



Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon 2000-2001 Final Report

OVERALL PARTICIPATION

In July 1999, Archbishop John G. Vlazny adopted *Disciples in Mission: An Evangelization Experience* developed by The Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association (PNCEA). The Presbyteral Council at its May meeting unanimously recommended the process. During the 1999 - 2000 fiscal year parishes were invited to participate. Ninety-two parishes, the Catholic Deaf Community and the Multnomah County Prison Ministry all agreed to join the process representing 74% of the parishes and over 90% of the registered households in the archdiocese.

2000-2001 was the first year for parish implementation. During the summer, fall and winter parish leadership teams were created and training was conducted in seven locations around the archdiocese. Beginning in Advent 2000 each faith community conducted a prayer campaign. During Winter 2000 parishes recruited small group leaders and members for Lent. Over 1,380 parishioners came forward to lead small faith sharing groups. Parishes reported over 11,250 individuals joined small groups during Lent 2001. Eight parishes had over 300 in their small group experience with the average parish participation being 150. In addition, teen groups were formed and approximately 3,000 families took an activity booklet to use at home.

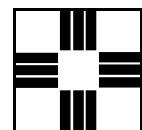
Training Sessions	Total	No. of Parishes
Coordinators Summer 2000	147	85
Team Members Fall 2000	613	85
Team Members Winter 2001	541	92

After completing the Lenten discernment process, parishes met throughout the Easter Season for a Parish Reflection Day. Over 3,700 individuals attended these reflection days where the community looked at its pastoral plans and activities through the lens of **Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States (GAMD)**. The parish facilitators asked each parishioner to consider the three goals of GAMD: to enrich and energize faith, share our faith with others and through our witness and action transform society. Each community developed an Evangelizing Profile to guide activities during the coming year.

†	Total	Average Per Parish
Team Leaders	637	8
Small Group Leaders	1,388	18
Small Group Participants	11,264	150
Families Booklets	2,986	88
Reflection Day	3,777	50

SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

Reflecting on the experience, the small group gatherings offered a very positive and welcoming community to share and explore faith with other parish members. For many it



was a new experience. 85% of the 1,964 individuals submitting evaluations, representing 18% of the total participation, rated the overall experience as very good or excellent. Over 75% rated the prayer experience, faith sharing and discussion as very good or excellent. The small groups were approximately two thirds female, 70% married, 13% single, 10% widowed and averaged 53 years of age. Eighty percent were already active in their parish and 12% indicated they were returning Catholics. Over 88% were Caucasian/white, 6% Hispanic/Latino and 5% Asian. Over 60% of the total archdiocesan participation came from seven of the nineteen vicariates—the Beaverton-Suburban, Metropolitan Eugene, Metropolitan Salem, Northeast Portland, Southeast Portland, Southern Oregon and West Portland Suburban. The evaluations also indicated that the Lenten experience had a very positive influence on the faith commitment of the participants. Over 90% reported they had a deeper experience during the Liturgy of the Word on Sunday, saw scripture as more important in their lives and felt a renewed commitment to their Catholic faith. Many written comments focused on the wonderful experience of meeting members of the parish and sharing faith and scripture for the first time.

Small Group has caused me to:	Somewhat	Very Much
Pray more	46%	39%
Read Sunday readings before attending	37%	36%
Value Scripture in my life	32%	55%
Have confidence & ability to share my faith	41%	47%
Want to participate in another group	33%	48%

THE PARISH REFLECTION DAY

The Parish Reflection Days averaged over 50 participants. The attendees were two-thirds female, 67% married and averaged 54 years of age. Over 83% were Caucasian/white, 11% Hispanic/Latino and 4% Asian. Over 50% of the total archdiocesan participation came from five of the nineteen vicariates—the Beaverton-Suburban, Metropolitan Eugene, Northeast Portland, Southeast Portland and West Portland Suburban. Over 85% of the 1,495 evaluations, representing almost 40% of the total participation, reported the experience as very good or excellent. Almost 90% felt the process helped parishioners better understand the Goals of GAMD and the importance of evangelization to the parish community.

The following were "Very Good or	Small Group Respondents	Parish Reflection Day Respondents
Small Group	85%	83%
Prayer Campaign	60%	69%
Homilies	81%	86%
Bulletin Inserts	57%	65%
Family Activity Book	35%	44%

Reviewing the 3,559 evaluations submitted to the Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) during the first year, 60% or more of the individuals rated the Prayer Campaign, improved listening to Sunday Homilies and the Bulletin Inserts as very good or excellent.

SUMMARY

The first year of *Disciples in Mission* was very successful. The process brought renewal to the parish communities. The faithful had opportunities to meet each other while sharing their stories of faith in Jesus Christ and His Church. Many experienced the joy of opening scripture for the first time. In addition parishes viewed their many activities and plans through the lens of evangelization, “the essential mission of the Church (EN14).”

The challenge for Year II is to build on the success, increase participation and begin outreach to the broader community. During the coming year parishes will implement their Evangelizing Profiles and Plans reaching out to more parishioners, especially the youth and young adults. Every participating parish sees itself as a multicultural community and will continue to build a spirit of unity and collaboration to bring the Gospel to Western Oregon.

Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon Top Objectives

During the Parish Reflection Day, parishes were asked to reflect on the three goals of **Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization**. Parishioners were presented with 26 objectives that related to the three goals and they were asked to select the two most important objectives for each goal. Each parish was asked to submit a Parish Evangelizing Profile that summarized the top objectives for their parish community and the ways that they recommended implementing these objectives. The information from the reports was tallied to create a list for the archdiocese of the top objectives as reported by the parishes. The following are a list of the top objectives, the GMAD goal that each objective is related to and the number of parishes that selected the objective. A sample of implementation ideas follows each objective.

- ◆ **To involve parishes and local service groups in alleviating the immediate needs of people in their areas** (Goal III, 42 parishes)

Implementation suggestions include: greater involvement of more parishioners in the causes parishes already support (e.g. St. Vincent de Paul, local soup kitchens, support of local seniors), working with migrant camps in the summer and establishing or strengthening a Peace and Justice committee.

- ◆ **To instill a renewed understanding of the faith among Catholics** (Goal I, 41 parishes)

Implementation suggestions include: better/more adult education, reviewing the religious education process to see how it might be improved, teaching a "Catholic 101" class and creating Bible study opportunities.

- ◆ **To effectively welcome back those who have left the church** (Goal II, 41 parishes)

Implementation suggestions include: sponsoring media and personal invitations to join our church, having a soup and bread night during Lent and inviting fallen away Catholics and non-Catholics, identifying and welcoming back those who have left the church by learning more about programs such as "Landings" and "Welcome Home" and having a parish open house.

- ◆ **To foster the importance of the family** (Goal III, 39 parishes)

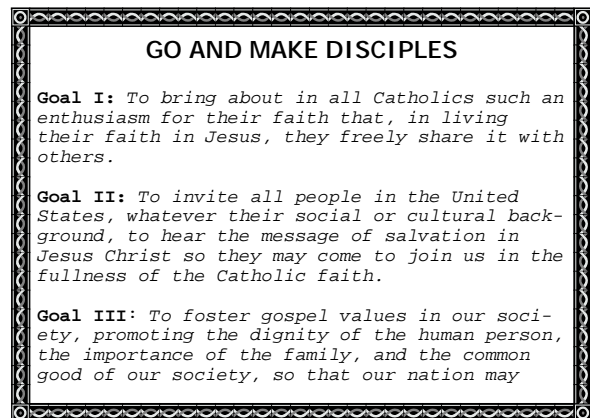
Implementation suggestions include: more activities at the parish (social and educational) that involve the whole family, encouraging families to keep one day a week as a family day, planning family retreats and making family and marriage counseling available.

- ◆ **To help every Catholic feel comfortable about sharing his or her faith** (Goal II, 31 parishes)

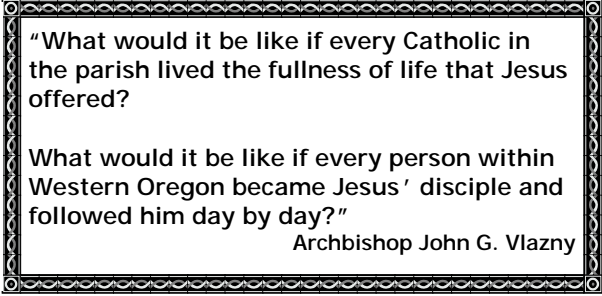
Implementation suggestions include: offering more adult education so that parishioners can be confident about sharing their faith, providing training for evangelization, forming an evangelization team at the parish, placing literature about the faith in the back of the church and continued participation in *Disciples in Mission*.

- ◆ **To involve Catholics on every level in areas of public policy, in the media and in questions of economic systems** (Goal III, 31 parishes)

Implementation suggestions include: developing ways to make parishioners more aware of political issues, encouraging parishioners to contact legislators, educating the parish on the Catholic position on various issues and developing a Parish Public Policy Task Force.



- ◆ **To make every Catholic institution more welcoming** (Goal II, 30 parishes)
Implementation suggestions include: training ushers and greeters to be at all Masses and demonstrate a sincere interest in people, welcoming new parishioners, encouraging personal invitations to all parish events and using holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day to welcome strangers.
- ◆ **To foster a greater appreciation of God's word in our lives** (Goal I, 29 parishes)
Implementation suggestions include: continuing faith sharing and scripture study groups weekly or monthly, offering Bible study classes taught by the clergy or catechist, funding free copies of *Share the Word* and encouraging daily prayer and scripture reading at home.
- ◆ **To create small group experiences of prayer and study** (Goal I, 29 parishes)
Implementation suggestions include: continuing exciting and theologically based faith sharing groups for all ages, forming a variety of prayer groups and activities (e.g. prayer services, music services, rosary groups, benediction) and inviting others to join *Disciples in Mission* next year.
- ◆ **To highlight the evangelizing dimension of the Sunday Eucharist, the power of God's word in worship and our recognition of Christ's presence in the sacraments** (Goal I, 28 parishes)
Implementation suggestions include: offering more adult education on the liturgy and the sacraments, demonstrating a welcoming attitude at Mass, encouraging participation in Eucharistic adoration and having monthly lectures by guest speakers on various topics (e.g. the Catholic faith, scripture, and liturgical music).
- ◆ **To foster greater appreciation of cultural and spiritual diversity** (Goal I, 28 parishes)
Implementation suggestions include: incorporating various cultural traditions of worship and multiple languages into the liturgy on a regular basis, having an annual cultural fair, inviting ethnic speakers to address social needs and having church dinners and musical events hosted by the various cultures in the parish.



NEXT STEPS

The Archdiocese of Portland has completed a very successful implementation of *Disciples in Mission* with thousands of parishioners experiencing renewal in the process. The Parish Evangelizing Profiles and the Parish Yearly Reports have been submitted to Archbishop John G. Vlazny. The information will also be shared with pastors, vicars, staff and the archdiocesan offices that support our parishes. The Parish Evangelizing Profiles will offer the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council insights and perspectives as they discuss the overall plans for the archdiocese.

The important work, releasing the Spirit in Western Oregon, will take place in each parish. The clergy, staff and laity must strive to fully implement the results of their individual Parish Evangelizing Profile. Every Catholic in Western Oregon must encourage more parishioners, especially the youth, young adults, alienated, complacent and non-practicing, to join the evangelization experience in Year II and become disciples in mission.

September 14, 2001

