



Ninth General Synod

Implementation Strategies, Plans, and Resources

Update: October 2017

Blue: finished, in place, on-going

Yellow: parish suggestion

Unhighlighted: to be done, finished or put in place

Background and Introduction

After the promulgation of the Priorities and Goals on the Ninth General Synod on the Feast of St. Louis, King of France, in August 2015, the Office of Pastoral Planning and Ministries convened twenty-one task groups of archdiocesan staff and other resource persons in order to develop implementation strategies that would allow the vision of the synod to be fulfilled over the next few years. These task groups met from September 2015 through July 2016. As implementation strategies for each goal were developed, they were reviewed at a series of meetings of the Archdiocesan Ministerial Council in April, June, and August 2016. Additionally, clergy feedback was sought at various times, and then the archbishop gave a final approval.

What follows describes what the offices and agencies of the Archdiocese of New Orleans will do to achieve the synod goals, and what the offices and agencies will provide to parishes, schools, and other institutions to help them achieve the goals. While parishes are free to try their own ideas to achieve the synod goals, the strategies offered in this plan could be thought of as that of a bucket or toolbox out of which you can pick and choose from among many initiatives and resources. Our hope is that these strategies will help our local Church “encounter Jesus and witness with joy.”

Human Resources Needed

The archbishop, through the Pastoral Planning and Ministries Office, is coordinating the efforts of archdiocesan staff. At the parish, the pastor, assisted by his parish implementation coordinator, is the keeper of the synod vision. The school and parish staff, such as parish catechetical leaders, principals, and youth ministers, will also be vital to the success of the synod. In addition to staff, the archdiocese is suggesting at various places in this document, several other ministry coordinator roles:

- 1) Evangelization
- 2) Marriage & Family Life
- 3) Social Justice
- 4) Vocations

Many of the initiatives depend on there being a parish contact person for each of these ministry areas, someone to whom the archdiocese can offer training and support on an ongoing basis, in addition to the dedicated clergy and staff at our parishes.

The synod goals will remain words on paper without the time, talent, effort, and collaboration of many people, both in the archdiocesan offices and in the parishes, schools, and other institutions of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Priority 1: Form Welcoming Communities Who Celebrate our Unity in Diversity

Goal 1: Dedicate renewed attention and resources from the archdiocese to enhance parish liturgies with more engaging preaching and music, offering an atmosphere of hospitality and welcome to people of all backgrounds and cultures.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Worship

- The Office of Worship will facilitate re-establishing a local chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, for ongoing formation and sharing of best practices, with local church musicians on a leadership board and membership/representation from as many parishes as possible; the parish representation also needs to reflect the racial and cultural diversity of the archdiocese (at least 50 parishes.) – by October 2016
- Parishes are encouraged to utilize the resources of the local Lyke Foundation for enhancing worship music in the Black Catholic community. – ongoing
- The Office of Worship will offer an Advent Morning of Reflection for Lay Liturgical Ministers. – in December 2016 and annually thereafter
- The Office of Religious Education will enhance and expand a liturgy track at the Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference. – in January 2017 and annually thereafter
- The Office of Worship will create and distribute a list of reviewed homily resources with samples available for review at Office of Worship. – release in October 2016; provide annual update
- The Office of Worship will create and provide a resource guide for priests and deacons who wish to create focus groups/homily critique groups of parishioners. – release in September 2016
- The Office of Worship will create and provide bulletin inserts for laity about what a homily is; with simultaneous coverage in Clarion Herald and on nolacatholic.org. – by October 2016
- The Office of Worship will facilitate collaboration among Notre Dame Seminary, the Priests' Continuing Education Committee, and the Permanent Diaconate Office to offer an annual workshop on preaching for priests and deacons. – by Spring 2017
- The Office of Worship will work with the Priests Continuing Education Committee and Permanent Diaconate on development of homily writing groups for those who are interested in working with other priests/deacons in homily preparation. – by April 2017
- The Office of Worship, in collaboration with the Offices of Religious Education, Catholic Schools, and CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry, will offer formation for improving Catholic school liturgies and parish children's liturgies, through the ACME meetings of high school campus ministers, through the regional meetings of elementary school principals, and through meetings with parish catechetical leaders. – by Spring 2017

- Pastors are encouraged to establish or improve a ministry of hospitality in each parish, including intentional practices and processes for welcoming new parishioners, and emphasizing that hospitality is everyone's responsibility. – by Spring 2017
- The Offices of Worship and Evangelization will provide catechesis on the ministry of hospitality and regional, annual trainings for new ministers of hospitality. – by Spring 2017

Priority 1 - Form Welcoming Communities Who Celebrate our Unity in Diversity

Goal 2: Engage the disengaged in the life of the Church, including those who feel alienated, those who have been hurt and those who do not feel they are effectively cared for in the Body of Christ.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Evangelization

- The Office of Evangelization will sponsor a series of healing services/liturgies around the archdiocese as a follow-up to the archbishop's institutional apology on Divine Mercy Sunday; the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick may be offered at these services. – by Spring 2017
- Each parish is encouraged to identify a coordinator for evangelization with training and formation opportunities provided to them by the Office of Evangelization. – by Spring 2017
- To reach the disengaged (those who attend Mass but are not involved in other aspects of parish life) parish Pastoral Councils are encouraged to hold an annual ministry fair or similar event where parish ministries and services can be promoted, and parishioners can be invited to participate and/or create new ministries and services; the Office of Pastoral Planning and Ministries will offer sample models for this effort. – by Spring 2017 and annually thereafter
- Parishes are encouraged to actively invite those received into the Church through the RCIA to involvement in a parish service or ministry. – by Easter 2017 and annually thereafter
- Parishes are encouraged to invite active parishioners to submit annually two names of people they know who are disengaged or alienated from parish life and/or the Church in general for clergy and/or parish staff to contact personally. – by Spring 2017
- In consultation with pastors and parish leaders, the Office of Evangelization will draft, publish, and promote a “parishioners’ bill of rights” that articulates basic promises our parishes and ministries guarantee, i.e., treated with respect, calls returned promptly, etc. – by May 2017
- The Offices of Communications and Information Technology will enable every parish to have an up-to-date, professional, user-friendly website and social media presence. – by November 2017
- Parishes are encouraged, using both the parish census and bulk mail services of the US Postal Service, to send an invitation to Mass and to the parish to all living within the geographic boundaries of the church parish at least annually. – by Lent 2017
- The archdiocese will publicize the availability of the deans to listen and help resolve complaints after local attempts through the parish office and pastor have failed. – by May 2017
- The Offices of Evangelization and Pastoral Planning will offer an annual professional development in-service for parish front office staff on effective customer service in church work, especially helping them to work with those who are alienated from the church. – by Spring 2017 and annually thereafter

- The archdiocese will provide support, visibility, and promotion of an archdiocesan outreach to those identifying as LGBT. – by December 2016
- The Archdiocesan Commission on Persons with Disabilities will encourage parishes to identify a disability advocate for their community, with training and networking provided by the commission. – by November 2016
- The Offices of Catholic Schools and Religious Education will continue the development and expansion of Catholic education and formation opportunities for those with special needs. - ongoing
- Parishes are encouraged to include young adults and single adults on the Pastoral Council, Finance Council, and other major parish ministry teams/committees. – by May 2017
- Clergy are encouraged to intentionally reference single adults, in addition to couples and families, in homilies. – by October 2016
- Archdiocesan Prison Ministry, Hospital Ministry, Christopher Homes, and Chateau de Notre Dame will identify and reach out to those alienated or disengaged from the church through their various locations and services. – by March 2017
- The Office of Religious Education will offer follow-up outreach after Easter for those who were baptized or received into the Church at Easter. – by April 2017

Priority 1: Form Welcoming Communities Who Celebrate our Unity in Diversity.

Goal 3: Hold an annual Family, Food, and Faith Fest to celebrate our unity in diversity as the people of God.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Family Life Apostolate and Office of Evangelization

- The Offices of Pastoral Planning, Evangelization, and Family Life will explore holding a gathering of members and their families from all Pastoral Councils around the archdiocese, and include prayer, food, and community-building, and celebrate our unity in diversity as the people of God. – by Fall 2017
- Parishes are encouraged to invite all people living in their geographic boundaries, not just those in parish census, to participate in existing parish community events such as fairs/festivals, parish dinners, etc. -ongoing
- Parishes are encouraged to hold an event to celebrate the parish's patron saint feast day annually. -annually
- The Office of Evangelization will offer strategies and models for enhancing the evangelistic dimension of public events, such as fairs, sponsored by parishes. – by December 2016
- With guidance from the Office of Evangelization, parishes are encouraged to engage with civic events within or near their boundaries as a way for the Church to be present. - ongoing
- The Family Life Apostolate will offer new strategies and models for enhancing parish Family Day celebrations to celebrate our unity in diversity as the people of God – by September 2017

Priority 1: Form Welcoming Communities Who Celebrate our Unity in Diversity.

Goal 4: Pilot a ministry in several parishes in which parishioners go out two-by-two in a spirit of evangelization, visiting every household and inviting people into a deeper life of faith

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Evangelization

- The Office of Evangelization will seek four to six parishes interested in piloting this effort. – by April 2017
- The Office of Evangelization will research, develop, and provide a model with best practices, and offer training and guidance to the interested pilot parishes. –by September 2017
- Parishes are encouraged to invite all people living in their geographic boundaries, not just those in parish census, to participate in existing parish community events such as fairs/festivals, parish dinners, etc. -ongoing

Priority 1: Form Welcoming Communities Who Celebrate our Unity in Diversity.

Goal 5: Establish a team to provide mall ministry and ministry in other public venues, inviting and welcoming people to the Church

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Evangelization

- The Offices of Evangelization and Communication will initiate public advertising through social media, television, movie theaters, billboards, and other means to invite people into the life of the Church. *-ongoing*
- The Office of Evangelization will establish and train a team available to work at public festivals and events where there is an opportunity for the Church to be present and visible. *-by October 2017*
- With guidance from the Office of Evangelization, parishes are encouraged to engage with civic events, events, and occasions within or near their boundaries as a way for the Church to be present and visible. *-ongoing*
- The Office of Evangelization will offer strategies and models for enhancing the evangelistic dimension of public events, such as fairs, sponsored by parishes. *-by December 2016*

Priority 2 - Embrace Christ in Every Family, Parish and Ministry

Goal 1: Implement formal opportunities in families, parishes, and ministries for people to develop a prayer life that will lead to a deeper embrace of Christ.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Archdiocesan Spirituality Center

- The Archdiocesan Retreat Center and the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center will provide annual calendars of programs in a “copy & paste bulletin-ready” format, including suggested publishing dates for parish bulletins, school newsletters, websites, etc. *-by December 2016*
- The Archdiocesan Spirituality Center and the Office of Religious Education will create and provide a curated resource list for parishes, schools, and institutions on prayer basics and highlight new suggested prayer resources annually, including workshops, online resources, publisher materials, and events. *- by May 2017*
- The Archdiocesan Spirituality Center will offer annually a suggested program on prayer for use by parishes, schools, and other institutions. *-by May 2017 and annually thereafter*
- Parishes are encouraged to offer a new prayer opportunity annually, such as a workshop, group, or other experience, with suggestions provided by the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center. *- by December 2017*
- Parishes and schools are encouraged to have at least five people attend the 2017 Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference, whose theme will be on prayer. *-by January 2017*
- The Archdiocesan Spirituality Center will recruit and train 20 new spiritual directors. *-by May 2018*
- The Archdiocesan Spirituality Center will invite non-active spiritual directors, or those on limited-service, to renew their availability to serve the public. *-by December 2016*
- The Archdiocesan Spirituality Center, Office of Religious Education, and CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will collaborate to offer formation opportunities for catechists, youth ministers, and other religious educators on personal prayer, planning/leading public prayer, and teaching children and young people how to pray. *-by Summer 2017*
- The archdiocese will continue its annual staff Advent and Lenten days of reflection – *ongoing*
- The archdiocese will continue, and expand as appropriate, the spiritual enrichment and prayer opportunities at the Walmsley and Howard buildings; outside offices will have opportunities for shared staff prayer on a periodic basis. *-ongoing*
- Each archdiocesan staff member will be encouraged to engage in one annual retreat experience of their choosing in addition to the staff Advent and Lenten Days of Reflection. *- by December 2017*
- All Catholic schools are encouraged to sponsor annually a retreat experience for faculty and staff. *-by Fall 2017*

- Parishes are encouraged to provide opportunities for their parish staff to participate in a retreat experience annually. –by Fall 2017
- The Family Life Apostolate will offer formation and materials on prayer within marriage, especially for use with couples during marriage preparation. – by January 2017
- Each deanery is encouraged to have at least three parishes within its boundaries offering regularly scheduled opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration, especially in the absence of a Perpetual Adoration Chapel in the area. –by February 2017
- The archdiocese will continue to promote Eucharistic Adoration. - ongoing

Priority 2: Embrace Christ in Every Family, Parish and Ministry

Goal 2: Expand parish opportunities to encounter Christ through Bible studies, multi-generational faith formation events, and occasions to reflect upon one's spiritual growth.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Religious Education

- The Office of Religious Education will continue providing regular resource updates and suggestions to parish and school catechetical leaders as well as including key resources in the Archdiocesan New Oracle and the Clarion Herald. - ongoing
- Each parish is encouraged to offer intentional adult faith formation opportunities on a regular basis each year, with models available from the Office of Religious Education. – ongoing and no later than Fall 2017
- The Office of Religious Education will prepare a curated resource list for parishes that highlights Catholic Bible study programs and multi-generational faith formation models and materials; the resource will be updated annually for Catechetical Sunday. – by September 2016 and annually thereafter
- Each parish (or cluster of parishes) is encouraged to offer at least one faith formation event annually that gathers together a variety of age groups, both individuals and families, from children to senior citizens – during 2017

Examples could include:

- inter-generational evening “Vacation Bible School” during summer
 - an Advent inter-generational gathering incorporating activities around Jesse Trees, Advent Wreaths, etc.
 - Special formation opportunity for Lent
- Parishes and other institutions are encouraged to offer, at least annually, a formal Scripture formation program, with suggestions from the Office of Religious Education. – by Fall 2017 and annually thereafter
 - Every parish is asked to promote the offerings of the Archdiocesan Spirituality Center and the Archdiocesan Retreat Center on a regular basis through parish communications. – Fall 2016
 - Prison Ministry, Christopher Homes, and Chateau de Notre Dame facilities will offer Bible study, faith formation, and spiritual reflection opportunities to those they serve. – by Spring 2017

Priority 2: Embrace Christ in Every Family, Parish and Ministry

Goal 3: Increase the availability and catechesis of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Worship and Office of Religious Education

- Parish leadership (pastors, parochial vicars, deacons, and Pastoral Councils) are encouraged to determine new regular days and times on which to offer the sacrament in addition to Saturday afternoons, by appointment, and special occasions such as archdiocesan-wide days. It is suggested that the deanery structure be used for consultation so that neighboring parishes may consider collaborating in order to offer confessions on a variety of days and times. (Example: parish A adds confessions on Monday and Wednesday evenings and Parish B adds confessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Another example: Parish A adds two weekday mornings for confessions and Parish B adds two weekday evenings for confessions.) - Implement expanded schedule by start of Advent 2016
- The archdiocese will continued promoting use of the Toolbox of Mercy. - current through Year of Mercy
- All parishes will continue the annual night of confession each September. - current and continuing
- All parishes will continue to offer confessions on three consecutive Wednesday nights in Lent. - current and continuing
- The Office of Communications will reprint and distribute “confession” cards to all parishes with the addition of an Act of Contrition-by September 2016
- Deaneries are encouraged to consider holding a deanery Penance Service annually (not necessarily during Lent or Advent.) -by Fall 2017
- All Catholic schools and Parish Schools of Religion are encouraged to offer opportunities for confession to their students. - by Spring 2017
- Christopher Homes, Chateau de Notre Dame, Hospital Ministry, and Prison Ministry will increase the availability of confession at their locations. - by December 2016
- Catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation for priests scheduled for the Priests’ Convocation. - September 2016
- The Office of Religious Education will provide catechetical materials on penance such as bulletin inserts, sample pulpit announcements, and lesson plans for PSR and Catholic schools, in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese-in October 2016

- 1) Catechesis on what a sacrament is – a sacred encounter with the Holy, highlighting the importance of celebrating the Rite as it is written in order to provide the penitent with a true encounter of the mercy and love of God and the essence of God's mercy through the celebration of Penance.
- 2) How are sins forgiven? (Eucharist, Confession, Penitential Act)
- 3) Environment
- 4) Rite of Penance (Bible, face-to-face/screen options, Act of Contrition options)
- 5) Catechesis on five steps of the Sacrament (confession, contrition, penance, absolution, reconciliation)
- 6) Catechesis on Proper Penances

Priority 2: Embrace Christ in Every Family, Parish and Ministry

Goal 4: Develop a process to measure the effectiveness of religious education in our Catholic schools and parish schools of religion

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Religious Education and Office of Catholic Schools

- The Office of Religious Education and the Office of Catholic Schools will provide all Catholic Schools and Parish Schools of Religion an instrument approved by the archbishop for measuring program effectiveness. – by August 2017

Priority 3: Minister to Families, Youth, and Young Adults

Goal 1: Increase the number of parishes being served by qualified and compensated religious education directors, youth ministers, and family life ministers.

Lead archdiocesan resource: CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office, Office of Religious Education, and Family Life Apostolate

- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will offer a “why youth ministry” seminar in every deanery for clergy and laity, including the rationale for youth ministry, the benefits of having a youth minister, and the training and support offered by the archdiocese to the parishes. – throughout Fall 2016 and Spring 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will establish and offer a youth minister internship program to parishes and/or parish clusters whereby qualified candidates live in community with room and board funded by archdiocesan-obtained grants, and a stipend funded by the parish, with the intern working for a minimum of twelve months under the mentorship of archdiocesan staff and other veteran youth ministers. This could have the benefit of helping parishes create a position at an initial low-cost, form professional youth ministers, provide vocational discernment, and build capacity across the archdiocese. -by Fall 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will continue and re-emphasize the youth minister certification courses already offered. -ongoing
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will seek input from parish youth ministers to expand the deanery/regional support meetings for them as a way to reduce burn-out and turnover. -by February 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will create and offer a mentoring/companionship program for parish youth ministers, where new youth ministers are paired with an experienced, successful person from another parish, with an intentional look at professional growth topics and best practices. -by April 2017
- The Office of Religious Education will re-introduce and offer a mentoring/companionship program for Parish Catechetical Leaders where new PCL’s are paired with an experienced professional from another parish, with an intentional program of professional development topics and best practices. – by September 2017
- The Office of Religious Education will continue to offer, with renewed publicity, catechist certification courses year-round and across the archdiocese. -ongoing
- The Office of Religious Education will continue to offer, with renewed publicity, the discounted opportunities for degrees from Notre Dame Seminary and the local Catholic universities. - ongoing
- The Family Life Apostolate will offer “role of a family life coordinator” information for clergy, both in print and at deanery meetings. – by January 2017

- The Family Life Apostolate will offer formation and support gatherings by deanery for parish family life coordinators. –by January 2017
- The Catholic Foundation will offer a stewardship appeal program for use by parishes that focuses on funding one or more of these positions (youth minister, parish catechetical leader, family life coordinator) on the parish staff. – by January 2017

Priority 3: Minister to Families, Youth and Young Adults

Goal 2: Increase the number of young adults and single adults engaged in the life of the Church at the parish and deanery levels.

Lead archdiocesan resource: CYO/ Youth & Young Adult Ministry

- Pastors are encouraged to consider appointing at least one young adult to the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council of the parish. – by May 2017
- Parishes are encouraged to invite young adults to serve as youth ministry mentors and as catechists for PSR/CCD and immediate preparation for Confirmation. - by October 2016
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will continue to facilitate use of the “Newman Connection” program whereby the office collects college choices of graduating high school seniors and forwards these to the college Catholic campus ministries. - current and continuing
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will continue and enhance the relationship between the archdiocese and area universities. - current and continuing
- The Office of Communications, the Clarion Herald, and the CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will collaborate to increase the frequency and depth of coverage of young adult activities in the archdiocese. -by November 2016
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will expand the “Christ in the City” program to other areas of the archdiocese. – by Spring 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will sponsor listening sessions for young adults in various areas of the archdiocese to better identify needs and how parishes can respond. – November 2016 – April 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will offer to visit each of the clergy deanery meetings to discuss the purpose and goals of young adult ministry. – October 2016 – May 2017
 - Provide highlights of USCCB *Sons & Daughters of the Light*
 - Provide overview of young adult ministry
 - Invite clergy to identify 2-3 young adults from their parishes who may have expressed interest in young adult ministry or demonstrate leadership potential.
 - Invite clergy to discuss the best way forward: individual parishes, multi-parish, or deanery-wide.
 - Written summary of the information will be provided to clergy as well
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will offer young adult ministry trainings in all deaneries for interested parishioners and parish leaders. —two trainings per month during 2016-2017 academic year
 - Overview of young adult ministry, understanding of challenges, principles of young adult ministry leadership, basic ministry a parish can offer, setting measurable goals, planning

- Opportunity for networking among young adults from area parishes that can provide input as to preference for the ministry to be through individual parishes, multi-parish, or deanery-wide to best serve the young adults in that area
- Each deanery is encouraged to establish young adult ministry within its boundaries, whether as a deanery-wide/clustered outreach and/or in at least some parishes within the deanery. – by October 2017

Priority 3: Minister to Families, Youth, and Young Adults

Goal 3: Strengthen and support couples through all stages of marriage by offering mentorship, marriage enrichment, and marriage and family counseling.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Family Life Apostolate

- Every pastor is encouraged to appoint a couple or married individual to serve as parish coordinator of marriage and family life. –by November 2016
- The Family Life Apostolate will provide, in each deanery, initial formation sessions and a resource manual for parish family life coordinators. – begin November 2016 and then ongoing
- The Family Life Apostolate will host regular support meetings for parish family life coordinators in every deanery. – throughout 2017 and annually thereafter
- Parish Family Life Coordinators are encouraged provide leadership and support for the following parish efforts:
 - Marriage preparation:
 - Work with pastor, clergy, and parish staff to help implement the chosen parish marriage preparation structure.
 - Coordinate mentor couples: their training in the chosen program (via the Family Life Apostolate), pairing and scheduling, and continued formation (offered by the Family Life Apostolate.)
 - Marriage enrichment
 - For different stages of marriage
 - Spirituality
 - Communication
 - Parenting
 - Mentors and small groups
 - Pastoral care and outreach to the divorced and separated, and their children
 - Education and support for annulments
 - Assist single parents in their vocation
 - Advertise the services available for those struggling with infertility
 - Increase advertising and awareness of adoption services
 - Ministry to/with singles
- The archdiocese will continue implementation of the particular law on marriage preparation. – current and continuing
- The Family Life Apostolate will offer workshops on the exhortation of Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia, held in various locations around the archdiocese. – in September/October 2016
- The Family Life Apostolate will provide a speakers' bureau on family life that can be utilized by parishes and Parish Schools of Religion. - by December 2016

Priority 3: Minister to Families, Youth and Young Adults

Goal 4: Reach out with compassion to the divorced and the children of the divorced who feel alienated from the Church.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Family Life Apostolate

- Each parish would ensure that its marriage and family life coordinator understands the situation of divorce and can include that perspective when planning parish outreach. – by December 2016
- The Family Life Apostolate, with input from the Metropolitan Tribunal, will include formation on marriage validity, annulment process, and impact of divorce for parish family life coordinators. – November 2016 through May 2017 and annually thereafter
- The Family Life Apostolate, in collaboration with the Offices of Catholic Schools, Religious Education, Youth Ministry, and Legal Counsel, will offer all principals, school counselors, campus ministers, youth ministers, and parish catechetical leaders formation on Catholic teaching about divorce, pastoral care for children and parents experiencing divorce, and responsibilities regarding legal custody arrangements. – by May 2017
- The Family Life Apostolate, in collaboration with the Priests' Continuing Education Committee and the Permanent Diaconate Office, will offer continuing education opportunities that reviews Catholic teaching about divorce and pastoral care for those experiencing divorce. – by December 2017
- Clergy are encouraged, through their homilies, and other interactions, to invite and include the divorced in parish life. – by Advent 2016 and then ongoing
- The Family Life Apostolate will promote and expand the Beginning Experience program, especially the Beginning Experience youth weekend component for children experiencing divorce. – by March 2017
- The Family Life Apostolate will offer models and training for parish or deanery based support groups for those who are divorced, similar to the NAIM program for widows/widowers. – by December 2017
- Parishes are encouraged to intentionally include and recognize the diversity of family structure including the divorced, widowed, blended, and situations such as grandparents raising children at their annual "Family Day" celebration. – by September 2017 and annually thereafter
- Parishes, schools, and other institutions serving children and young people are encouraged to be sensitive in planning programs that are inclusive of those living in diverse family structures. – by December 2016 and ongoing

- School counseling programs encouraged to offer during every academic year intentional outreach to students who have experienced or are experiencing divorce. - by 2017-2018 academic year
- With facilitation by the Office of Religious Education, parish catechetical leaders in each deanery are encouraged to collaborate and ensure that students enrolled in PSR/CCD are accommodated in situations of shared custody and visitation arrangements that make attending PSR/CCD challenging for the student. - Fall 2017
- The Metropolitan Tribunal, in collaboration with the Family Life Apostolate, will recruit and train additional procurator advocates who can assist divorced persons with drafting the petition for a declaration of nullity. - by December 2017
- The Metropolitan Tribunal, in collaboration with the Family Life Apostolate, will publish a brochure to be placed in each parish, school, and institution that explains annulments, including recent updates to processes. - by December 2016

Priority 4: Prepare Servant Leaders for the Church

Goal 1: Nurture awareness within families of God’s call to holiness and the need to put our gifts at the service of the community.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Stewardship Director of Catholic Foundation & Family Life Apostolate

- The Catholic Foundation will offer to pilot the Catholic “StrengthsFinder” tool at the clergy meeting of one deanery so that clergy can provide feedback on the experience; the tool’s purpose is to identify a person’s gifts in a context of faith, spirituality and parish life. – Spring 2017
- The Catholic Foundation will offer a clergy training in each deanery on the chosen parishioner strengths finder/gift assessment tool. – Fall 2017/Spring 2018
- The Catholic Foundation will invite parish leadership including clergy, parish staff, pastoral council members, and school administrators to participate in a deanery-based gift-assessment process. – Fall 2018
- Parishes or deaneries are encouraged to offer the strengths finder process for all interested parishioners annually. - begin Fall 2018 and ongoing thereafter
- The Catholic Foundation will pilot an “art of the invite” workshop for clergy in one deanery and obtain feedback, and then offer the workshop widely on an annual basis to all clergy. – by Spring 2018
- Parish leaders are encouraged to offer home visits, gatherings, or receptions in order to build relationships within the parish community. – begin by Fall 2017
- The Family Life Apostolate will establish a speakers bureau that specializes in helping parents apply Catholic identity and ideals to family life. – by November 2016
- Each parish and school is encouraged to offer an annual opportunity, such as a retreat, day of reflection, or workshop, for parents to reflect on holiness and service within the family. – by Spring 2018
- With suggestions provided by the Family Life Apostolate, each parish is encouraged to do intentional follow-up with parents after the Baptism of a child. – begin by Spring 2017
- Through homilies, parish bulletins, social media, and other means, clergy are encouraged to frequently advocate that parishioners share gifts of time and talent to better parish life. – ongoing
- Each parish is encouraged to hold an annual event to promote parish services and ministries and invite parishioner involvement in these. – by Spring 2017

- The Family Life Apostolate will offer a “toolbox for holiness” for families, utilizing resources from the Year of Family and Faith. –by May 2017
- Clergy and married couples who are preparing couples for marriage are encouraged to invite the couple to consider how they might be involved in the services and ministries of parish life. –ongoing

Priority 4: Prepare Servant Leaders for the Church

Goal 2: Identify 1-2 potential lay leaders in each parish annually and support their formation as servant leaders for the Church.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry at Notre Dame Seminary

- The archdiocese will establish a standing committee, chaired by Notre Dame Seminary's Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry, on lay leadership formation in order to maintain momentum, coordinate resources, and promote collaboration with representatives from Loyola Institute for Ministry, Xavier Institute for Black Catholic Studies, University of Holy Cross, and the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education. – by November 2016
- The Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry will provide continuing education opportunities for current lay ecclesial ministers. – by Fall 2017
- The Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry will create a discernment resource and offer a periodic gathering for individuals to help them examine/reflect on a call to lay ecclesial ministry and leadership. – by September 2016
- The archdiocese will create and promote opportunities for clergy education about lay ecclesial ministry, and about ministry versus service in parish life. – by December 2016
- The Catholic Foundation will work to identify and obtain funding sources for need-based scholarships for laity in leadership formation. – by May 2017
- The archdiocese will have an annual appeal on the Feast of Baptism of the Lord in January (letter from archbishop, pulpit appeal, prayers of the faithful, Clarion ad, etc.) to parishes to identify 1-2 potential lay leaders annually. – develop materials by October 2016; publicize November-December 2016 for January 2017 launch and annually thereafter
- Parishes are encouraged to identify candidates for Lay Ecclesial Ministry. – ongoing

Priority 4: Prepare Servant Leaders for the Church

Goal 3: Identify 1-2 candidates for priesthood, the diaconate and consecrated life in each parish annually and support their discernment

Goal 4: increase African-American, Hispanic, and Asian-Pacific candidates to the priesthood, the diaconate, consecrated life as well as lay ecclesial ministry.

(Implementation strategies for goals 3 and 4 are listed together because of the similarities and overlap in the work.)

Lead archdiocesan resource: Vocations Office

- Each pastor is encouraged to appoint a vocations ministry coordinator who will be offered initial training and then gathered annually by the Vocations Office. – by October 2016
- The Archbishop will consider appointing vocation liaisons to the African-American, Hispanic, and Asian-Pacific (especially Vietnamese) communities for more focused efforts in those communities. – by December 2016
- The Archbishop, Vocations Office, and Office of Religious will consult to clarify responsibilities for promoting vocations to consecrated life (religious brothers and sisters.) - by December 2016
- The archdiocese will maintain and increase promotion of the Magnificat House of Discernment. –current and continuing
- Catholic schools and Parish Schools of Religion are encouraged to offer informational sessions on vocations for parents, especially at existing gatherings. –available as of January 2017 and year-round
- The Vocations Office, Office of Catholic Schools, and CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will renew publicity efforts for St. Joseph Seminary Come & See Weekends through Catholic high schools and parish youth ministry. – Fall 2016 and continuing
- The Vocations Office will establish parental support groups for those whose children are pursuing a vocation and for those who would like their children to be open to a vocation with promotion through parishes and Catholic schools. –by January 2017

- The Vocations Office, in collaboration with the Office of Communications, will create and market “witness videos” for social media from priests, seminarians, and religious about their vocation, as well as witness by parents of the same. – by February 2017
- The Vocations Office, in collaboration with the Office of Communications, will create and market “public service announcement” style ads that encourage parents to “talk to your kids about vocations” annually in conjunction with Vocation Sunday. – by April 2017 and annually thereafter
- The Vocations Office will work to establish a “Come & See” program at Notre Dame Seminary, similar to that offered at St. Joseph Seminary College. – by Spring 2017
- Parish Vocations Coordinators are encouraged to submit 1-2 names each April at the Archdiocesan Vocations Mass; the Vocations Office will facilitate follow-up with these individuals. – by April 2017 and annually thereafter
- The Vocations Office will increase collaboration with and among the Serra Clubs, Knights of Peter Claver, Knights of Columbus, Marians, and the Catholic Foundation in promoting vocations. – ongoing
- The Archbishop, in collaboration with the Permanent Diaconate Office, will discern the need for another class of permanent deacons, with consideration for the uneven challenge of supply and demand for diaconate service among parishes, and a review of the diaconate curriculum. – Fall 2016

Priority 5: Be a Voice and Witness for Catholic Social Teaching

Goal 1: Enable all parishes, Catholic schools, parish schools of religion, and archdiocesan ministries to engage in formal dialogue and interaction to address racism throughout the archdiocese.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Office of Racial Harmony and Bishop Cheri

- Dialogue, formation opportunities, and resources, should acknowledge the reality that the Archdiocese of New Orleans is a multi-cultural community that includes African-American, Filipino, Hispanic, Korean, Vietnamese, and other cultures.
- The Vicar General, the Office of Racial Harmony, Office of Black Catholic Ministries, the Hispanic Apostolate, and Catholic Charities' Office of Justice and Peace will offer to parishioners engaged in social justice ministry specific formation on racism issues, intercultural competencies, and related topics, and suggested action for local facilitated conversations and action for systemic change. –during 2016-2017 year and annually thereafter
- The Vicar General will offer an in-service/convocation on racism for all archdiocesan and parish staff. – Spring 2017
- The CYO/Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office will offer regional gatherings of youth and young adults for interaction and dialogue about racism. – Fall 2017
- The archdiocese will offer a seminar on addressing racism for clergy with resourcing by Father Brian Massingale and Bishop Edward Braxton. – by September 2017
- The Office of Catholic Schools will explore holding an in-service/convocation on racism for all Catholic school faculty. – during 2017-2018 academic year
- The Office of Religious Education will explore having the topic of racism as part of the Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference. – January 2018
- The Office of Racial Harmony will offer regional gatherings of parishioners involved with Pastoral Councils and Parish Social Justice Ministry for interaction and dialogue about racism. - February-March 2018
- Each parish is encouraged to set one measureable action item to address racism locally after Pastoral Council leadership and clergy have participated in local formation and dialogue. – by Fall 2018
- Seminarians are encouraged to read Bishop Braxton's two pastoral letters on racism in the church and Archbishop Hughes' *Made in the Image and Likeness of God, a Pastoral Letter on Racial Harmony*. - 2017-2018 academic year
- The Office of Racial Harmony will revisit the "action items" from Archbishop Hughes' *Made in the Image and Likeness of God, a Pastoral Letter on Racial Harmony*. – Spring 2017
- The Office of Racial Harmony will continue monthly Peace Prayer Walks. - ongoing

- The Office of Religious Education will offer a course on racism issues/who is my neighbor as part of catechist certification renewal. – available by Spring 2017 semester
- The Office of Racial Harmony will continue racial sobriety workshops and discussions on *Made in the Image and Likeness of God, a Pastoral Letter on Racial Harmony* for parish clusters, school faculties, and other interested groups. – ongoing

Priority 5: Be a Voice and Witness for Catholic Social Teaching

Goal 2: Ensure that the archdiocese is a voice and witness in upholding the dignity of human life through education and advocacy regarding all pro-life issues.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Respect Life Office

- Each parish is encouraged have a parishioner serving as respect life coordinator, who can connect advocacy and educational resources between the archdiocese and the local parish communities; this person would ideally be included with others involved in parish social justice ministry. *-by November 2016*
- The Respect Life Office will continue e-mail bulletins and action alerts to respect life coordinators with education, events, action alerts, etc. *- ongoing*
- The Respect Life Office will continue to provide monthly respect life highlight articles in the Oracle for use in parish bulletins. *- ongoing*
- The Respect Life Office will continue expansion of resources on the respect life page of the archdiocesan website. *- ongoing*
- The Respect Life Office will create a comprehensive resource manual for each parish, school, and institution on the USCCB respect life topics, including a “what does the Church say” catechetical section, practical suggestions for individuals and parishes to be actively involved in pro-life efforts, and local programs and resources. *- by October 2016*
- Using the USCCB list of respect life topics, highlight one topic each month with special articles, suggested activities, educational sessions/gatherings, homily resources, and other initiatives for use in parishes, schools, and institutions. *- began in January 2016 and ongoing*

January – abortion

February – human trafficking

March – disabilities

April – fertility/infertility awareness

May – healing after abortion

June – end of life issues, assisted suicide, euthanasia

July – conscience protection

August – capital punishment/mercy behind bars

September – stem-cell research and human cloning awareness

October – Respect Life Month (theme determined annually by USCCB)

November – adoption

December – violence/peace on earth

- In collaboration with the Catholic Medical Association, the Respect Life Office will help to unify and strengthen one comprehensive association for Catholic healthcare professionals including doctors, nurses, allied health, etc., and offer regular respect life education opportunities through such group. – by December 2016
- The Respect Life Office, in collaboration with the Catholic Medical Association and campus ministries, will offer regular respect life formation opportunities each semester to medical and healthcare students through a Catholic student association open to all area medical/healthcare students including LSU Medical School, Tulane Medical School, Delgado School of Nursing, etc. – by December 2016
- The Archdiocesan Hospital Ministry will advocate for access for Catholic chaplains to every non-Catholic hospital and nursing home in archdiocese. – by Fall 2017
- The Archdiocesan Hospital Ministry, in collaboration with the Respect Life Office, will offer education on Catholic teaching about end of life issues for all hospital, hospice, and nursing home chaplains. – by May 2017
- Christopher Homes and Chateau de Notre Dame, in collaboration with the Respect Life Office, will offer and establish respect life groups/ministries at their facilities. – by May 2017
- The Archbishop and Office of Communications will continue to promote the USCCB Faithful Citizenship resource and the Archdiocesan Policy on Political Activities during election seasons. – ongoing
- The Office of Communications and the Respect Life Office will continue public relations efforts through secular media to educate the broader public on each major respect life topic. – ongoing
- The Pastoral Planning and Ministries Office will rejuvenate the Commission on Persons with Disabilities and offer advocacy and education through it to all parishes, schools, and institutions. – by December 2016
- The Office of Religious Education will offer assistance to clergy and catechists on adapting sacramental and catechetical programs for use with persons with disabilities. – by May 2017 and ongoing
- The Office of Catholic Schools will continue to help schools expand outreach to students with disabilities. – ongoing
- The archdiocese will continue publicizing and supporting efforts of the Woman's New Life Center, the Gianna Center, ACCESS Pregnancy Centers, and the St. Vincent Maternity Clinic. – ongoing

- The Respect Life Office will continue educational, advocacy, and prayer efforts regarding the Claiborne Avenue Planned Parenthood facility. -ongoing
- The archbishop will continue his engagement with the governor, state legislative delegation, and city/civil parish leaders on advocating church teaching on human dignity and respecting life. - ongoing
- The archdiocese will continue collaboration with New Orleans Right to Life and Louisiana Right to Life, including support for 40 Days for Life, the Louisiana Life March, and the March for Life in Washington, D.C. -ongoing

Priority 5: Be a Voice and Witness for Catholic Social Teaching

Goal 3: Establish in all parishes an organized ministry to the poor among us and address other issues of social justice.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Catholic Charities Office of Justice and Peace

- Pastors are encouraged to identify and appoint a coordinator for parish social justice ministry. – *by November 2016*
- Parishes are encouraged to network representatives from existing social justice organizations and efforts in the parish, i.e., a St. Vincent de Paul Conference, Respect Life Coordinator, etc. *-ongoing*
- Catholic Charities Office of Justice and Peace will create a parish resource manual and website page that lists by agency/program and by topic/need in relation to poverty and related issues, including an explanation of what each program does. – *by October 2016*
- Using the USCCB Communities of Salt & Light model as a basis, Catholic Charities Office of Peace and Justice will offer trainings on multiple dates and in multiple locations around the archdiocese for those parishioners involved in social justice work. – *during 2016-2017 academic year and annually thereafter*
- The trainings will help parishes:
 - Provide a model for parish(s) to support the poor with local parish services and referral to services/resources
 - Promote use of Catholic Charities programs including case management, counseling services, Cornerstone Builders, Isaiah 43, Family Promise, Cornerstone Kids, Food for Families/Food for Seniors, Stepping Stones, JustFaith,
 - Promote use of Second Harvest Food Bank programs including hunger 1-800 help-line, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program enrollment, mobile pantries, school pantries, backpack program, after-school meals, summer feeding meals, nutrition education, health fairs, food drives
 - Respond to action alerts from the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, the USCCB, and PovertyUSA
 - Promote resources of Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other Vincentian initiatives
 - Promote global solidarity, especially Catholic Relief Services and Propagation of the Faith
 - Establish local chapter of National Association of Catholic Social Workers
 - Identify social workers living in each church parish who could be invited to participate in these efforts

Priority 5: Be a Voice and Witness for Catholic Social Teaching

Goal 4: Use the prophetic voice of the archdiocese in the areas of criminal justice, immigration reform, and human trafficking.

Lead archdiocesan resource: Catholic Charities Office of Justice and Peace

- Catholic Charities Office of Justice and Peace will offer follow-up training to individual or clusters of parishes on additional, specific social justice topics/modules in multiple locations annually. – *beginning in 2017 and annually thereafter*

- The archdiocese will seek to do the following - *ongoing*
 - Respond to action alerts from the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops and the USCCB on topics of criminal justice reform, immigration reform, and combatting human trafficking
 - Promote and support Archdiocesan Prison Ministries
 - Advocate for “banning the box” and “second chance” legislation
 - The archdiocese, as an employer, will “ban the box” from employment applications
 - Advocate for sentencing reform, restoration of voting rights, abolition of death penalty
 - Collaborate with Xavier University’s Black Lives Matter symposium
 - Promote and participate in the annual Symposium on Systemic Change
 - Support the St. Vincent de Paul Re-entry Project
 - Continue the work of the Archdiocesan Human Trafficking Coordinating Committee and its collaboration with the Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Group
 - The Respect Life Office will promote a speakers’ bureau for education on human trafficking and promote to all parishes, schools, and institutions
 - Provide training on signs of, and response to, human trafficking victims to archdiocesan agencies likely to encounter them, including LGBT outreach, Catholic Counseling Services, Catholic Charities’ case managers, Prison Ministry, Daughters of Charity healthcare centers, Woman’s New Life Center, Gianna Center, parish/school safe environment coordinators, etc.
 - Establish trained “street ministry teams” to do outreach among the homeless, adult entertainment workers, and other vulnerable groups
 - Promote awareness of human trafficking with local tourism/hospitality industry and collaborate with the Jesuit Social Research Institute at Loyola University on migration and immigration reform initiatives
 - Continue the programs, services, and outreach of Catholic Charities Immigration Services and the Hispanic Apostolate