Uniting in Heart

A Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

5 July 2015

Most Reverend Timothy L. Doherty, S.T.L., Ph.D.
To the faithful,

In the context of the ever-changing world, I asked for input from members of this diocese to identify the realities and aspirations that should influence the development of a strategic plan. I am very grateful to all who responded. Your input truly helped form Uniting in Heart, Pastoral Planning for the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana.

The purpose of the plan is to guide effective direction and development of the Church in the diocese. It reflects the input of over five thousand people, including our high school youth, our priests, religious and laity. The plan, Uniting in Heart, is meant to assist in directing our diocesan offices, schools and parishes into a future full of hope, where we can work together to continually build the reign of God on earth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

As we work together to build a plan for the future, it serves to remember why Christ came as a helpless infant, why he lived on the social margins, why he preached repentance, why he companioned the poor and sick, why his greeting of “peace to you” acknowledged people’s deep down fears (Lk. 24, Jn. 20). Simply put, Christ loves us and came to save us. We need Christ, and must know him in order to love him.
“SIMPLY PUT, CHRIST LOVES US AND CAME TO SAVE US. WE NEED CHRIST, AND MUST KNOW HIM IN ORDER TO LOVE HIM.”

If our planning is to be effective, its “why” must rest in these three principles: Christ’s first coming, the daily turning of our lives over to Christ and listening to the Spirit. The Church that Christ founded, and which appoints bishops to teach, sanctify and govern, only makes sense insofar as its disciples, above all else, reflect Christ’s love and imitate his heartfelt kindness.

With the heart of Christ as a firm foundation, the aim of this strategic plan is to guide the diocese through three steps of development. The first step is to clarify the vision of the diocese for the purpose and activity of the diocesan staff. The second is to guide the evaluation and organization of the diocesan staff, as it supports the mission of the bishop’s office. Third, the plan is to provide a basis for parish planning and reorganization of parishes that may be needed. This developmental process also will recognize the right and duty of the lay faithful to help shape the mission of the Church and the secular activities of society.

As years pass, the story of the Church in the Diocese of Lafayette will unfold. In order for the Church to continue to thrive, it must return again and again to the founding story of Christ, which will correct how we live and pray. By sharing our hope in Christ and trusting in his power to unite and heal, Christianity will endure through the end of time. It is our mission and our duty to keep the light of Christ aflame. Let us now go forth, with the help of this plan, to both carry and pass that light on to future generations.

+ Timothy L. Doherty
Bishop Timothy L. Doherty
Given the 5th day of July in the year 2015
Mission Statement

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD UNITING IN THE HEART OF JESUS CHRIST. WE JOIN THE WHOLE CHURCH IN PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN WORD, SACRAMENT AND CHARITY FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL PEOPLE.
Vision Statement

The Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, Uniting in Heart, is actively engaged in forming the hearts and minds of all Catholics to be fervent disciples of Jesus Christ, living the message of the Bible and the teachings of the Church. Trusting in the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

We see:

• Catholic believers consciously involved in integrating the spirituality of the Gospels into our everyday experiences and faith journeys;

• Young people searching for the meaning and purpose of life, and finding hope in a deepening faith, striving to make a significant impact in the world as followers of Christ;

• Parents eagerly sharing the faith with our children, praying regularly together and establishing family rituals that reflect the celebrations and teachings of the Church;

• Parishes that are warm, safe and welcoming to all people, that joyously share the treasury of the Catholic faith by serving, building hope, providing formation and encouraging deep devotion to the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as the source and summit of our Christian lives;

• Parishes, schools and diocesan offices working cooperatively to serve people in need: new immigrants; poor, hungry and homeless people; those in fragmented or fragile relationships; people in need of medical and mental health care; the widowed, lonely, depressed or marginalized; and

• Diocesan operations that are well organized to support effective episcopal and local leadership, where cooperation and good stewardship of human and financial resources empower the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ to flourish in all parts of the diocese.
Value Statement

Uniting in Heart, the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana values:

- Discipleship
- A welcoming and all-encompassing community
- Collaboration
- Compassion
- Good Stewardship
- Respect for all life, especially human life
• **Discipleship**
  Christ’s disciples are baptized followers, nurtured by the Eucharist, other sacraments, prayer and the teachings of the Church, who balance the use of intellect and science with faith to serve the needy and further the reign of God.

• **A welcoming and all-encompassing community**
  The community respects, protects and warmly receives all people of faith, appreciating their differences, their cultures and their dignity as children of God.

• **Compassion**
  Based on the Gospel, the community is compassionate when it reaches out to people who are suffering, lonely or in need of support for their physical, spiritual or social well-being.

• **Respect for human life**
  The community demonstrates reverence for all life and most especially for all human life from conception to natural death.

• **Good Stewardship**
  The community cares for the Earth and promotes its sustainability; limited human and financial resources are used wisely to serve the community and to continue building the reign of God.

• **Collaboration**
  Agencies, departments, schools and parishes in the diocese work to share human and financial resources to accomplish the mission of the Church.
Goal Statements

Goal #1

Expand resources for vibrant Eucharistic liturgies and other sacramental celebrations

- Offer ongoing resources and training for homilists to ensure relevant Scripture-based preaching.
- Ensure that training materials are available, especially resources for lectors.
- Provide regional training workshops for liturgical ministers (lectors, Eucharistic ministers, ministers of hospitality, environment designers, etc.)
- Present enriching workshops for liturgical musicians.
- Design and present adult formation sessions on the meaning of the Eucharist and other sacraments.
- Offer trainings in English and Spanish in all regions of the diocese based on cultural needs.
Goal #2

Strengthen our commitment to evangelization by integrating it into all aspects of diocesan life

• Continue formation on the meaning of Catholic evangelization, “The Church exists to evangelize.”

• Ensure that support staffs, volunteers and all parish and school staffs realize that they play an important role in evangelization by providing warm, safe and welcoming environments.

• Provide parishioners with parish/deanery specific opportunities to pray for, encourage and support vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

• Implement “Welcome Back” events and healing activities, at a regional or interparish level, for people who are disillusioned with the Church, where their input is welcome, their concerns are heard and resources targeting those concerns are available.

• Train parish evangelization teams in effective ministry.

• Ensure that parishes know how to deal with complaints; how to respond pastorally to complaints about parish or diocesan policy; and understand the degree of flexibility permitted, to ensure needs are met with the compassion and mercy of Christ.
Goal #3
Provide excellent leadership in lifelong faith formation

- Continue catechist and Catholic school teacher training for lifelong catechesis and make it available in all parts of the diocese in English and Spanish as needed.

- Continue to strive for excellence in Catholic schools, making them accessible, affordable and available to the highest degree possible.

- Build up the “Domestic Church” by offering models for family prayer and catechesis for all parish families, including those with children with special needs.

- Continue to explore effective and creative ways to engage youth and young adults in faith formation and vocation awareness, highlighting the need for priestly and religious vocations.
• Continue to build lay ecclesial formation programs throughout the diocese which deepen and develop the intellectual and spiritual gifts of participants, offering sessions in Spanish and English as needed.

• Ensure that the Second Vatican Council teachings of the Church, Bible studies and spirituality sessions for adults are available throughout the diocese in Spanish and English as needed.

• Offer learning opportunities and resources on the relationship between faith and science and moral values, especially related to health care.

• Create opportunities in the diocese to engage ecumenically, promoting the unity of Church desired by Christ, in the Holy Spirit, for the salvation and strengthening of souls, and the common good.
Goal #4
Strive to eliminate injustice and create peace through direct service, advocacy and good stewardship

• Expand direct service to immigrants and those in need through facilitating food, shelter, clothing and the basic necessities of life in collaboration with parishes, schools and other organizations.

• Develop advocacy groups to work for justice in light of Catholic social teaching.

• Raise awareness, educate and provide increased opportunities for service to those in need, locally, nationally and internationally.

• Support the concept of “Sister Parishes” within our diocese, state, nation and world, where culture, resources and prayer are shared.

• Develop stewardship as a way of life in all parishes through the sharing of time, talent and financial resources.

• Support the ministries of healing and wellness of mind, body and spirit.
Goal #5

Create, implement and communicate excellent policies and procedures to help govern and sustain the local Church, parishes and schools as part of the administration of the diocese

- Complete the review of administrative policies and procedures and revise as needed.
- Cultivate faith-filled communities through promoting collaboration as a sign of solidarity and good stewardship of resources.
- Involve the whole diocese in designing ways to create vibrant faith communities, given demographic shifts, limited resources and the number of available priests.
- Continue to use and enhance The Catholic Moment, blogs, social media and the diocesan Web site as prominent vehicles for communication in English and Spanish.
- Review and reorganize diocesan structures as needed to support the parishes and schools in the implementation of Uniting in Heart.
Bishop Doherty’s role is to teach, to sanctify and to govern. “Helped by the priests, their coworkers, and by the deacons, the bishops have the duty of authentically teaching the faith, celebrating divine worship, above all the Eucharist, and guiding their Churches as true pastors. Their responsibility also includes concern for all the Churches, with and under the Pope.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #939)

The bishop in his teaching role proclaims the good news of the Gospel, as a “herald of faith.” As the primary teacher in the diocese, the bishop draws new disciples to membership, and as teacher is “endowed with the authority of Christ.” The bishop ensures the authenticity of what is taught in the name of the Gospels and the Catholic Church.

The diocesan bishop has rights and obligations connected to Catholics within his region, while at the same time serving the truth and cooperating to help the needy no matter their affiliation.
His office obligates his cooperation in local society and culture, especially where the truth must be spoken and the needy must receive assistance.

The bishop in his office of sanctifying is the “steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood,” especially in offering or causing to be offered the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the “source and summit” of Catholic life. The bishop and priests sanctify the Church by their prayer and work, by their ministry of the Word and of the sacraments. They sanctify her by their example, “not as domineering … but being examples to the flock.” The Eucharist, the great act of thanksgiving, transforms the community into the living body of Christ.

The governing office of the bishop is executed by giving counsel, exhortations and example in the spirit of service. The bishop is the vicar and ambassador of Christ, sharing in his sacred power and authority. He does this by overseeing the operation of the diocese, including its proper use of human and financial resources and its organizational accountability. Governance is not arbitrary, and conforms to the Code of Canon Law, the rules (canon or laws) that provide the norms for good order in the visible society of the Church. The laws that apply universally are in the Code of Canon Law, but there are additional laws or administrative policies legislated for this diocese as well.

The bishop’s role as a servant leader is to do everything in his power to unite the people of the diocese in heart and mind in the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, so they can continue in Christ’s footsteps to build the reign of God on earth.
The story of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana goes back to French explorers and trappers in the 1600s. The French moved among the Native Americans, sometimes intermarrying, with no exclusionary design that marked later European nations’ interests. At that time, this territory was within the first Diocese of Bardstown (1808), which included Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. The Roman Catholic Church in Indiana began with the Diocese of Vincennes, which was created in 1834 by Pope Gregory XVI. French missionaries came to build up the Church, including St. Mother Theodore Guerin, who went to southern Indiana and founded the Sisters of Providence in 1841.

• The Diocese of Fort Wayne, the mother diocese to this one, was established in 1857. At that time, the territory now occupied by the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana had only three small brick churches with resident pastors, and four wooden frame missions. Total Catholic population was about 5,000 people.

• On Nov. 11, 1944, the Holy See announced the partitioning of the Fort Wayne diocese, creating the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. The name distinguishes it from the Diocese of Lafayette in Louisiana. The new diocese had 54 parishes and a Catholic population of 31,700. Catholics comprised fewer than 6 percent of the total population. The area was largely rural.

• The area covers 9,832 square miles and comprises 24 counties in North Central Indiana extending from Illinois to Ohio. The estimated Catholic population in 2015 is 98,937.
John G. Bennett was consecrated first bishop of the Lafayette See on Jan. 10, 1945. He was a son of a parish in the new diocese, St. Mary’s in Dunnington. His successors have been John Joseph Cardinal Carberry, and Bishops Raymond Gallagher, George Fulcher, William Higi, and the current ordinary Timothy Doherty.

A map sketched by Bishop William Simon Gabriel Bruté de Rémur, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes.
The Old Cathedral in Vincennes.
The Diocese of Vincennes, established in 1834, originally encompassed all of Indiana and Eastern Illinois.
Prayer of Pope Francis for the Jubilee of Mercy

Lord Jesus Christ,

you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees him.

Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze
freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by
money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking
happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his
betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you
spoke to the Samaritan woman: “If you knew the gift of God!”

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of
the God who manifests his power above all by
forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible
face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in
weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those
in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches
them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its
anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace
from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm,
may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives
and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy,

you who live and reign with the Father and
the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

Amen.

A special prayer for the Jubilee Year of Mercy
Composed by Pope Francis
May 2015