

Strategic Vision Review

Diocese of the Midwest

Orthodox Church in America

Background

This document is an organized compilation of four meetings each including a subset of Diocesan Council members. Very few (2-3) persons have participated in all four meetings. A reasonable number (5-6) have participated in none of the meetings. It is not final or official in any way. Its use is to generate discussion among Diocesan council members and, in time among the entire Diocese.

Outline

What/Who Are We

- *Mission*
- *Identity*
- *Diocesan Ministries/ Tasks*

Current Status : Inventory *Where Are We Today*

Face Facts

- *Territory*
- *Census*
- *Resources*
- *Parishes*
- *Missions*
- *Ministries*
- *Clergy*
- *Admin. Structure*
- *Budget*

Conclusions

- *Strengths*
- *Weaknesses*
- *Trends*
- *Potential Priorities*

Our Vision

Where Do We Want to Be in 5-10 years?

- *Key Characteristics*

Actions

Budgets

Goals

How to Get There

Where are we heading?

Purpose of this Planning Exercise

Why are we doing this? For Whom?

What improved outcomes do we expect can result from this?

- Discern God's will for this Diocese;
 - become all we can be – achieve our best
- Get bishop, deaneries, clergy, parishes on same page ;
 - Increase ownership by all
- Facilitate change in order to grow and to mature
- Focus on what we (the Diocese) need to do (not others e.g. OCA)
- Determine what is the minimum baseline effort for a 21st century Diocese in North America?
- Improve stewardship --meticulous/ management of resources
 - Are we wasting resources (\$ or other) on efforts we do not need?
 - Missing opportunities due to lack of resources or focus?
 - Identify short, medium long term priorities and allocate resources in those areas.
- Clarify values – what is important to us
- Provide a foundation for Bishop search/election

Planning Horizon

- 10 Years – Vision
- 2-5 years - Goals
- 18-36 months – Actions

Stakeholders

- **Parishes**
- Clergy
- Laity
- Youth
- OCA; other Dioceses
- the local (secular) communities served by our parishes
- All mankind

Mission and Identity

Who We Are and What We Do

Our Mission is¹

“To bring the fullness of the Gospel (Orthodox Christianity) to all people of eleven states in the Midwest so that they might acquire the Holy Spirit and make Jesus Christ present in their daily lives.”

To fulfill this mission the Diocese’ primary ministries are to...

...equip *parishes* and *persons* to:

- Receive the Body of Christ and to

- Be the Body of Christ in the world as Disciples and Apostles

Our ministry is the Bishop’s ministry.

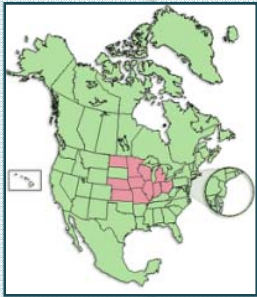
To fulfill this mission the Diocese’ practical ministries are to...

1. Oversee behavior and proper practice among parishes in the Diocese.
2. Provide assistance, resources, encouragement, guidance and tools to help parishes fulfill their ministry.
3. Maintain robust communication with clergy and with parishes (letters; communication organs; electronic, verbal, personal; formal informal)
4. Build a spirit of connectedness and community among clergy, parishes and people of the Diocese.
5. Stimulate and oversee the planting of new parishes and assist in planting
6. Provide developmental assistance to clergy to use their unique gifts as ministers of the gospel
7. Maintain good administrative order – metrical records; clergy assignments etc.; standard by-laws
8. Commit to proper funding for doing the work of the Diocese
9. Be good stewards of funds entrusted to the Diocese to do its work.
10. Equip & encourage all people of the Diocese to pursue their vocation in the church.

1. This is not necessarily “the” official mission statement. of the diocese It was constructed quickly by one group. It seems good enough for now. Future refinements may be useful.

Diocesan Inventory

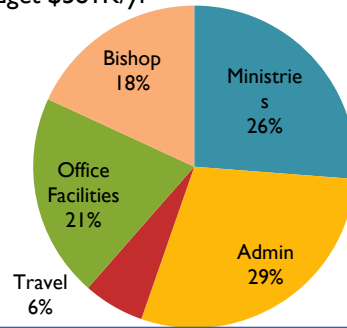
Territory



11 states
65M people
689 K sq miles

Financial

Budget \$581K/yr



Funding: Per capita assessment
Balance sheet : \$_____

Administration

- Chancellor aide, secretary, care taker, treasurer, bookkeeper, accountant; Parish health facilitator, 6 deans
- Diocesan council- 12 members; 3 mtgs/yr
- Comp policy
- Relatively few procedures/policies

Diocesan Ministries

- Parish Health Ministry:
 - Connect;; share practices/ tools; stimulate action via: *Parish Health grants; newsletter; parish inventory ; articles; workshops consulting; conferences; webinars*
- Late voc.
- Nothing: youth, music, educ. clergy, evangelization, charitable outreach

Diocesan Facilities

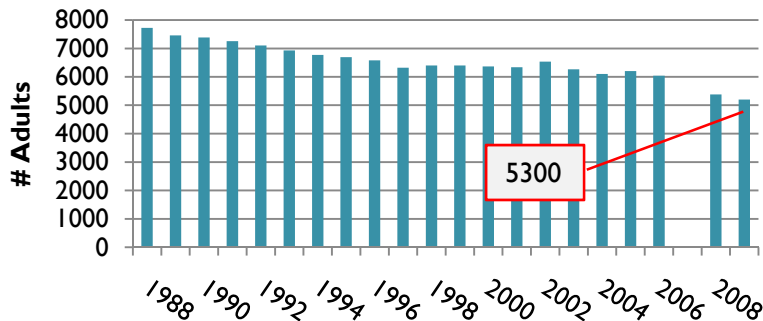
- Residence , church,/office.
- Downtown Chicago
- \$ 250K mortgage taken 2/07
- Diocese pays virtually all cost for entire complex
- Comingling of diocese and CTS parish is a complexity.
- Residence - 3 story brownstone
- 4 modest offices behind altar in church
- Limited parking and meeting space

Clergy

- ~90 Priests
- ~ 25% over 60 years of age.
- ~ 53% converts
- ___ % Orthodox seminary educated
- ___ Deacons
- ___ Seminarians
- More candidates than openings.
- Clergy convocation; little other training; assist, mentoring.

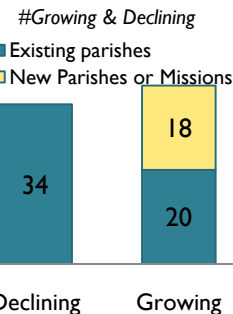
Missions

- 12 Missions
- Oversight committee
- Target: Founding to parish in 10 years; *not achieved*
- Grants 4 yr limit; early in life cycle
- Planting is ad hoc/ reactive.
- No training/few tools assists



Diocesan Census History

Parishes



- 71 communities
- Median parish = 55 adults
- 4 larger than 200
- Urban, suburban, rural
- Baseline: Parish council & Church school
- Probably 1/3 with youth effort of consequence; one parish w/ pd. youth leader
- Stewardship: Pledging most common practice; some still use dues

LaSalle St. Chancery Residence & Offices



Residence from
LaSalle St



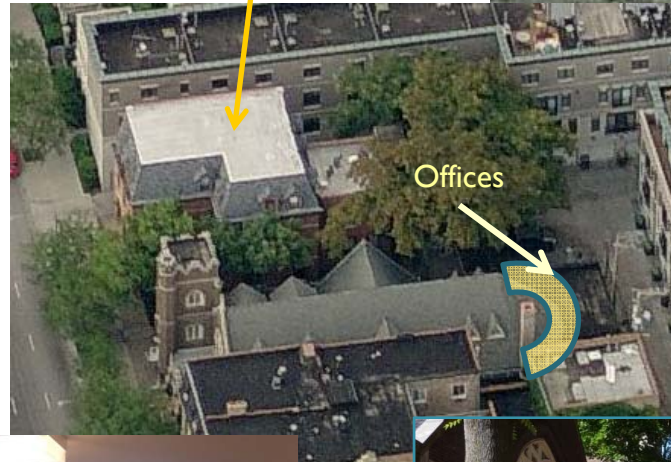
Church/office from
LaSalle St



Meeting room (dining room) in
residence first floor)



One of three offices behind
altar in church



Residence

Offices



Courtyard between residence
and Church/office (facing street)

Conclusions

Strengths, Weaknesses, Trends, Priorities

Inventory

(Previous page)

- Territory
- Number
- Financial
- Facilities
- Administration
- Parishes
- Missions
- Clergy
- Ministries

Strengths

- Love & respect for the bishop
- Caring ethical bishop
- Interest in/action on missions
- Support of late vocations
- Functioning deanery system & bishop's council
- Many seminarians
- Many youth camps
- Clergy convocation (pro & con)
- Open dialogue between clergy and hierarch
- Acceptance of pastoral/community diversity
- Parish ministry/assistance – resources/tools/encouragement
- Parish Grants

Key Trends – Social Economic Technological

- Rampant individualism
- Increasing diversity
- Decay in social mores
- Post Christian culture –Christianity not a norm
- Relativism
- Diminishing resources; conservancy
- Health & longevity of life – more parishioners available for volunteer effort
- Some have sensed a return to structure in education
- Increasing technology
 - Opportunity for fast cheap communication; allows small groups to have disproportionately large impact; shrinks diocese
 - Does not replace personal communication

Obstacles

- Limited ability to recognize, harness and utilize the gifts & talents of laity.
- Cost & utility of current Diocesan facilities
- Chaotic administration --we are disorganized
- Communication is poor
- Genuine pastoral ministry to the clergy
- General ignorance/ineffectiveness at sharing the Gospel w/ others
- We often have an exclusionary view of who we serve (our “target audience”)
- Individualism, parochialism, congregationalism
- We are satisfied with the status quo
- We are resource poor
- Uneven approach to stewardship

Potential Priorities

- Make diocesan administration more efficient
- Care for and assistance to parishes
- Increase connectedness and cross pollination of practices and ideas among parishes
- Clergy development
 - Provide assistance in formation beyond seminary: cont ed. , mentoring, early career rotation; summer internships; comp.
- Strengthen mission efforts
 - Mission priest assistance/training; apostleship teams for mission planting assistance; starter kit
- Parish visitation as conceived in 2002 budget reform
- Rethink how we do our work given lessened resources
(reconfigure territories; use technology, close parishes etc.)

How to Move Forward

Priority Area	Goals/Outcomes	Actions/Assigned to	Budget