

Parish Health Ministry

Report to 2006 Diocesan Assembly

October 11-12, 2006

Palatine IL

Joseph Kormos



Outline

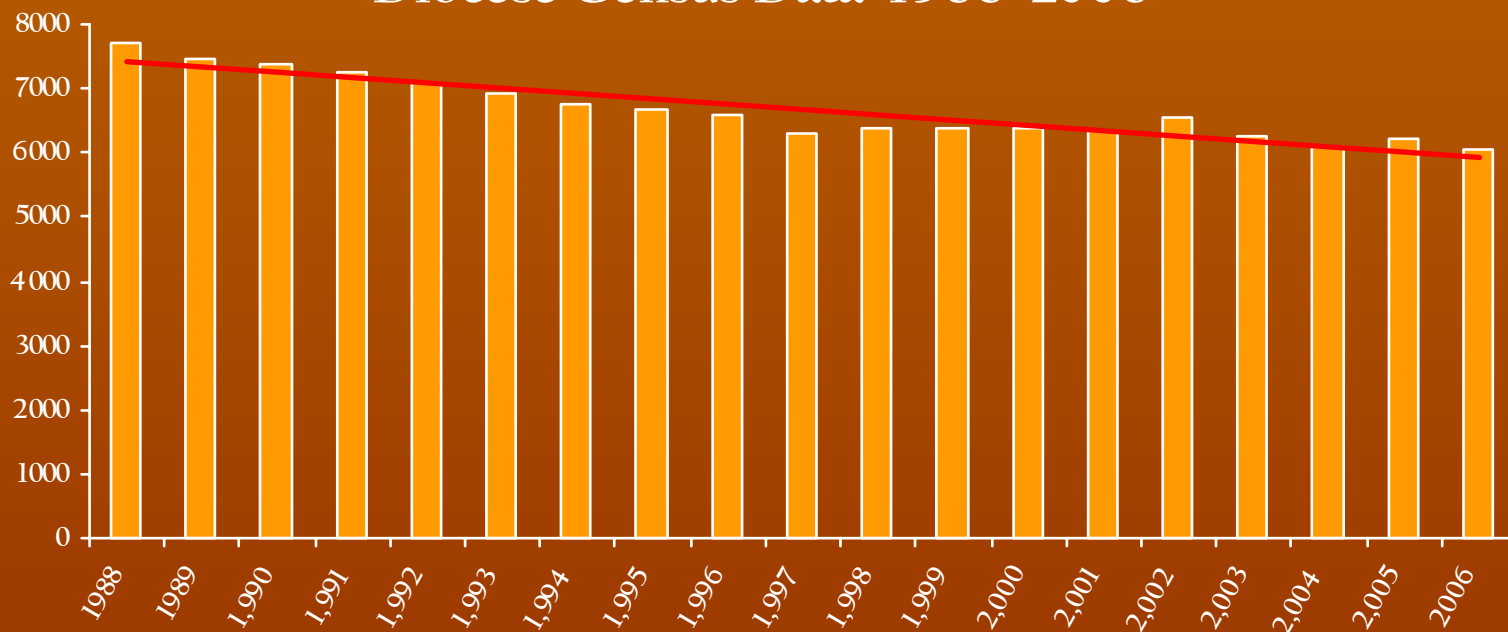
- Background
- Deanery visits
- Longer term view
- One year actions
- How you can help



Steadily Declining Census Numbers

Background

Diocese Census Data 1988-2006



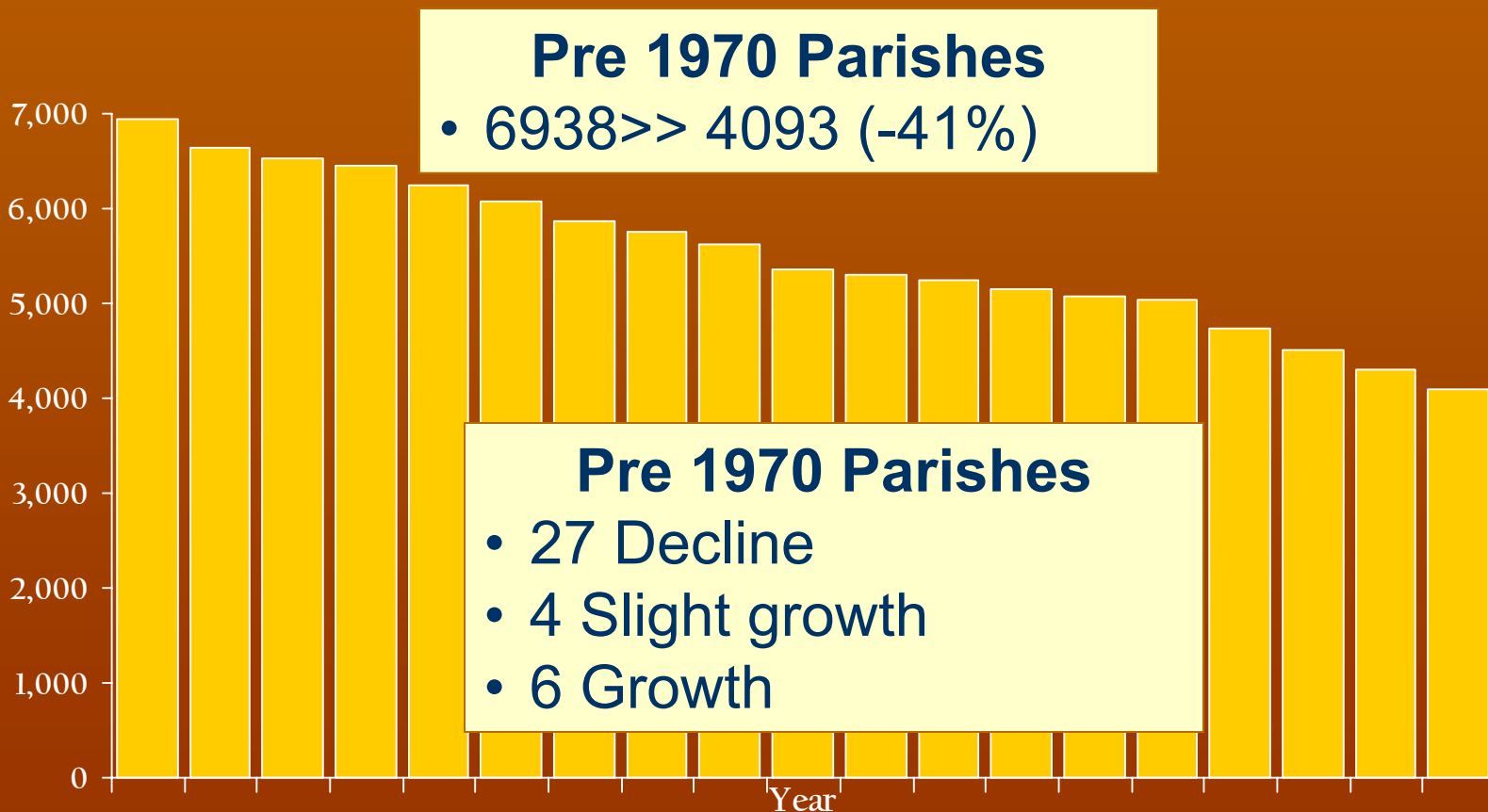
- **Diocese is 22% smaller than 1988 (7726 >>6041) (1685)**
- **51% of parishes have declined >15% since '96**



Parish Population by Founding Date

Pre 1970

Diocese of the Midwest

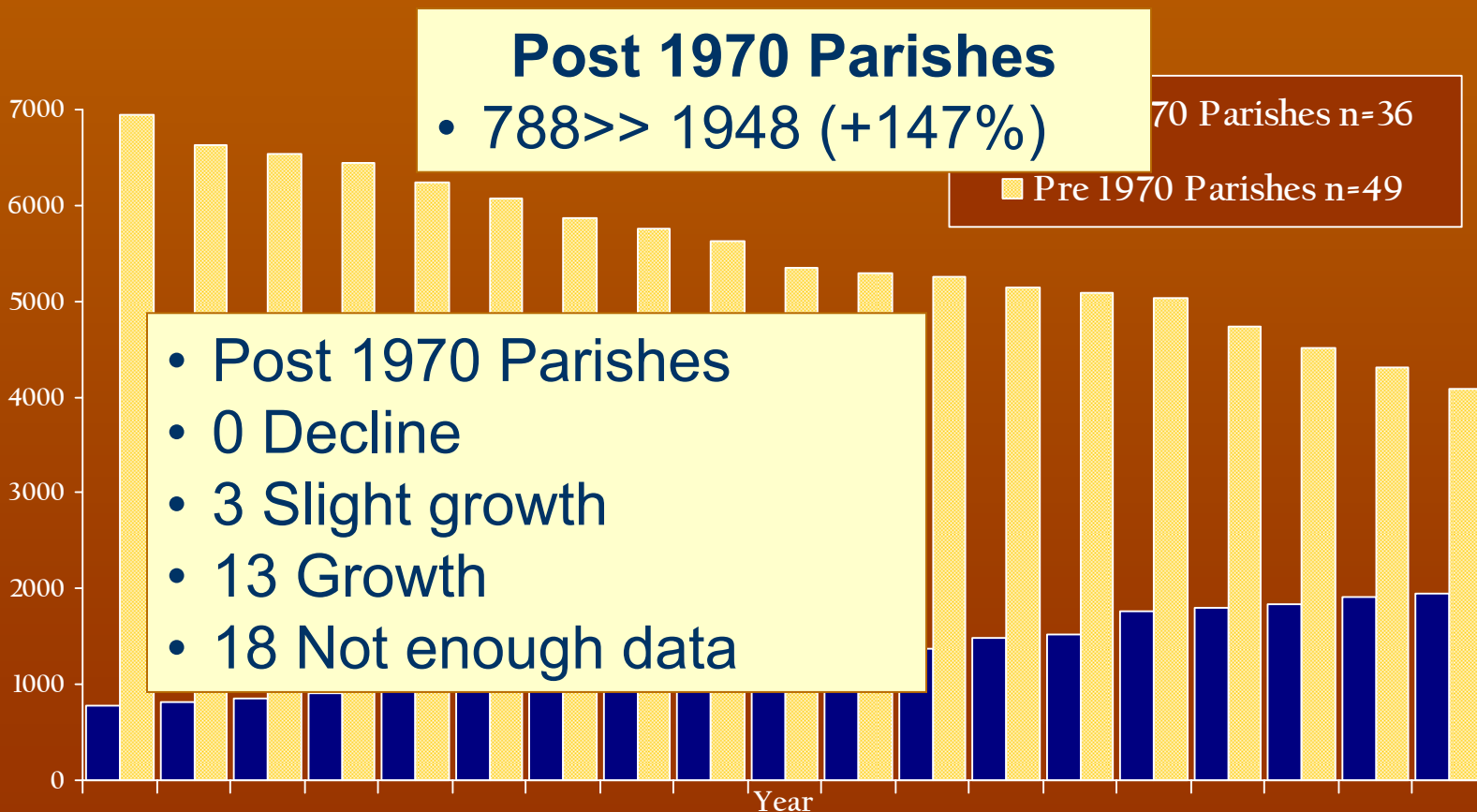




Parish Population by Founding Date

Pre & Post 1970

Diocese of the Midwest





Background: Timeline

Parish Health Ministry

- Orlando AAC – July 02
- Columbus Assembly Oct 03
- Livonia Assembly 04
 - Discuss decline >> “take action”
- Diocesan Council 05 – Brainstorm Solutions
- Mission Committee – Jan 05
- Toronto AAC July 05
 - Aid to declining parishes
 - Parish communication



Past Diocesan Action

Limited Investment in Future

- < 15% of budget
 - Seminarians, Missions
 - \$0 invested in strengthening existing parishes
- Current Diocesan “personnel” >>>>Today
 - Administration
 - Facilities
 - Reacting



Parish Health Ministry



The Concept

Parish Health Facilitator

- Part time Diocesan staff person to focus on parish health
 - Health/vitality/vibrancy >> Growth
- Build & drive...
 - Urgency; Hope; Sharing; Training; Zeal
 - Assistance when asked
- Bias toward “active” rather passive



Not...

- Growth (directly)... but health & vitality >>> growth
- A silver bullet “program”:
 - “evangelizing”, “round ups”, or advertising...
- Trying to personally do everything
- Reinventing wheels... (instead “repurpose”)
- Intruding in your parish



Deanery Visits

150 People from 53 Parishes

- What was Learned...
 - Ideas... over 80 of them
 - Herding cats
 - Your parish is not typical
 - “Un-program”
 - Laity want to contribute
 - (Virtual) death before renewal



“The Connector”

Deanery Visits – What We Learned

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another ”

Romans 12:4-5



The Lessons of Geese

- Fly 71% further in formation than if flying alone
- Share responsibility...rotate when tired
- Honk to encourage



One Year Actions

Selection Criteria

- Fit with vision
- Connectedness
- Multiple, modest size actions
- Impact multiple parishes
- Ease of execution
- Balance
- “Products” & Plans



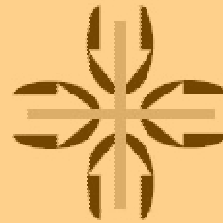
Starter Activities

Connectedness & Sharing

- Newsletter
- Help Us Find
- Deanery retreats
- PHM Conference

Parish Development

- NCD Methodology
Monitoring
- Urban Ministries
practices



Personal Development

- Inquirers Class
- Lay catechist definition

Administration

- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Clergy Comp Policy
- Audit Manual



How Will We Do It

- Lead Deaneries?
- Peer working groups
- Technology
 - Web pages, e-newsletters; chat sessions, webinars
- Make it up as we go along...!



What Can You Do to Help This Ministry?

- Feedback on plan
- Volunteer
 - Working Groups
 - Parish finances; webmasters; NCD; Leadership, Clergy Comp; Sexual Misconduct policy; Lay catechists, Inquirers class; more
 - Peer Reviewer
- Communicate -
 - Send bulletin
 - Take/return phone calls
- Parish Action Pledge –
 - Low hanging fruit
 - Count inquirers
- Make a \$ Contribution
 - Parish Renewal Grants
- Ask for Help
- Pray
 - For ministry
 - Parishes



Summary

- Facilitate a diocesan conversation about what a healthy, dynamic, vibrant parish looks like and what it takes in terms of clergy and laity leadership to achieve it.
- Build a useful methodology for parishes to assess their continual progress toward being a dynamic, vibrant parish and to identify key next steps in their journey.
- Find good practices/methods employed by parishes... share with others
- Identify needs/issues shared by multiple parishes cause action to be taken to address those needs.

Questions?

Thank You



Job Qualifications

- Self starter --ability to work without supervision
- Conceptualize and synthesize -- ideas >> new approaches>> solutions
- Ability to inspire – energy, fresh ideas; can do' spirit
- Knowledge of parish life - pre/post 1970 “mentality”.
- Contact Network --Diocese and OCA
- Skills - MS office applications, email e-newsletters, web sites
- Experience organizing events
- “On Feet” - facilitation of groups, deliver workshops; public speaking



Job Qualifications

- Self starter --ability to work without supervision

Salesman (*“Diocesan encourager”*)

+

“Maven” (*Subject matter knowledge*)

+

Connector (*Network*)

- Experience organizing events
- “On Feet” - facilitation of groups, deliver workshops; public speaking



Areas of Evaluation

What Makes a Healthy Parish?

- Leadership/ Administration
- Spirituality
- Worship & Liturgy
- Education & Spiritual development
- Outreach & Charitable works
- Evangelization
- Stewardship
- Lay ministry
- Love
- Others?



Parish Health Ministry

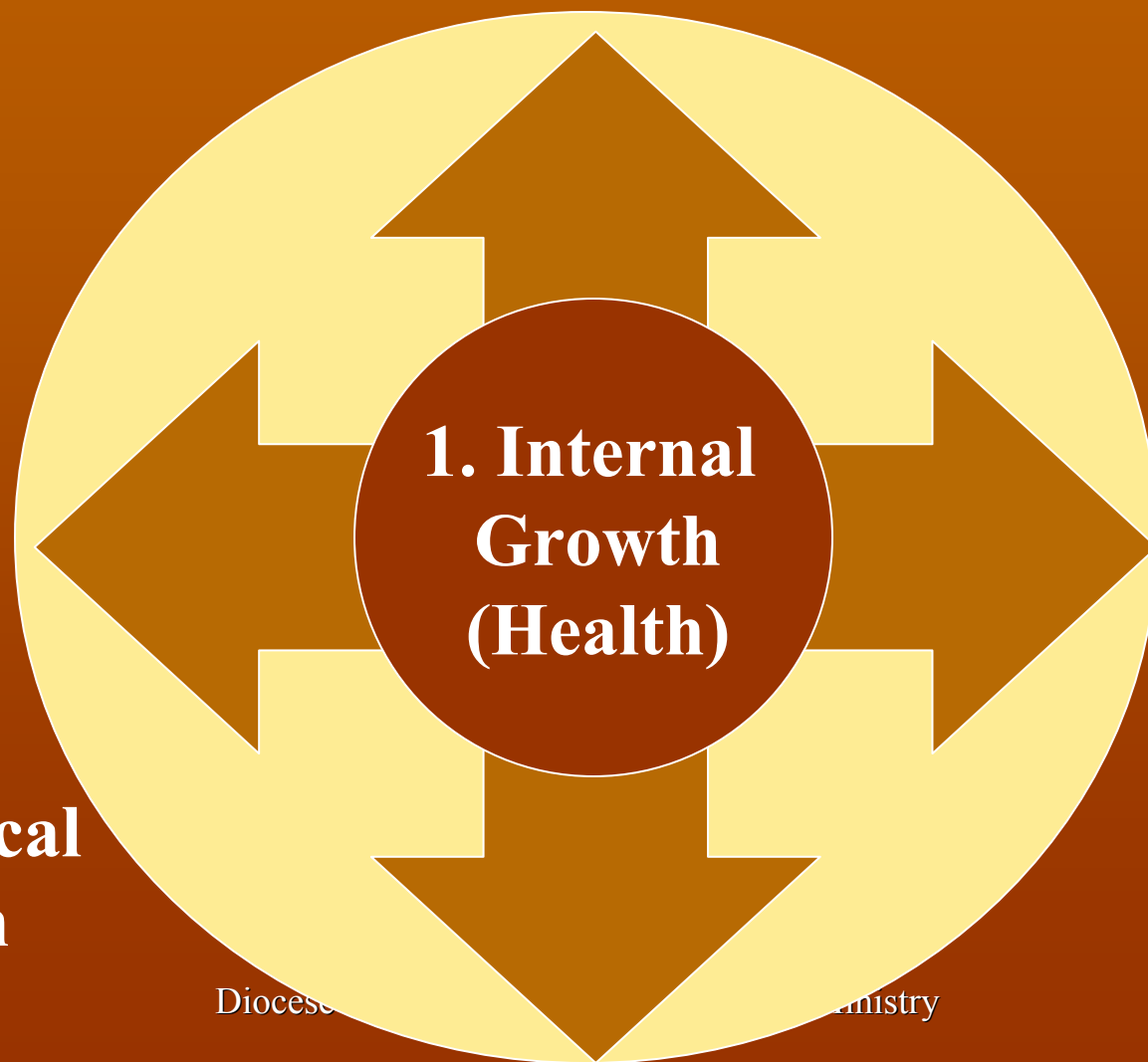
Benefit Focus Areas

Where should we focus...

1. Build awareness, Orthodoxy/ our parish
2. Attract inquirers
3. Catechumens
4. Strengthen knowledge of faith
5. Connect Youth to the Church
6. Improve facilities
7. Save priest time/efficiency
8. Make the parish feel/be well run
9. Save lay leaders time/avoid wasting time
10. Improve worship experience
11. Build priest confidence – tackle new issues



Internal Growth Enables Numerical Growth



**2. Numerical
Growth**



Background: Timeline

Parish Health Ministry

- Orlando AAC – July 02
 - Discussed status of parish life
- Columbus Assembly Oct 03
 - Restructured diocesan budget
- Livonia Assembly 04
 - Discussed decline



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Parish Health Facilitator

Kormos Background

- Parish Affiliations
 - Baptized: Archangel Michael Parish, Cleveland OH
 - Member: Christ the Savior – Holy Spirit, Cincinnati OH
- Diocese
 - Diocesan Council, Budgetary reform committee, Mission Committee
- OCA
 - All-American Council Project Team leader 3X
- Professional/Secular
 - Consultant – Product Innovation

Longer Term View



Long Term View

5-10 Years

- Consensus>>root causes of unhealthy Orthodox parishes
- Budgets – Greater % toward parish health
- Standards – Clergy Comp; Sexual misconduct ... being applied
- Diocese as Parish Engine - info, training, encouragement
 - Active Experience Sharing – Conferences/retreats
- Parish Health Assessment –
 - Methodology, track record of results, team
- Certifications
 - Parish Ed programs
 - church school teachers
 - Choir directors
 - Lay catechists



Long Term View

5-10 Years

- Personal stewardship (financial)
 - More parishioners meaningful donations.
 - The number of parishes with pledge programs has increased.
 - Income from fund raising has decreased
 - Larger % of parish budgets toward outreach and charitable purposes.
- Worship –
 - full liturgical cycle; greater participation
- Let Light Shine
 - Welcoming; Nice; Knowledgeable; Zeal for the Gospel ; Share
- Missions – 5 new missions planted. 5 new parishes; Gestation period decreasing.
- Census Figures/Parish data
 - average age ↓; Fewer parishes declining; Growing parishes outnumber shrinking
 - Baptisms + converts \geq burials



Long Term View 5-10 Years

- Additional items?

1.

2.

3.



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