



Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon 2001-2002 Final Report Summary

OVERALL PARTICIPATION

During 2001-2002 the Archdiocese of Portland completed the second year of *Disciples in Mission*, an evangelization experience in the parishes. The year saw continued enthusiasm by the Church in Western Oregon for the process at all levels of leadership and parish involvement despite the events of September 11th, a significant downturn in the regional economy and the sexual abuse scandal. In 2001, four new parishes joined the 90 participating parishes in the process - St. Agatha, Portland; St. Anne, Grants Pass; St. Philip Benizi, Redland and Sacred Heart, Gervais. In Year 2, 75.2% of the parishes were part of the process representing more than 95% of the registered households in the Archdiocese. 86 of the participating parishes submitted Yearly Reports. 78 parishes submitted Evangelizing Profiles. Overall, 90.4% of the parish teams contributed to the Archdiocesan Annual Report. It should be noted that in Year 2 the Archdiocesan Leadership Team clarified the reporting. As part of the reporting this year, parishes were requested to review and update Year 1 information to improve the consistency of the results for Years 1 and 2.

†	Year 2 Total	Year 1 Total	Percent Change
Team Leaders	734	714	2.8%
Small Group Leaders	1455	1467	- 0.8%
Small Group Participants	12000	11984	0.1%
Teens	1426	998	42.9%
Families Booklets	4435	5400	-17.9%
Reflection Day	4186	4241	-1.3%

SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

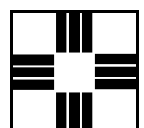
The results for Year 2 show overall small group participation slightly greater than Year 1; 12,000 individuals joined a parish group and 50% of the vicariates had increases that ranged from the Southeast Vicariate's 3% to the North Coast's 143%. The most significant increases can be attributed to strong pastor involvement, team leadership and new parishes joining the process.

The small group experience in Year 2 again offered a very positive and welcoming community to share and explore faith with other parish members. 2,838 small group participants representing 23.6% of the total participation and 55 parishes, submitted evaluations to Georgetown University's Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). The survey indicates that 58% also participated in Year 1 and for 30% the small group was a first time experience. 76% were always active Catholics, 14 % returning Catholics, 9% new Catholics and 1 % Non-Catholics. The groups averaged 8 members with 69% women and 31% men. 70% were married, 13% widowed, 10% single and 6% divorced with an average age of 57. Only 13% were young adults between the ages of 18 and 39. The profiles for Years 1 and 2 were identical.

87% of the individuals submitting evaluations rated the overall experience as very good or excellent. Over 72% rated the prayer experience, faith sharing and discussion as very good or excellent. Over 88% were Caucasian/White, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Hispanic/Latino and 1% African American/Black. The evaluations also indicated that the Lenten experience had a very positive influence on the faith commitment of the participants. Over 80% reported they had a deeper spiritual 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. Seeing greater value in the Bible was reported in over 90% of the surveys. Many written comments focused on the wonderful experience of meeting members of the parish and sharing faith and scripture for the first time. As one participant wrote, "Enjoy *Disciples in Mission!* Our church needs this to draw all Christians together."

YOUTH

Year 2 showed a marked increase in participation by our youth. Overall teen participation rose from 998 in Year 1 to 1426 in Year 2, a 42.9% increase. Increases came from across the spectrum. Only parishes with less than 500 individuals and parishes with between 2501-3000 individuals showed a decline in teen participation. The positive overall increase is due at least in part to the revitalized Youth Ministry Office which began its first full year of operations in 2001-2002, offering parishes increased support and training in comprehensive youth ministry programming.



FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Family participation, as reported by the parishes, was down markedly from 5400 families in Year 1 to 4435 in Year 2, a 17.9% decline. In Year 1, the *Family Activity Booklet* was widely distributed without a network of support and follow up with the families. In Year 2, parishes worked more closely with those using the *Family Activity Booklet* to enhance the experience. Year 2 evaluations indicated greater satisfaction. Year 1 and 2 continues to raise up the need for support and spiritual enrichment for parish families. Parents, whose last formal religious formation was either elementary or high school, feel inadequate in sharing and teaching the faith to their children. Adult formation continues to emerge as a significant need throughout the Archdiocese in every parish.

PARISH REFLECTION DAY

The Parish Reflection Days averaged over 49 participants. The attendees were two-thirds female, 68% married and averaged 55 years of age. Over 82% of the participants were Caucasian/white, 12% Hispanic/Latino, 4% Asian and 1% African American/Black. Over 85% of the 1,372 evaluations, representing over 30% of the total participation, reported the experience as very good or excellent. Almost 90% felt the process helped parishioners better understand the goals of **Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization** (GAMD) and the importance of evangelization to the parish community.

The Parish Reflection Day continues to be one of the most problematic components in the process. Parish planning and goal setting is not part of the culture in many Catholic faith communities. Too many parishioners look to "Father" or staff to provide services. A spirit of collaboration, participation and stewardship falls short in many parishes. In Year 2, parish teams called on Pastoral and Administrative Councils to be more involved in the process so the results could more easily be communicated and acted on. Pastors from a variety of parishes representing various parish sizes feel the parish planning process needs to be evaluated and training for parish leadership should be offered regularly. Leadership and laity must devote more time guiding the mission and less time focusing on short-term maintenance issues.

SUMMARY

Overall the Archdiocesan Year 2 experience continued to bring new enthusiasm and energy to the parishes through involvement as leaders and participants. The process was most successful in parishes of 1000 to 2500 members. These parishes had membership and staff large enough to support a full implementation lead by volunteers.

Reviewing the 4,210 evaluations and comments submitted to the Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) during the second year, almost 70% of the individuals rated the small group experience, prayer campaign, improved listening to Sunday homilies and Parish Reflection Day as very good or excellent. All four areas showed higher levels of participation and satisfaction in Year 2.

As the Archdiocese proceeds into Year 3 we must continue to see all parish activity through the lens of evangelization. Special emphasis needs to be placed in reaching out to families, young adults and youth. Every opportunity must be taken to form adults in their faith. Finally, collaborative leadership must be encouraged to more effectively use the talent of our clergy and laity. *Disciples in Mission* is an essential foundation stone for building the 21st Century Catholic Church in Western Oregon.

Small Group has caused me to:	Somewhat or Very Much Year 2	Somewhat or Very Much Year 1
Pray more	88%	85%
Read Sunday readings before attending	76%	73%
Value Scripture in my life	92%	87%
Have confidence & ability to share my faith	89%	88%
Want to participate in another group	94%	82%

The following were "Very Good or Excellent"	Small Group Respondents	Small Group Respondents	Parish Reflection Day Respondents	Parish Reflection Day Respondents
Small Group	87%	85%	76%	63%
Prayer Campaign	69%	60%	76%	69%
Homilies	82%	81%	86%	86%
Bulletin Inserts	50%	57%	51%	65%
Family Activity Book	36%	35%	57%	44%

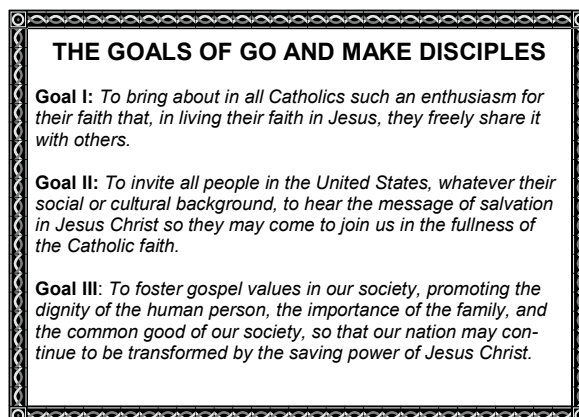
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon 2001-2002 Top Objectives

Each *Disciples in Mission* parish at its Parish Reflection Day in 2002 was once again asked to reflect on the three goals of **Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization** (GAMD). Parishioners were presented with 26 objectives that related to the three goals and were asked to select the two most important objectives for each goal. Based on the input from parishioners at the Parish Reflection Day, the *Disciples in Mission* Parish Leadership Team prepared a Parish Evangelizing Profile that summarized the top objectives selected at the Parish Reflection Day. The Profile also included suggestions about how the parish might implement these objectives in effort to become a more evangelizing parish. Once the Profile was prepared, the leadership team gave copies to the pastor and pastoral council in order to provide valuable input for the pastor and all parish planning bodies that are responsible for implementing the overall pastoral plan for the parish.

A copy of the Parish Evangelizing Profile was also submitted to the Archdiocese of Portland. The information from the Year 2 profiles was tallied by the Archdiocese to create a list of the top objectives as reported by the parishes. The overall top objectives in Year 2 remained the same as those reported in Year 1; however, there was variation in the order of priority. The following is a list of the top objectives for Year 2. In parenthesis after each objective is the GAMD goal to which the objective is related and the number of parishes that selected the objective in both Year 2 and Year 1. A variety of implementation suggestions follows each of the top objectives.

- ◆ **To involve parishes and local service groups in alleviating the immediate needs of people in their areas** (Goal III, YR 2—55 parishes, YR1—42 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: form a social justice committee to develop awareness of needs of the poor in our parish and local

community; have pulpit announcements during mass to give voice to ministries such as St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities, and soup kitchens; establish a prison ministry; channel volunteer talents to those in need such as cleaning, transportation, and grocery shopping; and build up outreach to elderly and disabled.



- ◆ **To instill a renewed understanding of the faith among Catholics** (Goal I, YR2—53 parishes, YR1—41 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: provide regular adult education between Sunday Masses; set up a Catholic faith resource center with books, videos, and tapes;

join together with parishes in the vicariate to invite dynamic and inspiring speakers to discuss topical people to ask questions by creating an “Ask the Pastor”

issues regarding the Catholic faith; and encourage section in the bulletin.

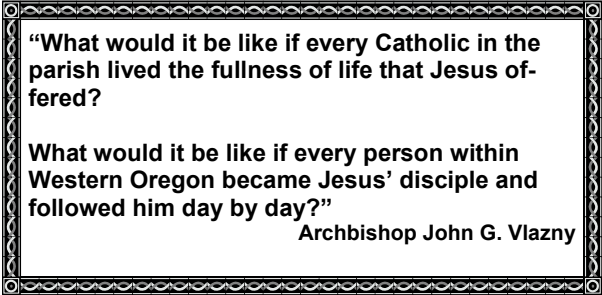
- ◆ **To make every Catholic institution more welcoming** (Goal II, YR2—44 parishes, YR1—30 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: have greeters at the door; exchange greetings with one another before Mass; develop a welcoming process for visitors and new parish members; publish a picture-directory to help parishioners recognize names and faces; utilize holidays to welcome strangers;

and work towards a more welcoming church by looking at accessibility difficulties, being sensitive to sight and hearing impaired, and having bilingual materials and bulletins.

- ◆ **To foster the importance of the family** (Goal III, YR2—42 parishes, YR1—39 parishes).

Implementation suggestions include: sponsor family nights in the parish including spiritual and social activities; expand programs to address needs and provide support for all types of families and all stages of family life; schedule retreats for married couples and families; and encourage more family faith activities in the home by giving parents tools and education to start home activities and prayer.

- ◆ **To involve Catholics on every level in areas of public policy, in the media and in questions of economic systems** (Goal III, YR2—42 parishes, YR1—31 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: form a social justice committee that will specify the political implications of our faith and keep our parishioners informed about the opportunities to impact our political processes; encourage Catholics to write letters, e-mail and phone legislators and the media; work together with other faiths to impact political processes; and utilize radio, TV and the media to promote Catholic views.
- ◆ **To help every Catholic feel comfortable about sharing his or her faith** (Goal II, YR2—37 parishes, YR2—31 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: offer evangelization classes and activities for both adults and youth; have mission weeks and days of reconciliation; train individuals on how to share their stories with one another and have testimonies of faith shared at Mass; and continue making small groups available for faith sharing and scripture study.
- ◆ **To foster greater appreciation of cultural and spiritual diversity** (Goal I, YR2—35 parishes, YR1—28 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: joint celebrations of the many cultures represented in our parish such as feast days, ethnic food potlucks with music, and celebration of ethnic traditions in our liturgy; have more bilingual Masses on Sundays, Holy Days and important feast days; have a bilingual bulletin; and reach out to more Hispanic people in our community and invite them to our parish.
- ◆ **To foster a greater appreciation of God’s word in our lives** (Goal I, YR2—29 parishes, YR1—29 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: begin weekly/monthly Bible study and faith sharing groups; encourage daily prayer and scripture reading at home by having scripture aids added to the bulletin; publish a list of resources that support greater appreciation of God’s word; and organize a Bible Trivia Game Night for the youth group to make learning God’s Word fun.
- ◆ **To effectively welcome back those who have left the church** (Goal II, YR2—28 parishes, YR1—41 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: develop an outreach group similar to “Landings” to welcome back Catholics who have left the church; encourage parishioners to personally invite back people they know who have left the church; form a volunteer phone committee to personally contact people who have left the parish to let them know they are missed and to ask if they are in need of anything to be able to return to the church; and reach out to fallen away young adults.
- ◆ **To create small group experiences of prayer and study** (Goal I, YR2—26 parishes, YR1—29 parishes). Implementation suggestions include: promote year-round scripture based small groups through continuing *Disciples in Mission*; offer a variety of programs to reach out to youth, single adults, married couples and families; and foster the development of additional small faith sharing groups.



CONCLUSION

The Archdiocese of Portland has completed a very successful Year 2 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. Finally, the Parish Evangelizing Profiles will offer the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council insights and guidance as they discuss the overall pastoral needs and plan of the Archdiocese of Portland.

