

Celebrating the Faith Task Force Executive Summary

Presented to Most. Rev. William E. Franklin, D.D.
May 17, 2005, for Promulgation

Members of the Task Force

Mary Jo Seaton	Grinnell Deanery
Barb Schreiner	Keokuk Deanery
Christy Low	Clinton Deanery
Angie Keeney	Davenport Deanery
Rev. Marty Goetz	Ottumwa Deanery
Rev. Ed O'Melia	Iowa City Deanery
Rev. Mr. Jerry Miller	Permanent Deacon representative
Rev. Charles Adam	Priestly Life and Ministry Committee of the Presbyteral Council
Sr. Elizabeth Hillis	Religious in Pastoral Ministry
Rev. Edward J. Fitzpatrick	Convenor of the Task Force

OBSERVATIONS

- celebrating the faith should be a joyful experience; it is sometimes boring.
- for many it seems to still be as a spectator/not a participant.
- the concept of the spirituality of music still isn't widespread.
- there continues to be a lack of understanding of the importance of the Eucharist; also that we are missioned forth.
- how to involve our youth.
- still an attitude among some that liturgy is 'Jesus and me'.
- will there be conformity across the Diocese in implementation of GIRM?
- need to break down walls of 'we have always done it this way'
- foster full participation in the Liturgy/also with ministers.
- continue to enhance liturgical environments: seasonal and permanent.
- improve preaching: everyone can become better/homily input and critique
- how do we light the fire for liturgy?
- improve presence of presider (presiding) and ministers.
- increase liturgical preparation for liturgies: on part of presider and people: prayer and Scripture reflection during week as preparation.

CONVICTION

It is our conviction that the availability of clergy should not be the determining factor to close parishes. The determining factor should be viability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Enhancing the Environment
 - * need a full time Diocesan Liturgist: Office of Worship.
 - * make liturgy/worship/preaching a priority.
 - * consistent diocesan input to parish pastoral councils and commissions; maybe yearly by deanery or region.
 - * how to involve trained people; graduates of Ministry Formation.

- 2 Presiding function: priests and deacons
 - * lessen administration; make a lay function; presiders exhausted when week-end comes.
 - * improve preaching: input, techniques.

- 3 Ministers: music and liturgical
 - * have workshops: deanery and diocesan (live ones, not ICN).
 - * stress spirituality of ministry.

- 3 People
 - * emphasize their role importance: also that of the community.
 - * encourage home prayer and prior reflection on Sunday readings.

FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

- * Each parish participate in ‘Welcoming the Stranger Among Us’ workshops.

- * Coordinate with Diocesan Liturgy Director and the Diocesan Liturgy Committee on:
 - * materials to help prepare for Sunday liturgies.
 - * improving the ministry of liturgical ministers.
 - * strategies for homily input and feedback.
 - * process of assessing Sunday Eucharist in parishes and strategies to improve them.

- * Collaborate with the Diocesan Vocation Director and the Diocesan Lay Ministry Formation Coordinator so that recruitment activities also include parish ministries: parish life coordinator, pastoral administrator, finance administrator, SCAP leaders, parish prayer leaders.

- * Collaborate with the Deacon Council about strategies to more effectively use deacons – as priest numbers decrease – in non-priest parish sacramental and worship situations. Also strategies to improve deaconal homilies.

- * Provide training for parish prayer leaders for every parish, including SCAP, funeral/wake presiding, leading Liturgies of the Word (reflections/homilies) – included in the training are the points noted in the next bullet point.

- * Renew all those trained in SCAP: include parish prayer leader aspects to this training. Include some concepts of liturgical principles, environment, appropriate music and application of the Word of God to the needs of the people. Provide for on-going formation.

NOTE: We have collaborated with the Living the Faith Task Force and concur in their recommendations for the faith communities of the Diocese of Davenport.