

# ***“The Vibrant Parish - a place to encounter the Living Christ”***

## **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**



Working Group for the Implementation of  
Strategic Development of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church  
until 2020

***April 1, 2013***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”** **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

**Programs of “The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**  
are being implemented as resolved by the  
Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church  
(Brazil, September 2011)

### **TO THE CLERGY PARTICIPATING IN TRAINING SESSIONS TO DISCUSS PASTORAL PLANNING ACCORDING TO THE PRIORITIES OF “THE VIBRANT PARISH” PROGRAM**

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Father!

In 2012, throughout our entire Church we began working together on a program of parish renewal: “The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”. You have had an opportunity to work through our first handbook (*Instrumentum laboris*), which had been prepared specifically for the parish clergy. The aim of this first handbook was to:

- 1) acquaint you with those priorities for parish renewal, which were placed before us by our Synod of Bishops under the leadership of His Beatitude Sviatoslav,
- 2) encourage you to personally reflect on your priestly ministry in respect to these priorities,
- 3) give you an opportunity to discuss these priorities with your Bishop and your brother-priests working in pastoral ministry, and to begin a process of exchanging ideas and experiences for mutual support and growth.

Let me briefly remind you of these priorities or “elements” (and characteristics of a “Vibrant Parish” of the UGC Church):

1. The Word of God and Catechesis / *Kerygma*
2. Liturgy and Prayer (and *Eastern Christian Heritage*)
3. Service to one’s neighbour / *Diakonia* (and *Focus on the Person*)
4. Leadership – Stewardship (and *Spirit of Renunciation for Christ’s sake / Kenosis*)
5. Communion – Unity / *Koinonia* (and *Witnessing and Serving Unity with the Successor of St. Peter*)
6. Missionary Spirit (and *Accessibility and Openness*)

Having these priorities, the question naturally arises: “How can these **priorities be realized in my parish** and how do we **engage the laity to a more vibrant participation** in the mission of the parish?” This is the question we hope to presently address. Concretely, we wish to assist you in a very important process, called *Pastoral Planning*.

For some of you this is not a new concept, but a familiar reality. Others, possibly, are hearing the term for the first time, but have already participated in its reality to a greater or lesser degree. Again, the hope and task of our Working Group is to support you in your pastoral ministry, so that each parish “may strengthen and improve on that which is good, honest and praiseworthy, as well as develop those aspects of church life, which for whatever reason have not yet been put into practice” (*Instrumentum Laboris*, p. 2).

Every pastor engages in some form of planning and coordination of activity in his parish community: setting the time for the various liturgical services, scheduling various meetings for parish organizations, coordinating catechism classes for children and various charitable programs, planning for the upkeep of parish buildings and building projects etc. All this is part of the normal responsibilities of any pastor.

In this Handbook we wish to propose a certain framework for planning these and other activities, but based on the priorities (or “elements”) of the “*Vibrant Parish*”. In other words, we invite you to **reflect together with your parish community** on those elements we already identified as priorities for your priestly ministry, building further on the foundations set for us by His Beatitude Sviatoslav in his “*Vibrant Parish*” Pastoral Letter (December 2011).

We invite you to envision a process of Pastoral Planning in **four stages**:

- 1) Count our blessings: How are we already fulfilling our mission as Church?
- 2) Dare to Dream: Imagine what might be possible to better fulfill our mission as Church?
- 3) Evaluate / Prioritize: What can be done and will have the greatest impact on our mission?
- 4) Design / Commitment: Concrete Plan of Action in fulfilling our mission as Church.

Not all parishes are ready for such a process, and so you must be patient with your parishioners, and also with yourself, as pastor. If you can only implement a portion of what is being proposed here, then you are encouraged to do so. There is room here for creativity and time for growth. Work with your Eparchial coordinator, as he will be able to provide advice, encouragement and resources. Always remember to consult with your local Ordinary, especially when an initiative requires his approval and blessing. Most importantly, along with your community, endeavor to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, as He shows you the way and the manner in which to proceed. Always maintain a readiness to listen with an open heart.

Once again we entrust this process of Church renewal and parish revitalization to the Protection of the Most Holy Mother of God, and to the prayers of all the saints of Ukraine.



+ Ken

Bishop of New Westminster  
 Director of the Working Group for the Implementation of  
 Strategic Development of the UGCC, until 2020

# **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

## **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**LIMITS OF THIS HANDBOOK:** *Pastoral Planning is also conducted on an Eparchial level, both in terms of the mission of the Eparchy, and in terms of providing resources for parish life. The focus of this Handbook is on **parish pastoral planning**, and on its vocation to be “A Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”.*

### **1. WHY PASTORAL PLANNING?**

We might say that the aim of Pastoral Planning is to help our parish communities and all their members **BECOME WHO THEY ARE CALLED TO BE!**

The following questions can help us focus on the basics:

**Who are we?** WE ARE CHRISTIANS, MEMBERS OF CHRIST’S CHURCH.

**What do we believe?** WE BELIEVE IN A TRIUNE GOD WHO DESIRES THE SALVATION OF THE HUMAN RACE.

**What is our mission?** TO GUIDE THE COMMUNITY OF GOD’S CHILDREN TO THE FATHER, THROUGH THE SON, IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

**How can our community fulfill this mission?** BY BEING A VIBRANT PARISH - A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST.

**Pastoral Planning – is the process of recognizing human, spiritual and material gifts and coordinating their activity within the Christian community** (an Eparchy or parish) in order to better fulfill its mission. In this process, conducted in a spirit of prayer and an awareness of the signs of the time, **all members of the Christian community are called upon to participate** under the guidance of their local Bishop and the pastor appointed by him.

Pastoral Planning is not just limited to preparing a calendar of for a given year, (although the liturgical year is a very important element of pastoral planning). Pastoral planning always **centers on the mission of the Church**, and subordinates all natural and professional, spiritual, and material resources to a higher spiritual purpose: participation in Divine Life.

In 2005, our Synod of Bishops under the leadership of His Beatitude Lubomyr defined as a goal for our church: **“Holiness of the united People of God.”** Every initiative concerning the revitalization of our Church seeks to achieve this goal.

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### **2. THE KEY ROLE OF THE PASTOR**

The role of the pastor cannot be overemphasized in pastoral planning. A great deal depends upon the pastor’s positive attitude and hard work, his prayerful preparation and spiritual maturity, his ability to discern the spiritual gifts of his faithful, and to encourage others to active participation in the life of the parish.

**PERSONAL PREPARATION:** First of all, a pastor must **think through the entire process** of pastoral planning, and prepare himself well for his meetings with parishioners. The greatest difficulty will possibly be for a long-serving priest who has had many years of pastoral experience, and is unable to perceive the need for him to change his way of doing things or his style of leadership. Here we can but encourage each pastor to be more open to the gifts, which the Holy Spirit provides to his community, and to be more sensitive to the needs of the times, in which we live. Let your fervent personal prayer guide you in this process.

**PREPARATION OF KEY INDIVIDUALS:** Before beginning the process of parish planning, it is important to prepare key parishioners (for example: members of the Parish Pastoral Council), explain to them the **objectives and process** of pastoral planning based on the priorities of “The Vibrant Parish,” and then patiently respond to all their questions, encouraging their active participation. One should not begin the process of pastoral planning in the broader parish community without the understanding and support of key people who can have a positive influence on other parishioners.

#### **RESOURCES FOR PASTORAL PLANNING:**

**“Instrumentum laboris”:** A pastor is invited to refer back to the sessions of the “Vibrant Parish” working handbook for the Eparchial Clergy. This recommendation is for his own personal reflection and encouragement.

**Instrumentum laboris Group Discussion Summaries:** It is also useful to review the proposals and good practices, which emerged from the clergy Discussion Groups.

**2020 Strategies:** Our Synod of Bishops in 2011 approved a broad strategy for the development of our Church. A pastor will see to it that these Strategies are implemented on a parish level. **See: ADDENDUM: Priorities for 2013-2015 for pastoral planning at the parish level (pp. 40-49)**

**Special Themes and Instructions:** Parish pastoral planning should take into account all themes and guidelines proposed by the local Bishop, Metropolitan and Church authorities (e.g. in the Catholic Church the theme for 2013: Year of Faith).

**“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**3. ROLE OF PASTORAL AND FINANCIAL COUNCILS**

**GENERAL SITUATION:** In our Church there is a broad range of practice in regards to the development of lay participation in parish structures. In some parishes there already exists a well-established group of parishioners who work in close cooperation with their pastor and assist him in the planning and implementation of various pastoral programs (**Parish Pastoral Council**, sometimes simply called “**Parish Council**”), or in administrative and financial matters (**Financial Council**). In other parishes, the pastor may deal with pastoral and administrative matters with little or no input from his parishioners. In other parishes still, a practice has been adopted where financial matters are controlled by a small group of parishioners with little administrative responsibility or oversight by the pastor. It is important to **understand how pastoral and administrative decisions are made in your parish community**, who has legal authority and responsibility over financial and administrative matters, what is the role and responsibility of the Bishop, and whether existing practice corresponds to ecclesiastical norms.

**DEVELOPMENT OF COUNCILS IN A PARISH.** Canon Law clearly establishes the responsibilities of the pastor and the framework in which parish organizations are to function. In addition to the work on developing a pastoral planning process, “*The Vibrant Parish*” program envisions the **formation of Parish Pastoral and Financial Councils according to the norms of Canon Law** and in accordance with statutes established by the local Ordinary for each Eparchy or Exarchate. In some cases this will be a prolonged process, requiring a great deal of preparation and patience. It is easy to anticipate resistance to change, in some cases from the clergy, in others from the faithful. That is why any changes must be undertaken slowly and with great prudence, always under the guidance of the Bishop, the Vicar General or the Eparchial coordinator.

**THE PROCESS OF PASTORAL PLANNING.** If you already have established Councils, they will play an important role in the process of Pastoral Planning. If no such formal structures exist, then the pastor is to **invite into a cooperative effort** those parishioners who possess the required talents, the necessary professional knowledge and skills, and the ability to work with others. Obviously, such individuals should be honest, practicing Christians, and actively participate in the liturgical life of the parish community.

**“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

## **4. PASTORAL PLANNING – OVERVIEW**

### **4.1. PASTORAL PLANNING – PRIORITIES**

In the *Instrumentum laboris* (Abbreviated: *IL*) we spoke of six **elements** of a Vibrant Parish and of five **characteristics** of a parish of the UGCC Church. For the purposes of pastoral planning, the **first three elements** have top priority, as they describe the overall mission of the Church. All other elements and characteristics can be considered as being at their service.

#### **THREE TOP PRIORITIES (Our Mission)**

- |                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1) The Word of God & Catechesis | (IL, 1) |
| 2) Liturgical Life and Prayer   | (IL, 2) |
| 3) Service to our neighbour     | (IL, 3) |

#### **IN COMMUNION-UNITY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (With whom and in what spirit)**

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| (A) In our parish community   | (IL, 5A) |
| (B) In cooperation with other parishes – Eparchy –<br>entire Church | (IL, 5B) |
| (C) In cooperation with other Christians: Ecumenism                 | (IL, 5B) |

#### **WITNESSING A LIFE IN CHRIST**

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| (D) Inviting others to participate in the life of the<br>Church: Missionary Spirit | (IL, 6) |
|--|---------|

#### **UNDER SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND WITH A MULTITUDE OF GIFTS**

- |                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| (E) Leadership/Stewardship | (IL, 4) |
|----------------------------|---------|

#### **MINDFUL OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A VIBRANT PARISH OF THE UGCC.**

- Eastern Christian heritage
- Focus on the Person
- Spirit of Self-renunciation for Christ’s sake (*Kenosis*)
- Witnessing and serving unity with the successor of St. Peter
- Accessibility and Openness

## 4.2. STEPS FOR PASTORAL PLANNING

*Pastoral planning is usually undertaken in the last months of a calendar year (September – December)*

This Handbook proposes working on Pastoral Planning in **four stages**:

### **TWO SESSIONS WITH THE BROADER PARISH COMMUNITY)**

- I. **Count our Blessings:** how are we already fulfilling our mission as Church?
- II. **Dare to Dream:** imagine what might be possible to better fulfill our mission as Church?

### **TWO SESSIONS WITH THE PARISH PASTORAL**

- III. **Evaluate / Prioritize:** What can be done, and what will have the greatest impact on our mission?
- IV. **Design / Commitment:** Concrete Plan of Action to fulfill our mission, as Church.

**WHO IS INVOLVED IN PASTORAL PLANNING?** It is important to encourage **the whole parish community** to participate, in order to give every parishioner an opportunity to express their ideas (I-II). Specific planning takes place under the direction of the pastor in cooperation with Parish Pastoral and Financial Councils (III- IV).

**THE QUESTION OF SIZE: Is my parish too small for Pastoral Planning?** Many pastors will have doubts regarding the potential for Pastoral Planning in their parish, especially if the community is mostly elderly, or if they themselves do not reside in the community they serve. Even the smallest community has an obligation to fulfill its mission (Preach the Word of God, Celebrate the Divine Mysteries and Serve One's Neighbour, exercising good Leadership/Stewardship). It is incumbent upon a pastor to **find creative ways** to involve his parishioners in that mission. The four stages proposed above should be easily adaptable to any situation and any size community, at least on a basic level. A pastor must **engage his faithful in conversation** about the things that are of greatest importance to a Christian community (the things that really matter!) and then discern together what can and should be done, so that even the smallest parish can have a sense of mission and spiritual growth.

**See Table 1: List of Priorities and Areas of Activity for Pastoral Planning.** The pastor is invited to explore in outline form the priorities of “*the Vibrant Parish*” laid out for pastoral planning. **TAKE SUFFICIENT TIME TO STUDY THE SCHEME AND TO REFLECT ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH PRIORITY AND AREA OF ACTIVITY.**

**“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

**Table 1: SCHEME OF PRIORITIES AND AREAS OF ACTIVITY FOR PASTORAL PLANNING**

<b>COMMUNION/UNITY: Fostering “one heart and mind” in our parish community</b>			
	<b>1. Word of God / Catechesis</b>	<b>2. Liturgy / Prayer</b>	<b>3. Serving one’s neighbour</b>
<b>(A) WITHIN THE PARISH COMMUNITY</b>	<b>(A) WORD OF GOD/CATECHESIS</b> <i>WITHIN THE PARISH COMMUNITY</i>  Children Youth Adults Parents/Families Seniors	<b>(2A) LITURGY/PRAYER</b> <i>WITHIN THE PARISH COMMUNITY</i>  Children Youth Adults Parents/Families Seniors	<b>(3A) SERVING ONE’S NEIGHBOUR</b> <i>WITHIN THE PARISH COMMUNITY</i>  Children Youth Adults Parents/Families Seniors
<b>(B) IN UNITY WITH OTHERS PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH</b>	<b>(1B) WORD OF GOD/CATECHESIS</b> IN UNITY WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH	<b>(2B) LITURGY/PRAYER</b> IN UNITY WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH	<b>(3B) SERVING ONE’S NEIGHBOUR</b> IN UNITY WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH
<b>(C) IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)</b>	<b>(1C) WORD OF GOD/CATECHESIS</b> IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)	<b>(2C) LITURGY/PRAYER</b> IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)	<b>(3C) SERVING ONE’S NEIGHBOUR</b> IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)
<b>(D) IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)</b>	<b>(1D) WORD OF GOD/CATECHESIS</b> IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)	<b>(2D) LITURGY/PRAYER</b> IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)	<b>(3D) SERVING ONE’S NEIGHBOUR</b> IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)
<b>(E) LEADERSHIP STEWARDSHIP</b> Dedicating time, talents and treasure for the Church’s mission	<b>(1E) WORD OF GOD/CATECHESIS</b> LEADERSHIP / STEWARDSHIP Who? What? Where? When? With what resources? How?	<b>(2E) LITURGY/PRAYER</b> LEADERSHIP / STEWARDSHIP Who? What? Where? When? With what resources? How?	<b>(3E) СЛУЖІННЯ БЛИЖНЬОМУ</b> LEADERSHIP / STEWARDSHIP Who? What? Where? When? With what resources? How?

**“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

**Agenda of Meetings for Pastoral Planning**

\*Four meetings are scheduled over a period of one month,

Remember to **prepare key individuals** before beginning the process.

**Example (adapt to your particular needs!):**

**You decide:** If your parish already has good lay participation experience in parish leadership/stewardship, you may find it beneficial to perform a Situational Analysis (see pp. 10-12) before beginning the Pastoral Planning process rather than in Session Three, as is suggested in this Handbook.

**PARISH OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT**

**Tuesday, September 3, 2013**

**General Meeting for Pastoral Planning**

18:30 – 20:30

**Session I. How are we already fulfilling our mission as a Church: (Count our Blessings)**

**Tuesday, September 10, 2012**

**General Meeting for Pastoral Planning**

18:30 – 20:30

**Session 2. Imagine what might be possible to better fulfill our mission as a Church? (Dare to Dream)**

**Tuesday, September 24, 2012**

**Meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council (with participation of Financial Council)**

18:30 – 21:00

**Session III. What can be done and what will have the greatest impact on our mission?(Evaluate / Prioritize)**

**Tuesday, October 1, 2012**

**Meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council (with participation of Financial Council)**

18:30 – 21:00

**Session IV. A Concrete Plan of Action to fulfil our mission, as Church (Design / Commitment).**

# **PASTORAL PLANNING**

## ***Situational Analysis***

**WHAT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS  
HELP OR HINDER US IN OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

### ***Guidelines***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”** **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

**SCHEDULING OPTION:** If your parish community already has a Parish Pastoral Council and a well-established process of lay consultation, you should consider undertaking this step at the very beginning of the Pastoral Planning Process (i.e. BEFORE Session I: Blessings). If, on the other hand, you are only developing consultative pastoral structures, it may be more beneficial to undergo this step at the beginning of Session III: Evaluate/Prioritize.

*Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!*  
(1Ch 16:11)

### ***Situational Analysis for Pastoral Planning***

#### **WHAT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS HELP OR HINDER US IN OUR MISSION?**

**WHY SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS?** As a divine institution, the Church relies on the grace of God and the action of the Holy Spirit. As a human institution it must also deal with specific circumstances and a variety of personal, social and material realities, which influence its ability to fulfill its mission. Any organization has a better chance of success, if it is aware of these factors and addresses them accordingly.

**WHAT IS INVOLVED?** For any organization, and this includes a parish, situational analysis involves both a **self-examination**, as well an **assessment of external factors** which have an impact on its life, its health and the pursuit of its goals and mission. In both these areas there will be **positive and negative factors**, which require thoughtful and mature analysis.

<b>Analysis of internal factors:</b>	
1. strengths of the parish	2. weaknesses of the parish
<b>Analysis of the external factors:</b>	
3. opportunities	4. obstacles and threats

The positive factors (strengths and opportunities) are the realities which you would hope to increase and build upon. Regarding the negative factors (weaknesses and obstacles/threats), if you cannot overcome them then at least you must try to lessen their impact on the pursuit of your mission and goals.

As an important part of Pastoral Planning, this Handbook proposes a **SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS of the parish** in respect to all six priorities of “The Vibrant Parish”. The scheme in **TABLE 2** can be used to facilitate such an analysis.

**“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

Handbook for Pastoral Planning

**Table 2: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS BASED ON “THE VIBRANT PARISH” PRIORITIES**

	Internal Factors (in our parish)		External Factors (outside our parish)	
	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Obstacles/Threats
<b><i>Word of God and Catechesis</i></b>	(e.g. We have sisters for catechesis)	(e.g. We lack facilities)	(e.g. Good printed resources)	(e.g. Materialism-secularism in society)
<b><i>Liturgical Life and Prayer</i></b>	(e.g. Our people are devout and prayerful)	(e.g. Our people lack liturgical understanding)	(e.g. Qualified iconographer available)	(e.g. We don't have full service books in our Church)
<b><i>Serving one's Neighbour (Diakonia)</i></b>	(e.g. We have many generous parishioners)	(e.g. We lack experience working with the poor)	(e.g. We are surrounded by urban poverty)	(e.g. Civil law limitations)
<b><i>Leadership-Stewardship</i></b>	(e.g. We have a capable Financial Council)	(e.g. We don't have Parish Statutes)	(e.g. Training courses available)	(e.g. Financial crisis)
<b><i>Communion-Unity (in our parish)</i></b>	(e.g. Our people are friendly/hospitable)	(e.g. We have a history on conflicts)	(e.g. Good transportation on Sunday)	(e.g. Sunday Youth Sport activities)
<b><i>Communion-Unity (with the Church)</i></b>	(e.g. We work well in our deanery)	(e.g. There is tension with our Orthodox neighbours)	(e.g. Our Bishop really cares for us)	(e.g. Lack of understanding among Roman Catholics)
<b><i>Missionary Spirit</i></b>	(e.g. We are a truly joyful community)	(e.g. We're “too small”)	(e.g. There is a hunger for truth)	(e.g. Scepticism regarding Christianity)

**PASTORAL PLANNING**  
*Session I*

**COUNT OUR BLESSINGS:  
HOW ARE WE ALREADY FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

***Guidelines and Group Discussion Forms***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **General Assembly Meeting for Pastoral Planning**

#### **I. COUNT OUR BLESSINGS: HOW ARE WE ALREADY FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

***This is the first step in Pastoral Planning based on the priorities of “the Vibrant Parish.”***

**Objective:** To foster an awareness of the blessings we already have in our community. To some degree, every parish community already fulfills certain aspects of “the Vibrant Parish” program. We need to acknowledge these graces and rejoice in them.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

**1) Who?** The pastor should invite the broader parish community (Parish Assembly) to consider together the activities that the parish already does in fulfillment of its mission as Church.

**2) Where?** In the parish hall, or some other available auditorium (e.g. school). Preferably, such meetings are NOT held in the church itself.

**3) When?** Pastoral Planning meetings should, if possible, NOT take place on Sunday, but rather on a weekday evening. If Sunday is your only option, then plan accordingly.

**4) How?** Together as one community. In large parishes there may be a need to schedule more than one Assembly session. The best method is to break the Assembly into smaller groups/tables (8-10 people) for more personal discussion. If the parish is bi-lingual, (for example, outside Ukraine), it is recommended that the meetings be held in both languages (Ukrainian and English forms are available).

**5) Group Discussion Forms:** The discussion forms should be filled in by each groups/table, and then shared with the Parish Assembly afterwards. Each breakout group should be encouraged to fill in as much as possible. Forms are provided below for:

1. The Word of God & Catechesis
2. Liturgical Life and Prayer
3. Service to our neighbour
4. Fostering “one heart and one mind” in our parish.

Make as many copies as needed for the size of your parish.

**Practical Suggestion:** When groups are reporting to the Assembly, it is not necessary to repeat what was already said by a previous group.

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **PRAYER – READING - REFLECTION**

##### **I. COUNT OUR BLESSINGS: HOW ARE WE ALREADY FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

**PRAYER:** Accept our prayers, O God, and make us worthy to offer You prayers, and spiritual sacrifices for all Your people, and make us worthy through the power of Your Holy Spirit, and without judgment or condemnation, with a clear conscience to call upon You at all time and in all places, that hearing us, You may be kind to us in the greatness of Your mercy.

(From the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great)

**READING:** In the Acts of the Apostles we read:

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

(Act 2:42-47)

##### **SHORT REFLECTION:**

- 1. The result of the gift of the Holy Spirit:** apostolic teaching, common life and joyful prayer
- 2. His Beatitude Sviatoslav in his Pastoral Letter** encourages us to renew our parish life by focusing on these same basic priorities: the Word of God and Catechesis, Liturgical life and Prayer, Serving one's neighbour (Diakonia), along with Leadership-Stewardship, Communion-Unity and a Missionary Spirit.
- 3. This is a wonderful program for our parish.** We are called to be a community of Christian teaching, sustained by liturgical and personal prayer, a place of caring for the needy.
- 4. As we gather here today, to reflect on how we might implement this program in OUR parish:** let us think about what gifts and blessings are already at work in our community.
- 5. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit:** so that He might enlighten us to recognize all that is good, honest and praiseworthy... ever grateful for the Lord's blessings.

## **1: THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

### **Session I. Count our Blessings**

#### **How do we (as a parish) fulfill our mission as a Church?**

##### **(1A) The Word of God and Catechesis**

IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY

**TOGETHER AS A PARISH** (e.g. Sunday homily, Lenten Mission)

**Children** (e.g. Preparation for first Confession)

**Youth** (e.g. Summer Camp)

**Adults** (e.g. Bible Study Group)

**Parents & Family** (e.g. Wedding preparation)

**Seniors** (e.g. Book Club)

**...1: THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

**Session I. Count our Blessings**

**How are we already fulfilling our mission as a Church?**

**(1B) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH

(e.g. Catechetical Olympics)

**(1C) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)

*Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop*

(e.g. Joint Bible Study Group)

**(1D) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)

(e.g. Parish Radio Program)

**REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **witness and serve unity with the Successor of the Apostle Peter.**

## **2: LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

### **Session I. Count our Blessings**

#### **How do we (as a parish) fulfill our mission as a Church?**

#### **(2A) LITURGICAL LIFE / PRAYER**

IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY

#### **TOGETHER IN OUR PARISH CHURCH**

(e.g. Saturday Vespers)

**We can also focus on different groups in the parish:**

**Children** (e.g. Altar servers)

**Youth** (e.g. Youth pilgrimage)

**Adults** (e.g. Prayer Apostolate)

**Parents / Families** (e.g. Distribution of Family Prayer booklets)

**Seniors** (e.g. Prayer over the radio for those who are unable to come to church)

#### **REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **Foster our Eastern-Christian Heritage.**

**... 2: LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

**Session I. Count our Blessings**

**How are we already fulfilling our mission as a Church?**

**(2B) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH

(e.g. Eparchial pilgrimage)

**(2C) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)

Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop

(e.g. Joint Memorial Service for victims of the Holodomor)

**(2D) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)

(e.g. Procession in our village, town, city)

### **3: SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR (DIAKONIA)**

#### **Session I. Count our Blessings**

#### **How do we (as a parish) fulfill our mission as a Church?**

#### **(3A) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

##### *IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY*

(e.g. Parish program for visitation of the sick and elderly)

#### **We can also focus on different groups in the parish:**

**Children** (e.g. Clothing collection for orphans)

**Youth** (e.g. Work with substance abuse)

**Adults** (e.g. Program for Alcohol abuse)

**Parents & Family** (e.g. Food bank for poor families)

**Seniors** (e.g. Care centre)

#### **REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **Focus on the Person.**

**...3: SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

**Session I. Count our Blessings**

**How are we already fulfilling our mission as a Church?**

**(3B) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH

(e.g. Working with a local Catholic charity)

**(3C) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)

Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop)

(e.g. Joint St. Nicholas for poor children)

**(3D) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT) (e.g. Soup Kitchen for the homeless)

**REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **foster Accessibility and Openness.**

#### **4. FOSTERING “ONE HEART AND ONE MIND” IN OUR PARISH**

##### **COMMUNION-UNITY (BUILDING UP OUR COMMUNITY)**

##### **Session I. Count our Blessings**

##### **How do we (as a parish) fulfill our mission as a Church?**

Let us reflect on how we **ALREADY** foster the unity of our parish community  
(e.g. Community coffee after Sunday services)

# **PASTORAL PLANNING**

## ***Session II***

**DARE TO DREAM:  
IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY  
TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

***Guidelines and Group Discussion Forms***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **General Assembly Meeting for Pastoral Planning**

### **II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

*This is the second step towards developing a Pastoral Plan based on the priorities of “the Vibrant Parish.” It is essentially a **brainstorming exercise**, where the broad parish community is invited to imagine what the parish could do to better implement its calling to be a “Vibrant Parish.” In this step it is **important to LISTEN** to every idea which might be proposed within the parish community. **The very process of reflecting together and thinking about possibilities can be transformative.** It will be important, however, to note that even though all ideas might be good and useful, at some point the parish will have to decide what is possible and realistic (This will be the third step, which involves the Pastor, the members of the Parish Pastoral and Financial Councils, together with representatives of other parish organizations).*

**OBJECTIVE:** To encourage the parish community to “dream” about possibilities and discover what it cares about. To help parishioners experience a sense of “belonging” within the community. To help the Pastor LISTEN to the hopes and dreams of his community, but especially to the voice of the Holy Spirit indicating what the Lord wants from us. Effective leadership requires engaging others in conversation about things that matter. **ASK WHAT’S POSSIBLE (AND NOT WHAT’S WRONG ...) AND KEEP ASKING!**

**METHODOLOGY:** The same as for Session 1 (Count our Blessings)

**Discussion Forms:** Each discussion group should fill out the forms provided below (pp. 26-32) and present them to the Assembly. Make as many copies as needed for the size of your parish.

**Practical Suggestion:** When groups are reporting to the Assembly, it is not necessary to repeat what was already said by a previous group.

**PROPOSALS FROM THE PASTOR:** In providing leadership, a pastor has the right and responsibility to propose pastoral priorities. He should do so during this session, having first heard out his parishioners. His proposals should take into account the priorities set out by his Bishop and the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC (**See: ADDENDUM:** Priorities for 2013-2015 for Pastoral Planning, pp. 40-47).

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **PRAYER – READING - REFLECTION**

##### **II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

**PRAYER:** *Make the pure light of Your Divine knowledge shine in our hearts, O loving Master. Open the eyes of our minds that we may understand the message of Your gospel. Instill in us the fear of Your blessed commandments that we may subdue all carnal desires and follow a spiritual way of life, thinking and doing all that pleases You. For You, O Christ our God, are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies, and we give glory to You, together with Your eternal Father and Your most holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.*

(From the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom)

**READING:** In the Gospel of Luke we read:

And He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

(Luke 4: 16-21)

**SHORT REFLECTION (3-4 min.):**

- 1) In the Gospel of Luke** our Lord reveals that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah about the Good News is fulfilled In Him.
- 2) His Beatitude Sviatoslav has laid out our priorities:** the Word of God and Catechesis, Liturgical life and Prayer, Serving one’s neighbour (Diakonia), along with Leadership-Stewardship, Communion-Unity and a Missionary Spirit.
- 3) In focusing on these things, our parish can** by its very life bear witness to the same Good News which our Lord proclaimed in Nazareth.
- 4) We’ve reflected on what we already do. Let us now talk about our vision and our dreams for this parish community.** Let us ask the Holy Spirit what He wants from us today. May He show us the light and the way. Christ is among us. He is and will be!

## **1: THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

### **SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

#### **(1A) The Word of God and Catechesis IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY**

**TOGETHER AS A PARISH** (e.g. Sunday homily, Lenten Mission)

**Children** (e.g. Preparing for first Confession)

**Youth** (e.g. Summer Camp)

**Adults** (e.g. Bible Study Group)

**Parents & Family** (e.g. Wedding preparation)

**Seniors** (e.g. Book Club)

**... 1: THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

**SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE  
OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

**(1B) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH  
(e.g. Catechetical Olympics)

**(1C) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHIRSTIANS (ECUMENISM)

Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop  
(e.g. Joint Bible Study Group)

**(1D) THE WORD OF GOD & CATECHESIS**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)  
(e.g. Parish Radio Program)

**REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church, is the need to **witness and serve unity with the Successor of the Apostle Peter.**

## **2: LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

### **SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

#### **(2A) LITURGICAL LIFE / PRAYER IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY**

**TOGETHER IN OUR PARISH CHURCH** (e.g. Saturday Vespers)

**We can also focus on different groups in the parish:**

**Children** (e.g. Altar servers)

**Youth** (e.g. Youth pilgrimage)

**Adults** (e.g. Prayer Apostolate)

**Parents / Families** (e.g. Distribution of Family Prayer booklets)

**Seniors** (e.g. Prayer over the radio for those who are unable to come to church)

#### **REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the “Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church, is the need to **Foster our Eastern-Christian Heritage.**

**...3: LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

**SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE  
OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

**(2B) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH

(e.g. Eparchial pilgrimage)

**(2C) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)

Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop

(e.g. Joint Memorial Service for victims of the Holodomor)

**(2D) LITURGICAL LIFE AND PRAYER**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)

(e.g. Procession in our village, town, city)

### **3: SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR (DIAKONIA)**

#### **SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

#### **(3A) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY

(e.g. A parish program for visitation of the sick and elderly)

**We can also focus on different groups in the parish:**

**Children** (e.g. Clothing collection for orphans)

**Youth** (e.g. Work with substance abuse)

**Adults** (e.g. Program for Alcohol abuse)

**Parents & Family** (e.g. Food bank for poor families)

**Seniors** (e.g. Care centre)

#### **REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the “Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **Focus on the Person.**

**...3: SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

**SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE  
OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

**(3B) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN UNION WITH OTHER PARISHES / OUR EPARCHY / THE CHURCH

(e.g. Working with a local Catholic charity)

**(3C) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS (ECUMENISM)

Note: Ecumenical cooperation should be undertaken under the guidance of the Bishop

(e.g. Joint St. Nicholas for poor children)

**(3D) SERVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR - DIAKONIA**

IN THE WORLD (MISSIONARY SPIRIT)

(e.g. Soup Kitchen for the homeless)

**REMEMBER:**

Among the characteristics of the Vibrant Parish of the UGC Church is the need to **foster Accessibility and Openness.**

*Fostering “one heart and mind” in our parish community*

**COMMUNION-UNITY (BUILDING UP OUR COMMUNITY)**

**SESSION II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY  
TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH**

Let us reflect on how we **can better foster the unity of our parish community**  
(e.g. Community coffee after Sunday services)

**PASTORAL PLANNING**  
***Session III***

**EVALUATE / PRIORITIZE:**  
**WHAT CAN BE DONE AND WHAT WILL HAVE THE GREATEST  
IMPACT ON OUR PARISH MISSION?**

***Guidelines***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **Pastoral Council Meeting**

### **III. EVALUATE / PRIORITIZE: WHAT CAN BE DONE AND WHAT WILL HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON OUR PARISH MISSION?**

*This third step is the stage of evaluation and involves the participation of a more selected group, ideally the Parish Pastoral Council, which should include representatives of various parish organizations, always working under the leadership of the Parish Priest. This step involves:*

- 1. Internal Analysis** (the strengths and weakness of the parish) and external influences (possibilities and difficulties) related to the aspects of the “Vibrant Parish” (If this has not been done already!),
- 2. Review of “Blessings and Dreams” (Session 1 & 2),**
- 3. Prioritizing:** a realistic review of the Dreams, taking into account available or required resources.

**OBJECTIVE:** Here the pastor with his closest co-workers has an opportunity to “listen” to what the Spirit is saying through the expressed hopes and dreams of their parishioners, and to consider the realistic possibilities (time, talent, treasure), necessary in order to fulfill the mission of the parish. Note: It is important to remind the participants that there are no “right or wrong” proposals. However, since no parish has unlimited resources, it is important to focus on those activities and tasks which have the greatest chance of succeeding and could have the greatest impact.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

- 1) A thoughtful SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS of the parish** in respect to all six priorities of “The Vibrant Parish” (See pp. 9-10, 37). **Analysis of internal factors:** 1. strengths and 2. weaknesses of the parish. **Analysis of the external factors:** 3. opportunities, 4. obstacles and threats. **Note SCHEDULING OPTION:** You may consider it more effective to undertake this step with your Parish Pastoral Council at the very beginning of the Pastoral Planning Process (i.e. BEFORE Session 1. Blessings).
- 2) Organize and analyze the material collected in the first two sessions:** I. Count our Blessings, II. Dare to Dream
- 3) Divide the proposals into two groups:** those which are considered ESSENTIAL, those which are GOOD AND USEFUL.
- 4) Write down** what is considered **ESSENTIAL (=TOP PRIORITY!).**
- 5) Organize-Prioritize** the **GOOD AND USEFUL** proposals according to this criteria: what will most help our parish **accomplish its mission?** (be most effective?).

**Remember:** Everyone who holds responsibility in the parish community serves with a **spirit of self-renunciation for the sake of Christ (Kenosis).**

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **PRAYER – READING – PRESENTATION**

#### **III. EVALUATE / PRIORITIZE: WHAT CAN BE DONE**

#### **AND WHAT WILL HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON OUR PARISH MISSION?**

**PRAYER:** *O Great and Almighty God! Grant me the wisdom of my state of life, that I may accomplish everything that You desire, grant me the insight to understand my obligations and allow me to fulfill them as needed and required of me unto Your glory and for the welfare of my soul. Grant me the wisdom of your ways, and the wisdom to follow in the footsteps of Your holy will; grant me the wisdom of success and of failure, that I may not exalted myself in one and despair in the other, grant me the wisdom of joy and the wisdom of sorrow; may I only find comfort in that which leads to You, and may I find sorrow only in that which leads me away from You. Amen.*

(From the Prayer of Metropolitan Andrey on the Wisdom of God)

**READING:** In the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians we read:

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

(Col 3:12-17)

#### **SHORT REFLECTION (3-4 min.):**

- 1) **What St. Paul writes to the Colossians** especially applies to us, who have been called to leadership in this parish community (...read the list of virtues in the reading)
- 2) **In his Pastoral Letter His Beatitude Sviatoslav:** speaks of gifts, which our Lord sends to every community and how these gifts must work together for the perfecting of those called to holiness.
- 3) **Our parish is called** to faithful stewardship of various spiritual and material gifts, those of time, talent and treasure... always focused on our mission as Church.
- 4) **Let us pray that the Holy Spirit grant us the gift of wisdom,** so that we might see things from God's perspective, and guide our parish community in all that is good.

**PASTORAL PLANNING**  
***Session IV***

**DESIGN / COMMITMENT:  
CONCRETE PLAN OF ACTION  
FOR FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

***Guidelines***

## **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

### **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

#### **Pastoral Council Meeting for Pastoral Planning**

#### **IV. DESIGN / COMMITMENT: CONCRETE PLAN OF ACTION FOR FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?**

*This fourth step takes place under the leadership of the pastor with the participation of members of the Parish Pastoral Council, including representatives of key parish organizations. Members of the **Financial Council** should also be involved in this stage of planning. This is where **concrete plans** are drawn up to implement the proposals or tasks specified in Session III.*

**PRAYER:** Heavenly King.

In preparation for this session, the pastor should review the proposals and priorities expressed in Session III: Evaluate-Prioritize, giving greatest weight to items identified as ESSENTIAL and to those GOOD and USEFUL proposals which have been given priority. Calling together the Pastoral Council, he should now **propose concrete action items** for Pastoral Planning, inviting and encouraging individuals to assume responsibility for specific tasks. If upon reflection he has determined that certain proposals from Session III are unworkable or not a priority at present, he should be prepared to explain his rationale.

**Note:** *The pastor should know if a certain decision of a pastoral, administrative, or financial nature requires approval or permission from his Bishop.*

**A Pastoral Plan of Action should address the following question for each proposal:**

**What?** The concrete task or activity.

**Who?** The person or persons who are responsible for the task at hand.

**Where?** Place or Location of activity.

**When?** Is the task ongoing, or time-limited? If time-limited, what is the projected date of completion?

**How?** What human and material resources are needed for the task or activity?

**With whom?** Is the task to be coordinated with the Eparchy? other parishes? etc.

**What is the aim or goal?** We undertake this task for the Greater Glory of God, and...

**Remember:** Anyone who holds responsibility in the parish community serves with a **spirit of self-renunciation for the sake of Christ (Kenosis)**.

# **PASTORAL PLANNING**

## ***An ongoing process***

### **ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION**

## ***Guidelines***

***“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”***  
**Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

**AN ONGOING PROCESS:  
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION**

In Pastoral Planning it is important to continuously assess and evaluate every good initiative and on-going program. A person committed to a task or having responsibility for an activity should **report** on his or her work, on the realization of a task or activity, on successes and failures, on any needed changes in planning in light of new or unanticipated circumstances.

The best place for assessing (monitoring) any planned activity are meetings of the **Pastoral Council** or, if administrative and financial matters are involved, the **Financial Council**. These Councils should have regular meetings and together with the pastor monitor the implementation of pastoral initiatives.

In addition, if there exists an **Eparchial Pastoral Council**, it may require reports on the implementation of pastoral initiatives of an eparchial, regional (metropolitan) or Church-wide nature. If at present no such eparchial structure exists, the eparchial coordinator of the program “The Vibrant Parish – a Place to Encounter the Living Christ” may request feedback from pastors in an effort to improve efforts in pastoral planning.

**ADDENDUM:**

**PRIORITIES FOR 2013-2015**  
**For parish pastoral planning**

**INTRODUCTION**

In 2011, the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church approved 12 main directions of development for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church within the framework of the Vision 2020 Strategy “The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ”.

**12 Main directions of development for 2020**

1. Catechesis
2. Ecumenism
3. Unity (within the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church)
4. Fostering our eastern identity
5. Evangelization/Mystagogy (Votserkovlennya)
6. Formation of clergy and religious
7. Formation of laity
8. Serving migrants
9. Youth ministry
10. Financial management
11. Social service ministry
12. Education

**Priorities for 2013-15:**

1. Catechesis (pg. 3)
2. Liturgy and prayer (fostering eastern identity) (pg. 4)
3. Social ministry/diakonia (pg. 5)
4. Youth ministry (pg. 6)
5. Formation of laity (pg. 7)
6. Formation of clergy and religious (pg. 8)

What follows are proposals of parish goals for each of the 6 priority directions for 2013-2015, which are intended to guide the implementation of the vibrant parish program for the next 3 years (2013 – 2015), and also a list of resources, which will be developed by Patriarchal and Eparchial level institutions, which you will have at your disposal to assist you in the growth of parish life and activities.

## **1. CATECHESIS**

### **Goals for the parish level for 2013-2015**

1. Organize a catechetical school or catechetical courses for all age groups: children, youth and adults; Implement catechetical programs based on the new UGCC Catechism for different age categories.
2. Set up a parish catechetical council comprised of: pastor, administrator, assistant pastor, catechists and parents.

### **To help you in developing catechetical ministry at your parish, the following resources are being prepared:**

1. Training and formation for catechists and leaders of Bible Apostolate in the Eparchy. (Eparchy-Exarchate)
2. The UGCC Catechism translated into different languages. (Patriarchal Catechetical Commission - PCC)
3. Catechumenate program - catechesis for adults. (PCC)
4. Bible study program with commentaries (PCC).
5. Catechetical materials for different age groups based on the Catechism of the UGCC, posted to Internet resources. (PCC and the Eparchial Commission)

## 2. LITURGY AND PRAYER

### Goals for the parish level for 2013-2015

1. Conduct liturgical catechesis for the faithful in the parish.
2. Revive the idea of a prayer corner (Pokuttya) in the family tradition and encourage the faithful to daily personal and communal prayer.
3. Hold daily Divine Liturgy and Prayers of the Hours (Chasoslov) in the parish church.
4. Encourage the faithful to participate in worship services, not only on Sundays and holidays, but during other days of the week.
5. On Sundays and holidays, in addition to the Liturgy, introduce Matins Vespers services.
6. Emphasize the importance of learning and practicing daily prayers, the prayers of the Prayer of the Hours (Chasoslov) and prayers before and after meals.

### To aid in the development of liturgical life in your parish, the following resources are being prepared

1. A Common Church Calendar and Ustav (Typikon) -both Julian and Gregorian calendar (Patriarchal Liturgical Commission - PLC)
2. A series of Booklets-Brochures explaining different parts of the liturgical cycle of prayer. (PLC)
3. Publication of a set of festal icons, based on the Ukrainian sacred art tradition, for use during feast days on the tetrapod (analogion). (PLC)
4. Liturgical texts honoring the Blessed Martyrs of the Church. (PLC)
5. Liturgical prayers and petitions for the glorification of martyrs and confessors of the faith. (PLC)
6. A thematic series of publications of important patristic and modern mystagogical catechesis and also liturgical-patristic commentary of those Scripture texts which are a permanent part of the liturgy. (PLC)
7. Certificate programs for learning about the liturgical heritage of our church tradition: Iconography, liturgical music, liturgical ministry, conscious and active participation of the faithful, (Eparchy - through institutions such as the Ukrainian Catholic University, the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, the Sheptytsky Institute or eparchial structures – all in agreement with the Patriarchal Liturgical Commission).
8. Eparchial Cantor (dyak) school, or courses for continuous formation for cantors (dyaky). (Diocese)

### **3. SOCIAL SERVICE / DIAKONIA**

#### **Goals for the parish level for 2013-2015**

1. Identify a person (or group of persons) responsible for developing the charitable service ministry of the parish, and encourage all the faithful in the active participation in charitable service as an expression of a living faith.
2. In each parish establish your own charitable program or actively support already existing charitable initiatives organized by the church or other community organizations.
3. Promote and spread the practice of “charity weeks / days” and other initiatives designed to popularize social service ministry in the Church and society.
4. (In Ukraine) Implement the program of activities planned for 2013, and dedicated to diakonia, as an expression of living faith.

#### **To aid in the development of social service ministry, the following resources are being developed**

1. A Council (Committee) of Social Ministry will be formed at the Patriarchal level to coordinate, promote and share experiences of social service ministry in the UGCC. (Department of Social Ministry -Patriarchal Curia)
2. Professional training of social service volunteers and staff at church and state institutions, and a series of regular courses, workshops and seminars to improve their skills in ministry. (Eparchy and the local Caritas)
3. Audio, video, and printed informational materials to share information about already existing social service ministry projects being implemented in the Church. (Department of Social Ministry - Patriarchal Curia)
4. (In Ukraine) Outline of events and activities for 2013, dedicated to diakonia as an expression of a living faith. (Department of Social Ministry - Patriarchal Curia)

## 4. YOUTH

### Goals for the parish level for 2013-2015

1. In every parish where there are young people, to establish a youth group.
2. Involve properly prepared and active young people in the life of the parish, especially in matters serving others and evangelization in the parish and beyond.
3. Where possible, found other youth community groups and activities at the parish (for example: Plast, sports teams)

### To aid in developing youth ministry, the following resources are being developed

1. Eparchial Coordinator (commission) of youth pastoral care in parishes.
2. Youth Catechism. (Patriarchal Catechetical Commission (PCC) and the Ukrainian Patriarchal Youth Commission (UPYC)).
3. Youth website [dyvensvit.org](http://dyvensvit.org). (UPYC)
  - Possibility to create Eparchial sub-pages.
  - Forum for the communication and experience sharing of the youth of the whole UGCC.
4. Programs and Materials (UPYC)
  - Youth Retreat.
  - "First Steps in youth ministry in my parish." (guidelines to creating a youth group in the parish)
  - Program for training youth leaders.
  - "Discovering your vocation."
  - "Fostering a spirit of missions and social service."
  - "Know the treasures of our spiritual tradition."
5. Christian camps for teenagers and young people. (Eparchy)
6. Eparchial Youth Pastoral Plan for 3 years. (Eparchy)
7. Training seminar for youth leaders. (Eparchy)

## 5. FORMATION OF LAITY

### Goals for the parish for 2013 - 2015

1. Create or revitalize Parish Councils: pastoral and economic, engaging spiritually mature and well prepared lay people - professionals.
2. Hold retreats or formational days based on the "Formation program for laity" for those persons involved in the administration of the parish. (Palamar, brotherhood and sisterhood leaders, cashiers, etc ...)
3. For the general formation of laity - particular emphasis in the coming year:
  - Bible study groups at the parish to foster the daily reading and study of Sacred Scripture: privately and in the family.
  - Joint reading and studying the new Catechism of the Church "Christ - our Passover."
4. Encourage the faithful to greater participation in liturgical services of the Church through liturgical catechesis: explanation of iconography and liturgical music, and helping lay groups to foster the practice of common liturgical prayer.
5. Ensure proper preparation for the sacrament of marriage in parishes and eparchial centers, and where there are enough young couples, create a community-group of young families.
6. Offer catechesis for parents and godparents in preparation for baptism, to help them raise their children in faith and love for God and neighbor, and to participate actively in the life of the church community.
7. Hold Retreats 2 times a year (Christmas and Lent). Once a year organize a parish pilgrimage. Every five years hold a mission at the parish.

### To aid in the formation of laity, the following resources are being developed

1. In the Eparchy a designated person responsible (or a Commission) for the Lay formation programs. (Eparchy)
2. Church-wide program "Preparation for the sacrament of marriage." (Ukrainian Patriarchal Commission on the Family)
3. Training for lay people helping the priest in the implementation of Marriage preparation courses. (Eparchy)
4. Program of lay formation - training for people serving in parish ministry (Eparchy)
  - Foundations of the Christian faith.
  - Vocation and mission of the laity
  - How to form and run a lay organization.
  - Formation of laity for active ministry in the parish.

(Later program permanent formation for laity)

5. Network of family movements and communities (Movement of young families, family counseling centers, etc ...). (Eparchy)
6. Programs and materials for the veneration of lay martyrs of the Ukrainian Church. (Patriarchal Liturgical Commission - PLC and Postulation Center)
7. Regular presentations lay communities, movements and organizations, at the level of deaneries to foster the development of new communities. (Eparchy)

## 6. FORMATION OF CLERGY and RELIGIOUS

### Goals for the parish for 2013-2015

1. Parish priest promotes vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life through:
  - Encouraging young boys to participate as altar servers and holding additional activities with them.
  - Encouraging young people to participate in deanery and eparchial meetings and programs for youth interested in religious life.
  - Sermons on vocations.
  - Meetings and retreats for the youth in the parish on the discernment of vocations.
  - Personal conversations.
2. In parochial schools and organizations emphasize the value of religious vocations among young people.
3. In parishes where there is more than one priest, the priests should foster their own regular common prayer together. (for example: Prayers of the Hours (Chasoslov)).
4. Support the connection between parish communities and seminarians of the Eparchy (particularly seminarians and their home parishes).
5. Encourage parish communities to support individual eparchial seminarians, especially those who come from poor families and also priests entrusted with a special pastoral ministry. (Chaplaincy and missionary activities)
6. Develop solidarity with priests and parishes in missionary territory.

### To help foster vocations to the clergy and religious life, the following resources are being developed:

1. Eparchial Commission or Vocations coordinator for fostering vocations (Eparchy).
2. Continuing formation programs for priests of the eparchy, based on the program guidelines and materials developed by the Patriarchal Commission on Priestly formation. (Eparchy).

### **SPECIAL PROPOSALS FOR PARISHES IN THE YEAR OF FAITH (2013)**

1. Reading and explanation of the Apostolic letter *Porta fidei* and pastoral letters of the Patriarch.
2. Hold parish educational seminars to introduce and familiarize the faithful with the new UGCC Catechism "Christ - our Pascha."
3. Parish missions and retreats, night vigils (using the icon of the Year of Faith) and pilgrimages to places of pilgrimage.
4. In parishes, church schools and institutes (catechetical institutes, seminaries) presentations of contemporary witnesses of faith, inviting missionaries, religious, chaplains, who will present ways of witnessing to the faith today, in various circumstances of life.
5. Encourage the faithful to charitable service and acts of charity, as evidence of a living faith ("Faith without works is dead").
6. A series of sermons and teachings throughout the year on topics:
  - faith which we express and strengthen in prayer and worship (*lex orandi lex credendi est*)
  - faith that we witness to (Creed, Catechism)
  - faith which we live (social, charitable service)
  - faith which we believe and pass on to others (evangelization mission)
7. Since faith is born and develops in the family as in a "domestic church" and grows deeper in prayer (including family and personal), then:
  - Promote and encourage the practice of family prayer (at least the evening), as well as daily reading the word of God, and prayer before and after meals.
  - In order to encourage family home prayer, organize a parish icon, which would travel between members of the parish (each house 1-3 days - depending on the size of the parish). If the priest helps to transfer the icon from house to house, this can also be another opportunity for visiting parishioners and better learning about their needs.
  - Restore the faithful Christian duty to cherish the interior of their homes, emphasizing the presence of the icons on the ancient tradition of red corner, as a special corner for prayer.
  - Produce and distribute electronic versions of liturgical prayer and other texts (for tablets, smartphones ...), putting them on the Internet, so that everyone could access them, and use them for personal prayer.
8. Hold parish retreats on the sacrament of baptism as preparation for 1025 anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' and the renew vows on the feast day of St. Volodymyr the Great.

# **“The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the Living Christ”**

## **Handbook for Pastoral Planning**

TO THE CLERGY PARTICIPATING IN WORK SESSIONS TO DISCUSS PASTORAL PLANNING ACCORDING TO THE PRIORITIES OF “THE VIBRANT PARISH” PROGRAM (Bishop Ken)	1
I. WHY PASTORAL PLANNING?	3
2. THE KEY ROLE OF THE PASTOR	4
3. ROLE OF PASTORAL AND FINANCIAL COUNCILS	5
4. PASTORAL PLANNING – THEMATIC REVIEW	6
TABLE 1: SCHEME OF PRIORITIES AND AREAS OF ACTIVITY FOR PASTORAL PLANNING	8
<i>Example: Agenda of Meetings for Pastoral Planning</i>	9
<i>Situational Analysis for Pastoral Planning</i>	
WHAT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS HELP OR HINDER US IN OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?	10
TABLE 2: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS BASED ON “THE VIBRANT PARISH” PRIORITIES	12
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING FOR PASTORAL PLANNING	
I. COUNT OUR BLESSINGS: HOW ARE WE ALREADY FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?	13
...GROUP DISCUSSION FORMS	16
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING FOR PASTORAL PLANNING	
II. DARE TO DREAM: IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OR NECESSARY TO BETTER FULFILL OUR MISSION AS CHURCH	23
...GROUP DISCUSSION FORMS	26
PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING FOR PASTORAL PLANNING	
III. EVALUATE / PRIORITIZE: WHAT CAN BE DONE AND WHAT WILL HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON OUR PARISH MISSION?	33
PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING FOR PASTORAL PLANNING	
IV. DESIGN / COMMITMENT: CONCRETE PLAN OF ACTION FOR FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS CHURCH?	36
AN ONGOING PROCESS: ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION	38
ADDENDUM:	
Priorities for 2013-2015 for parish pastoral planning	40