

UPDATE



Archidiocèse de
MONCTON
Archdiocese

WHAT PATH WILL WE TAKE...

...to guarantee that we will continue to be living Christian communities?

At first sight, such a question may seem somewhat out of place, but our present reality tells us that a serious reflection is necessary to secure our future as Church.

Lest we forget, this reflection began nearly a decade ago with the Diocesan restructuring project that was undertaken in light of the decline both in the number of priests and of the religious practice.

We must admit, however, that this first initiative leaned heavily on structure and organization: parishes were

regrouped into pastoral units and Pastoral Ministry Teams were created.

The main objective of this initiative may not have been clear to everyone, and one might say its focus was on concerns that were most visible to people. The vision statement accompanying this report stated its objective more precisely: 'laypersons and pastors together building our Diocesan Church'.

The Church is first and foremost a community of believers who gather to express their faith.

We are a people who are 'called',

a people who are 'journeying' like the disciples on to road to Emmaus.

Each and every one of us have received this calling described as our baptismal vocation.

Some of us have chosen to answer this calling by engaging actively in Church ministry.

It is for these people that we have offered and will continue offering Diocesan formation sessions to help them in their ministry.

With this in mind, we have prepared this summary of the three sessions already held and offer a brief overview of those to come.

THE ROAD TRAVELLED...

1 Saturday, September 22nd, 2007
THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH
See page 2

2 Saturday, April 12th, 2008
FROM MISSION TO VISION?
See page 3

3 Saturday, November 1st, 2008
COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY
See page 4

THE ROAD AHEAD...

Vatican II opened the way for a greater participation of lay persons in the life of the Church.

However, this participation has often been a stumbling block when there is misunderstanding over the ministry role of priests and layty.

This is precisely the question that Church canon lawyer Anne Asselin from

Saint Paul's University in Ottawa will deal with on Wednesday, September 30th, the first of a two-day formation session.

Which ministries do priests and lay persons have in common? Which ministries are reserved to the priests?

The following day, on Thursday, October 1st, Carol Kuzmochka, director of the Centre for Ministry Formation at the same university, will facilitate a session on

team work. During that session, each pastoral unit will be invited to determine its pastoral priorities and prepare an action plan for the year just beginning.

And finally, on Tuesday, October 20th, Father Gilles Routhier, theologian at Laval University in Quebec, will facilitate a session exploring what our Church has at stake and the challenges confronting her, as they pertain to Vatican II.

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This document is also available in French.

THE MISSION

1ST SESSION

Father Luc Tardir, o.m.i, is associate Director of the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University, in Ottawa. He facilitated the first session on Saturday, September 22nd, 2007.

A three-part presentation:

- The foundations of the mission;
- The Gospels as four steps in Christian life;
- The missionary challenges of the Church.

The foundations of the mission

1. God loves the world
2. God is at work in the world
3. God intervenes in time
4. God does all things new for a new world
5. God likes communion
6. God does all things for a



- new world
7. God chooses, calls, gathers, and sends forth
8. God also has urgencies and preferences
9. God's ultimate aim: the Kingdom

The Gospels: a summary of the mission given to the apostles

In Mark

- This Gospel is the book of **catechesis**
- Our mission as disciples is first of all to go forth, and then to proclaim the good news, to evangelize
- Conversion is the foundation of our mission

In Matthew

- This Gospel is the book of the **disciple**
- Jesus uses life experiences as the basis for formation
- He rereads life's experiences, what is happening between individuals
- Becoming a disciple is to enter in a culture of the Kingdom

In Luke

- This Gospel is the book of the **mission**
- The mission is to become witnesses, to report what we have seen and heard
- We are witnesses by the quality of our services

In John

- This Gospel is the book of **wisdom** and **mysticism**
- Jesus talks of love, of communion, unity, reconciliation
- Jesus knows that it takes more than reconciliation. He says: "Receive the Holy Spirit"

"Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." Mk 16,15

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."

Mt 28, 19

"These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you." Lk 24, 44

"As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Jn 20, 21

The three challenges of the Church's mission

God is on a mission among us. Our job is to recognize the signs of his presence.

1. Contemplation

- Contemplate God at work through His Holy Spirit, throughout the history of humankind and individuals;
- Contemplative leadership includes:
 - Confronting reality;
 - Developing a vision that is not frozen in time but open;
 - Experiencing the tension between these two in a creative way.

2. Passion

- Living with passion and compassion;
- We are a people who are called and sent;
- We need to discover our passion and to put it at the service of the community;
- Our mission is to help people make the link between their passion and the needs of the community.



3. Communion

- The greatest challenge now is the promotion of a spirituality of communion:
 - To experience a God of communion;
 - To receive the other person as a necessary gift;
- Disciples of Jesus say to the Lord "here I am" to learn with others

THE VISION

2ND SESSION

Lorraine Ste-Marie is assistant Professor in Pastoral Studies at Saint Paul University, in Ottawa. She facilitated the second session on Saturday, April 12th, 2008.

A three-part presentation:

- A shared vision;
- The reality;
- Creative tension.

The day's objective:

develop a greater awareness and appreciation of the joys and challenges we encounter in responding to the call to live out our vision as a people of God.



A shared vision

- Our vision is based on the nine main elements that are the foundation of the mission (See page 2);
- Members of a Pastoral Ministry Team need to go from a personal vision to a shared vision, from "my vision" to "our vision";
- Our 2000 year-old vision must always incarnate in place and time;
- Each generation of disciples has to journey on the road to Emmaus;
- We also are called to share our story and rediscover our vision;
- By sharing our visions, we discover a common vision that defines us as Church;
- Visions don't come from "on high" and are not the solution to a problem;
- A shared vision is based on listening, inquiry, dialogue, and must be deep rooted in the life of the community;
- A shared vision commits us to dialogue which is a long process of listening and receiving;
- We are called to share our hopes and dreams, to listen to the hopes and dreams of the others, and to carry them together. That's where something new can come about.
- The facets of the vision:
 - Commitment: I receive the vision and 'buy into it' without further questions;
 - Enrollment: I choose a vision after having thought it over;
 - Genuine, formal and grudging compliance: I feel drawn to compliance;
 - Non-compliance: I could easily compromise the project;
 - Apathy: I absolutely refuse to commit.



Reality

- Our vision can hinder us from seeing reality;
- Many factors contribute to shaping our vision, our ways of thinking:
 - Our assumptions;
 - Our culture;
 - Our gender, social status, families, education;
 - Our experiences.
- Unless we are aware of this, we will stay in our own little worlds;
- We need to hear the experiences of the others; otherwise we will be limited to our own vision, depriving ourselves of an accurate reading of a larger reality;
- There are three movements for contemplating reality with the eyes of faith:
 1. Seeking what we can celebrate. Good is energizing; seeing only the bad deprives us of energy;
 2. Lamenting what is missing. This allows us to be honest with ourselves. Fullness is not a part of this world;
 3. Hope and look for signs of hope.

- These three movements help me see the vision I carry in my reading of reality;
- The disciples of Emmaus did not like their reality.

"Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him." Lk 24, 15-16

Creative tension

- It is the tension between my vision and reality;
- It is necessary to have the most accurate reading of the reality we are living since it is the most important source of energy;
- Distinguish between emotional tension and creative tension;
- Emotional tension is associated with anxiety, sadness, discouragement, hopelessness and worry;
- If we don't recognize it, we may be led to weakening our vision;
- Creative tension bring us:
 - To be faithful to our vision and to respect our truth;
- To see reality face to face;
- To a widening of our horizons;
- To an understanding of the unsaid;
- To see the larger picture, the relationships and connections, the patterns of behaviour, what we can do and be responsible for it;
- To an understanding that we only hold a piece of the truth.
- Failure can give us the chance to review our reality;
- Passion is energizing, but it can stop us from seeing how others see us and from listening to them;
- Compassion allows us to see the other with his or her difference;
- Team work makes us capable of doing and knowing more.

COLLABORATION

3RD SESSION

Brother Loughlan Sofield is a missionary Servant of the Most Holy Trinity in Washington, DC. Co-author of a number of books on collaborative ministry, he has facilitated formation sessions for priests and lay persons in more than 200 dioceses spread over five continents.

Outline of the session:

- Jesus as a model;
- Collaborative ministry;
- The 4 C's of collaboration;
- From words to deeds;
- Ministry needs assessment;
- Obstacles to collaboration;
- Belief statements.

Jesus as a model...

- Did nothing alone
- Gathered his disciples
- Taught and passed on a vision
- Sent them out before they were fully prepared
- Received them at their return
- Listened to them and helped them reflect on their experience
- Left them on their own, accompanied by the Holy Spirit

Collaborative ministry

- Ministry is always about gifts;
- Gifts and mission go together;
- 100 % of the people have been gifted and called by God;
- Our parishes only use 10 % of their gifts;
- Ministry is not a choice: it's an answer to the call we receive at baptism;
- How do we invite parishioners to answer this calling:
 - Identify: what are my gifts;
 - Release: what is getting in the way?
 - Unify: putting our gifts together.

"You are the light of the world." Mt 5, 14

The 4 C's of collaboration

- **CLARIFICATION:** what do you mean by The Word? Ambiguity on its meaning can lead to anger, tension and conflict.
- **CONVICTION:** am I convinced that it is necessary?
- **COMMITMENT:** am I ready to commit? to cope with my ambivalence?
- **CAPACITY/CAPABILITY:** do I have the capacity and capability needed to collaborate?

From words to deeds

1. Examine attitudes and behaviors: revisit mine and make the necessary changes;
2. Discern, identify gifts;
3. Clarify roles: distinguish between which ones belong to the priests and to the lay
4. Develop skills needed for team work, to manage conflict and distinguish gifts
5. Nurture a spiritual foundation: compassion, forgiveness and sharing (**possibly the most important point**)



Ministry needs assessment

- The parish nourishes and forms us;
- Ministry is about "reaching out" to the other, touching the other emotionally, spiritually and physically in a positive way
- so that they feel God's presence;
- All are called;
- Call and gifts go together;
- For many, ministry calls for a change of attitude, a paradigm shift;
- Most people resist change;
- Most of us hold on to the beliefs we had as children.

Obstacles to collaboration

- Low self esteem as an individual and as a group: it is the major obstacle; a low self esteem leads to hostility, competition and control; a high self esteem has the opposite effect;
- Arrogance: knows everything, does not need anybody else;
- Burnout: unrealistic expectations of one's self;
- Hostility: anger, the antidote is forgiveness: forgiveness is up to me, reconciliation, to the other;
- Failure to deal with loss or conflict;
- Lack of knowledge of one's gifts or those of the others;
- Lack of integrated sexuality: need to reflect and talk about one's sexuality.

Belief statements

1. All have been called and have received God's gift;
2. All gifts are for the building of the community and extending the Kingdom;
3. Everyone has a personal responsibility to know, develop and use one's gifts;
4. Lives have meaning when people use their gifts;
5. Community is essential to achieve a fuller knowledge and appreciation of gifts;
6. Gifts change;
7. No person has all the gifts;
8. All the gifts that are needed for mission are present within the extended community.

