

IN SUMMARY

Bishop DiMarzio refers frequently to the Scripture passage, “put out into the deep.” As we plan for the future of the Church of Brooklyn and Queens, all parishioners will be called to “put out into the deep.”

Having read the pastoral letter, what do you see as the greatest challenge?
What fears or cautions does it leave you with? What hope does it engender within you?

GLOSSARY

Viable Parish or School: A parish or school is viable when it has sufficient members, leadership and resources to achieve its ecclesial purpose for existence.

Vital Parish or School: A parish or school is vital when it is experiencing a growth in ministry, membership, leadership and resources towards realizing the New Evangelization.

Reconfiguration: The diocesan process of re-adjusting our parishes and schools to meet current needs in every area of the Diocese. Most often, this process includes the need to combine one or more parishes or schools so that the new, merged parish or school can be both viable and vital.

Collaboration: An extensive process of communication and cooperative action among the people of God. In terms of reconfiguration, collaboration includes an ongoing process of dialogue among local, cluster and diocesan leaders about the nature, scope, and possible outcomes regarding the possible mergers of parishes or schools.

Strategic Planning: A diocesan-wide process of planning that is meant to create an open, transparent and logical “roadmap” that will help every parish and school to achieve both viability and vitality.

DSPC – Diocesan Strategic Planning Committee. This new committee will replace the former “Diocesan Reconfiguration Committee”.

FIRST CLASS - The secure, diocesan electronic communication and email system; will also be known as DIONET

DPC – The Diocesan Pastoral Council is the Bishop’s primary lay advisory board.

Cluster : A group of neighboring parishes created with the purpose to serve and strengthen the pastoral mission of its member parishes and schools

Presbyteral Council: The Presbyteral Council is an advisory board composed of priests who meet with the Bishop on a regular basis.

Ministry Resource Team: Ministry Resource teams will be composed of diocesan personnel and other experts in pastoral ministry who will be available to work with parishes or clusters to achieve their specific pastoral mission goals.

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“Do Not Be Afraid” - A Pastoral Vision for the New Evangelization Pastoral Letter of the Most Rev. Nicholas DiMarzio, Ph.D., D.D.

Study Guide

Introduction:

Bishop DiMarzio’s pastoral letter, “*Do Not Be Afraid*” – A Pastoral Vision for the New Evangelization, reflects upon “a revitalization of our personal relationship with Christ.” The New Evangelization, as well as the evangelization of the past, must be a clear proclamation that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour and that He offers the unique means of salvation for all humanity.

The Study Guide will:

- Focus on the Bishop’s vision for the viability and vitality of the parish, school and cluster.
- Highlight the importance of the New Evangelization and the impact on the life of the parish, school and cluster.

Before Using the Study Guide:

- Familiarize yourself with the document: “*Do Not Be Afraid*” – A Pastoral Vision for the New Evangelization.
- When it becomes available, review the Executive Summary.

The Purpose of the Study Guide:

- Aid in the understanding the key principles of: “*Do Not Be Afraid*” – A Pastoral Vision for the New Evangelization.
- Enable the community of the faithful to implement the priorities articulated throughout the pastoral letter.
- Assist in understanding the principles of the pastoral letter.
- Apply what has been written to the life of the parish, school and cluster communities.
- Identify the various roles that individuals will have in the attainment of the stated priorities.
- Provide a discussion tool for parishes, schools, clusters and Diocesan agencies.
- Provide guidance for further development of parishes, schools and clusters.
- Better understand the New Evangelization of the Catholic Church within the Diocese of Brooklyn.

PART I: CHALLENGE OF REVITALIZATION	References to Pastoral Letter
<p>A. PERSONAL REVITALIZATION AND CONVERSION</p> <p>What does “personal revitalization” mean to you?</p> <p>The pastoral letter describes four basic qualities necessary for personal conversion. Which quality calls you to greater reflection and action?</p> <p>B. REVITALIZATION OF THE PARISH</p> <p>The pastoral letter describes seven qualities that mark parish life as vital and growing. Which characteristic do you feel needs the most attention in your parish? What actions might the parish take in order to develop this quality?</p> <p>Are there additional qualities that should be added to the list? What are they?</p> <p>How do you understand the difference in meaning between a viable parish and a vital parish? (Refer to Glossary)</p> <p>C: REVITALIZATION OF “CATHOLIC EDUCATION”</p> <p>This first part of this section lists five essential qualities that can serve as benchmarks to assess Catholic school excellence.</p> <p>What do you think <u>all parishioners</u> could do to promote and support Catholic schools in our diocese?</p> <p>What can the school community do to support the vitality of the parish?</p> <p>After reading the description for each quality, what questions do you have about the revitalization of Catholic education?</p> <p>The second part of this section deals with ongoing faith formation for all parish members – children, teenagers, and adults. What recommendations might you make to your parish to promote the strategies set forth by Bishop DiMarzio?</p> <p>What is the essence of Catholic education in the life of the parish?</p> <p>Interdependence is a theme that runs through this section. How might a parish and school deepen their relationship in order to achieve the interdependence that the pastoral letter calls for?</p> <p>D: NEW AGENTS FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION</p> <p>The closing section of Part One mentions a few agents that serve the work of the New Evangelization. What additional agents might you add to this list?</p> <p>What questions do you have after reading Part One of the pastoral letter?</p>	<p>QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR PERSONAL CONVERSION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcoming the Lord 2. Trusting in the Lord 3. Recognizing our failures 4. Perseverance <p>CHARACTERISTICS OF PARISH VITALITY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vibrant center for worship and prayer 2. Place of hospitality 3. Center for ongoing faith formation 4. Christian service and outreach 5. Good stewardship 6. Pastoral leadership 7. Renewed by spirit of evangelization. <p>BENCHMARKS TO ASSESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL EXCELLENCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catholic identity 2. Academic excellence 3. Proper governance 4. Financial and enrollment stability 5. Strategic planning <p>STRATEGIES TO REVITALIZE FAITH FORMATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competent Directors of Religious Education and catechetical leaders 2. Effective RCIA process 3. Comprehensive programs for all age groups <p>WAYS TO PROMOTE THE NEW EVANGELIZATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication systems and media 2. Ecclesial movements 3. Ministry Resource Teams

PART II: DIOCESAN PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION	References to Pastoral Letter
<p>A. WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER?</p> <p>During the past four years what changes have you observed in your parish? How do these changes affect the New Evangelization?</p> <p>B. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>Having read this section, what do you think is the greatest challenge facing your parish and/or cluster? How do you hope your parish will address these challenges?</p> <p>C. FIVE BASIC PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION</p> <p>Bishop DiMarzio set forth five basic priorities for the New Evangelization.</p> <p>As you read this section of the pastoral letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What parts resonate with your personal vision of a vital parish? ▪ Which priority raises the most questions for you? What are they? <p>This section suggests several actions that a parish might take in order to address each of the priorities. What is your response to the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each parish will establish a vocation committee ▪ Individuals will reflect upon concrete ways in which to assist the priests of their parish, especially their pastors, to achieve the fullness of their priestly ministry ▪ More women and men will be encouraged to participate in lay formation programs sponsored by the Pastoral Institute ▪ Parishes will identify new leaders and form them correctly ▪ Families will receive ongoing support in order to realize the New Evangelization ▪ The Diocese will create a comprehensive plan of action to address the multi-faceted aspects of Youth Ministry. What are some options for supporting the pastoral vision in regard to youth? <p>Bishop DiMarzio states, “We have moved from a model of church that <i>maintained</i> communities to one that is call to <i>create</i> communities of faith.” What does this shift mean and how can it change parish life? How might this relate to the five basic priorities for the New Evangelization?</p>	<p>“...renewal certainly must be personal, but it is also communal. It affects our Diocese, our parishes, and the structures that support parochial life.”</p> <p>THREE PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evangelization is the work of the Holy Spirit 2. Unique challenges: ethnic diversity, demographic changes, available personnel and resources 3. Planning Priorities <p>FIVE BASIC PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing support and formation of priests 2. Ongoing support and revitalization of schools and programs of faith formation 3. Competent and faithful Church leadership 4. Ongoing effective support of Catholic families 5. Outreach, ministry, and service for our youth
<p>PART III: CHALLENGE OF RECONFIGURATION</p>	
<p>The reconfiguration of parishes has already begun in the Diocese of Brooklyn. As you read Part III of the pastoral letter, what questions arise within you?</p> <p>What challenges will your parish face in the future?</p> <p>What resources are needed to meet these challenges?</p> <p>The strategic planning process described in the pastoral letter calls for consultation, dialogue, and collaboration in decisions affecting our parishes and schools. How could the strategic planning process enhance the vitality of your parish?</p>	<p>TWO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF RECONFIGURATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutions exist to serve the needs of the Church, its people, its mission. 2. Reconfiguration must create vibrant parishes in service to the larger mission of evangelization. <p>Goal of Reconfiguration: Maximum collaboration at local level in decisions regarding actual mergers or consolidations.</p>