have been appointed, their training begins. Training with the Councils (Pastoral Council, Finance Council, School Boards) follows in the autumn. Early in the next year, the Pastoral Teams will begin their training. Training is focused on the New Evangelization, on Catholic Leadership, and on the mechanics of collaboration.

Will the Mass schedule change in my Collaborative?

Mass schedules are determined at the discretion of local Pastors, advised by their Teams and Councils. In many places, the Mass schedules will need adjustment.

Is this a merger of Parishes?

No. In a merger, the previous Parishes cease to exist, and a new Parish is created. The Collaborative is an affiliation of Parishes – it is not a new Parish. Each Parish remains open.

What happens to the assets, including financial assets, of my Parish?

Each Parish continues to maintain its own assets. If you put money in the collection at your Parish, it goes into your Parish's bank account, and is used to pay your Parish's bills. Some costs are shared, such as the significant costs of staffing, but the Collaborative does not have a bank account and does not own property – each Parish makes its contribution to those costs, and the accounts of those Parishes are tracked separately. Each Parish, of course, also maintains responsibility for its own financial obligations.

Will a priest continue to live in the rectory of my Parish?

One of the great strengths of *Disciples in Mission* is that it brings priests together to live in common rectories for the Collaborative. This is far healthier for the priests, and far more cost efficient. So, there will be some Parishes that do not have a priest living in the rectory.

Does everyone on my Parish staff have to resign?

No. The Pastor will need the freedom to make staffing changes to help the Parishes become healthy and vital centers of the New Evangelization, but these changes are made on a case by case basis. Mass resignations are neither required nor expected.

Will Religious Education programs merge?

The structure of the Religious Education programs is left to the discretion of the local Pastor, advised by his Team and his Councils. In some cases, the programs will merge, and in some cases they will remain separate. In each case, the Pastor will make his decision based on what he sees as the most effective way to evangelize.

What will happen to Parish Finance Councils?

Each Parish will have its own Parish Finance Council, but those Councils will have to work together in a substantial way in supporting the mission of Evangelization. There are various ways in which that can happen – the local Pastor will determine the best way to work that out.

What will happen to Parish Pastoral Councils?

There will be one Parish Pastoral Council for the Collaborative, made up of Parishioners from all of the Parishes, and advising the Pastor in the mission of the Parishes of the Collaborative. The Pastor will seek to structure the PPC in such a way that all of the people of the Parishes will be able to have open and honest communication with him, both through the council and in other settings. A vibrant and active communication between the Pastor and the Parishioners is vital to the success of the Parishes of the Collaborative.

Where can I get more information?

The Pastoral Plan itself, the blog, and much more information is available at the website www.disciplesinmission.com.