

The Northwest Group Plan

Revised 11-13-06 by the Northwest Planning Council

Membership of the Northwest Group: Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Brockport), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Hamlin), St. Leo (Hilton), St. John the Evangelist (Spencerport), the Hispanic Migrant Ministry (Brockport) and the Newman Center (SUNY Brockport)

COLLABORATION

A partnership is established in the Northwest Group comprising of the four parishes and two ministry communities. This partnership enables full sharing in the ministries of the Hispanic Migrant Ministry now located at Nativity and the Newman Community at SUNY, Brockport. As a partnership all members collaborate closely. Some areas of collaboration include:

- Encourage pulpit exchanges when appropriate in order to promote various ministries and community within the group and enhance awareness of the varied preaching ministries and ministers.
- Collaborative efforts in programs such as the annual retreat, RCIA, Baptism and marriage preparation, training of liturgical ministers, Creating a Safe Environment, and other special programming.
- Journey toward the practice and celebration of restored order in all parishes within the partnership and at Newman by 2008. The Hispanic Migrant Ministry will determine sacramental order based on pastoral needs within their community. ***Revised 11-13-06: Based on further discussion with regard to restored order, each parish and ministry community will determine sacramental celebration based on the pastoral needs within their own community.***
- Look at ways to collaborate in the formation of the people within the partnership in areas such as Justice and Peace, changes and reforms within the church, common seasonal themes, missions, etc.

MASS MATRIX FOR WEEKEND CELEBRATIONS OF THE EUCHARIST

The need for a Mass Matrix arose due to the declining number of priests in the Catholic Church. In response to this shortage the diocese provides pastoral leadership in two ways:

- 1) Priests serving as pastor
- 2) Pastoral administrator (lay, religious or deacon) who is responsible for the pastoral care and administration of the parish.

In the second case sacramental ministry is provided by a full or part-time priest who is assigned as a sacramental minister.

Currently the Northwest Group has five priests; four who serve full time and one part time serving as Sacramental Minister for the Brockport Newman Community. The diocese anticipates this will continue until 2008. During this period the number of Masses will remain the same.

Between 2008-2013 the diocese expects the number of priests in the Group will change to four. These priests may be either full time priest pastors or part time sacramental ministers providing

sacramental ministry to a community led by a pastoral administrator. At that point a revised Mass Matrix will need to be implemented. When there are four priests assigned within the Group each will have a primary relationship with one of the four parishes. At least two priests' assignments will include providing sacramental ministry for the Newman Community.

It is our goal that two priests within the Northwest Group will have Spanish language and cultural sensitivity training. It is also our goal that two priests within the Group will be skilled to work with young adults and college campus populations. All priests within the Northwest Group should be open to working with lay ministers and be excited about working with collaborative ministries.

Because the Eucharist is central to who we are as Catholic faith communities, our goal is to arrange Mass schedules to offer a variety of times within the Group (inclusive of a Mass in Spanish for the Hispanic migrant community and Mass for the Newman community).

SAMPLE MASS MATRIX

The following "matrix" is offered as a sample of what might happen when the number of priests declines to four. The specific schedule will be determined at that time. This matrix represents a maximum of 12 Masses ministered by four presiders as projected by the Diocese for the Northwest Group. This will allow us to reduce the number of masses and gain greater flexibility in priests' schedules and at the same time maintain the pastoral and economic needs of each community.

- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: two Sunday Masses
- St. John the Evangelist: one Saturday Mass of anticipation, three Sunday Masses
- St. Leo's: one Saturday Mass of anticipation, one Sunday Mass
- Hispanic Migrant Community at Nativity: one Sunday afternoon Mass
- Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary: one Saturday Mass of anticipation, one Sunday Mass
- Newman Center Oratory: one Sunday afternoon or evening Mass

When the number of priests is scheduled to decline to four, specific Mass times will be chosen by the Northwest Planning Group Council which includes the pastoral leaders, in consultation with individual pastoral councils.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ANY MASS MATRIX

- Mass times are staggered within the Northwest Group to limit overlap and provide a spectrum of times to meet the varied needs of parishioners
- Mass times allow priests to have reasonable travel time and adequate time to maintain relationships with the faith communities they serve
- Priest/sacramental ministers will celebrate at no more than two locations within the Northwest Group on any given weekend
- The Matrix will be reviewed regularly by the Northwest Planning Group Council to accommodate changes in demographics and pastoral needs
- The priests' presiding schedule must include coordination with the preaching schedules in individual faith communities

OTHER LITURGICAL OPPORTUNITIES

- The Catholic Tradition contains vast treasures of liturgical and communal prayer. The group will work together to cultivate awareness and expose parishioners to the full spectrum of Catholic liturgical practices.
- Parishes are to be acclimated to non-Eucharistic services in preparation for a time where it may be necessary for Sunday services in the absence of a priest.

MINISTRY WITH SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITIES

Within the Northwest Group there exist two Spanish-speaking populations

- 1) migrant workers and their families
- 2) a year-round Spanish speaking community

We believe that ministry with both of these communities is essential. Therefore, the Northwest Group will work together to foster multi cultural inclusion of all our communities. True multi-cultural inclusion entails respect for cultural integrity and pastoral needs and involves becoming aware of the gifts and strengths of the various communities. This implies participation in the events and activities of the Hispanic Community as well as including the Spanish Speaking community in the events and activities of the other faith communities. Mutual participation means insuring that interpreters are available as needed.

MIGRANT WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- The Hispanic Migrant Minister will serve on the Northwest Planning Group Council
- Advisors from each faith community will sit on a diocesan fund raising board for Hispanic Migrant Ministry.
- The Northwest Group will explore ways to support sacramental preparation and faith formation for migrant workers and their families
- The Northwest Group will explore ways to connect with the Ecumenical Rural Migrant Ministry in areas of social justice, advocacy and legal concerns

YEAR-ROUND SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY

- In collaboration with the Hispanic Migrant Ministry the Northwest Group will identify the year-round Spanish speaking community and explore what their needs and gifts might be.
- The Northwest Group will explore ways to support sacramental preparation and faith formation for the year-round Spanish speaking community.

NEWMAN COMMUNITY AT BROCKPORT

All parishes assume responsibility for young adults in their midst (18-35 year olds). However, due to the nature of campus ministry Newman is equipped to serve the needs of a specific segment of that young adult population - 18-25 year olds. For this reason Newman will be a center for campus and young adult ministry in the Northwest Group. An important part of its mission is to prepare college students and young adults for leadership as mature, fully active Catholic Christians.

The Group assumes that the current Newman facilities will remain intact. A concerted effort will be made to retain the Newman community in its own facilities. Should any changes become necessary, the Group will work with the Newman community to insure that the ministry remains vital.

LITURGY

- Newman will be a site for Mass targeted and scheduled to accommodate students and other young adults
- Sacramental coverage:
 - During the period in which five priests are assigned to the Group, Newman will have its own sacramental minister.
 - When the number of priests is reduced to four (between 2008-2013) one or more priests within the Group will be appointed to provide sacramental ministry for Newman.
- Newman will continue to recruit and train college students and other young adults as liturgical ministers

EDUCATION AND FORMATION

- Because an oratory is a center for study and prayer the Group envisions the Newman Center becoming a resource for the Northwest Group providing formation and education; integrating academics, theology and personal faith for adults.

NORTHWEST GROUP FINANCES AND FACILITIES

- As demographics change, the Group will monitor facility needs and usage to arrive at appropriate recommendations.
- This plan affirms that each faith community will remain viable. While the Group expects growing collaboration among all of the communities each one will continue to be responsible for their own finances.
- The Group will explore ways to assist members of each community in recognizing their responsibilities as parishioners including the importance of parish registration and stewardship. Because parishioners may attend Sunday worship at other sites within the Group envelopes will be returned to the appropriate community.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

While we understand that many challenges lie ahead, we are aware that this is a time of grace calling us to deeper and fuller commitment; to an understanding of our Catholic faith; and of our nature as many parts, mutually interdependent, of the one body of Christ.