



# Pastoral Council Update



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## Multicultural parishes growing in the U.S. Catholic Church

The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) published the results of a large, comprehensive study on diversity across the U.S. in November 2016. “Culturally diverse parishes are the fastest growing type of parish in the United States”, according to their report.

This move from the traditional single culture parishes has them exploring new ways of being community together.

Many parishes today are realizing the richness of different cultures sharing together in worship, prayer and community. They are beginning to

offer workshops on building intercultural competence among the pastoral ministers and volunteers. The goal is “to increase the capacity to welcome, receive and encourage all emerging cultural groups to participate and assume leadership roles in the Church. The hope is that, in turn, the participant will train others to do the same.” (from the flyer for a workshop to be offered by the USCCB staff in February 2017).



What are some facts from the CARA study that might benefit the pastoral councils as they do their planning?

- ◇ The Catholic Church in the U.S. is one of the most culturally diverse institutions in the country and will become more diverse in the future.
- ◇ 37% of parishioners in multicultural parishes are between the ages of 34 and 54.
- ◇ Ethnic groups are more likely to enroll their children in Catholic Schools.
- ◇ There is widespread agreement among all

sub-groups that “having people of different cultural backgrounds enriches the parish”.

What can we as pastoral council members do to encourage this embracing of the many cultures in our parishes?

- ⇒ Create a parish culture of invitation & welcome
- ⇒ Celebrate the different cultures through music, food, sharing of “home liturgies”
- ⇒ Take Pope Francis’ advice to put the entire parish in a “Permanent state of mission”.

## Evangelization in the parishes

Parishes around the Diocese are involved in various evangelization outreach programs. Suddenly there is a lot of buzz about the ChristLife series, the Alpha Course and now V Encuentro.

“*ChristLife equips Catholics for the essential work of evangelization so the world might personally encounter Jesus Christ and be transformed into His missionary disciples.*” (<https://christlife.org/>)

ChristLife is a three step evangelization process of 7 week sessions each and a weekend retreat.

**Alpha** is a series that explores the basics of the Christian faith, typically run over eleven weeks. It is structured around creative globe trotting videos and examining faith issues followed by small group conversation. It always includes a meal and retreat weekend. <http://alphausa.org/about/>.

**V Encuentro** is a nation wide initiative four year process of evangelization, consultation and leadership development that seeks to create “missionary disciples: witnesses of God’s love.”

We know of five parishes offering the **Alpha** Course, at least four involved with the **ChristLife** series and more than a dozen who have expressed interest in **V Encuentro**.

**Is your parish involved in a program about which you’d like to share information?**

### Pastoral Council Prayers

Opening and Closing prayers for the pastoral councils are sent via emails to the Chairs quarterly, but they can also be found on the DOR website at: <http://www.dor.org/index.cfm/pastoral-services/pastoral-councils/>

**Suggested Books for Parish Growth**

Do you wonder which other parishes are in your deanery?  
Are you interested in learning about the demographics of your parish boundaries? Think a ministries survey might be helpful?  
Check out the resources and maps on this site: interactive deanery maps, surveys, pastoral council resources...



***Divine Renovation: Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission*** by Fr. James Mallon. "An engaging guide for parishes seeking to cultivate communities of discipleship and vibrant, dynamic faith. Highly acclaimed for his work with parish renewal and the New Evangelization, Fr. James Mallon shares with us the many ways for bringing our parishes to life. Through humorous and colorful stories, Mallon challenges us to rethink our models of parish life, from membership-based communities to assemblies of disciples of Jesus who proclaim and share the good news with all peoples. Accessible and engaging, *Divine Renovation* turns to the Church's many writings on evangelization and mission so as to articulate practical ways for injecting new life into our parishes. Pastors and parish ministers will be inspired by this book and turn to it for many years to come."



***Divine Renovation Guidebook: A Step-by-Step Manual for Transforming Your Parish*** by Fr. James Mallon. "Fr. James Mallon offers a blueprint for parishes to go beyond maintaining their buildings and meeting the needs of their parishioners. He believes the key to being a Church that is alive and relevant is for parishes to embrace their mission, which is to make disciples. This companion volume provides the tools parishes need to succeed with this mission. This step-by-step guidebook for transforming your parish is packed full of information, ideas and examples, and it is doable. It contains many charts and graphics where you can put pen to paper and work out your own goals and vision. With energy, encouragement, humor and deeply rooted faith, Fr. Mallon leads parish ministry leaders through the steps they need to take to effectively bring people to Jesus and his Church.

*Do you have any books you'd like to share?*  
*Submit summaries to [bmcdermott@dor.org](mailto:bmcdermott@dor.org)*

**Creating a Parish Culture of Invitation:  
A workshop in ministerial leadership**

Volunteer lay leaders welcome!

In this workshop, pastors, other priests, deacons, lay ministry staffs and volunteers explore what it takes to create engaged parishioners as well as approaches and initiatives to make the culture of their community more inviting. Featuring a guest speaker, panel discussion, and small group sharing with leaders from around the Diocese.

Enjoy an afternoon of learning and sharing together!



When: Wednesday, February 1, 2017 (Snow date 2/8)

Where: St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry, 120 French Road, Rochester

Time: 1:00pm to 4:15pm

Info: Register online at <http://www.stbernards.edu>

\$10.00 registration fee

**Pastoral Council Liaison Contact information**

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