

Archdiocese of Winnipeg - Synod Process  
**Focus Commission on Vocations and Leadership**

2017

## General Statment

Through the sacramental life of the Church, the People of God is called to share in the vocation of ushering in the reign of God and transforming the world.

*“On All Christians therefore is laid the preeminent responsibility of working to make the divine message of salvation known and accepted by all throughout the world”<sup>1</sup>*

## Direction for Consideration

Every woman, man and child has a responsibility to carry out the mission of Jesus in the world:

*“There is one vocation, which is to share in the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ. In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission, Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world.”<sup>2</sup>*

The clergy's role is to build up the body of Christ through teaching, preaching and the celebration of the Church's sacraments so that the laity might faithfully and effectively carry out their unique sharing in the common apostolate in the world.

*“The [Second Vatican] Council saw the task of the clergy, from the normative teaching of pope and bishops to the catechetical activities and preaching of priests and deacons, as that of proclaiming the moral vision of the Gospel as it has been perpetuated in the living tradition of the church. It is the particular duty of all the baptized to take this moral vision and integrate it into their daily lives and apply to the complex issues of the age”.<sup>3</sup>*

The synod process has recognized a tremendous need to make priority the ongoing formation of the laity so that they might: more effectively fulfill their mission in the world, live out their rightful vocation and carry out true leadership. As the laity assume greater ownership of their role in the church they will inspire and motivate men and women to serve as religious and ordained ministers.

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<sup>1</sup>Apostolicam Actuositatem -Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 1965, par. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Apostolicam Actuositatem -Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity , 1965, par 3.

<sup>3</sup>Keys to the Council - Unlocking the teaching of Vatican II, Richard Gaillardetz, Catherine E. Clifford, 2012. pg 99

## Suggested areas for future consideration

### **The ongoing formation and education of the clergy so that they may assume their vital role as effective formators for the people and communities whom they serve.**

One of the primary roles of the contemporary pastor is the ensuring of the formation of the laity for mission and leadership in the church and in the world. This synod sub-committee recognizes the need for a concentrated effort that ensures the ongoing formation of pastors so that they may effectively fulfill this pastoral responsibility.

*“Certainly there are also purely human reasons which call for the priest to engage in ongoing formation. This formation is demanded by his own continuing personal growth. Every life is a constant path toward maturity, a maturity which cannot be attained except by constant formation. It is also demanded by the priestly ministry seen in a general way and taken in common with other professions, that is, as a service directed to others. There is no profession, job or work which does not require constant updating if it is to remain current and effective. The need to “keep pace” with the path of history is another human reason justifying ongoing formation.”<sup>4</sup>*

*“Priests are not there to serve themselves but the People of God. So, ongoing formation, in ensuring the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral maturity of priest, is doing good to the People of God itself. Besides, the very exercise of the pastoral ministry leads to a constant and fruitful mutual exchange between the priest's life of faith and that of the laity.”<sup>5</sup>*

*“The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching (munus docendi), divine worship (munus liturgicum) and pastoral governance (munus regendi).”<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Pastores Dabo Vobis, John Paul II, 1992, par 70

<sup>5</sup>Pastores Dabo Vobis, John Paul II, 1992, par 78

<sup>6</sup> Code of Canon Law, par 1592

## Recommendations:

- To acknowledge that the priest is responsible for the formation of the people whom he serves.
- That all priests continue in the pursuit of ongoing formation (spiritual, intellectual, human, pastoral and theological) through professional learning and study to effectively fulfill their responsibilities of preaching, teaching and the spiritual formation of their communities.
- That a concerted effort is made to ensure ongoing learning is available in order to address the most current issues of our contemporary society.
- That more financial resources and time be committed towards enhancing the priority of the clergy's ongoing learning and formation through study weeks, and days dedicated to the further education of priests.
- That more priests are considered for specialized studies in the various disciplines of church life so as to form an effective ordained teaching body for our archdiocesan church.

## **A renewed focus on the formation of the laity for the life of the Church and the transformation of the world.**

*“This is why the particular responsibility each person has within the Church is not separable from the responsibility that all Christians have by virtue of their Baptism. St. John Paul II made this clear: ‘Because of the one dignity owing from Baptism, each member of the lay faithful, together with ordained ministers and men and women religious, shares a responsibility for the Church’s mission.’ A Christian cannot carry out this mission in isolation, but only in communion with the entire People of God.”<sup>7</sup>*

## Recommendations:

- A commitment to more opportunities for adult faith formation and learning in every parish community so that the laity may be formed for their mission in the world and the call to the new evangelization.
- A commitment to prepare laity for life in the world so that the christian witness may permeate all aspects of our society.
- A renewed emphasis on the spirituality and apostolate of the laity.
- Greater attention on the importance of the homily as a critical vehicle of formation and education, ensuring relevance for contemporary discipleship.

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<sup>7</sup> The co-responsibility of the Lay Faithful in the Church and the World” , CCCB, 2016, par 3.

- A commitment from Archdiocesan initiatives to support adult faith formation and learning through symposiums, workshops, conferences in all areas of christian life and witness.

- The establishment of an Archdiocesan office of adult faith formation and learning.

### **Recognizing the work and contributions of the Church's ministers, ordained, religious and lay.**

Often the good works and accomplishments carried out by the members of the Church are not communicated within the greater community and remain unacknowledged. It is this synod committee's recommendation that greater attention and encouragement is given to all members of the Church for good things that are being done in both the Church and in the world in order to build a greater unity and cooperation.

#### **Recommendations:**

- A sense of appreciation, acknowledgement and celebration of the apostolate and ministry being carried out by both laity, religious and clergy.

- That the use of the New Wine Press and the creation of new vehicles of communication of reporting and promotion be employed to feature the various apostolates of the laity and ministries of the clergy and religious being carried out in the parish and in the world.

- The consideration of the annual Chrism Mass dinner as a venue for celebrating noteworthy accomplishments of the clergy, religious, laity and parish communities.

### **Regarding vocations to ordained ministry and religious life**

This synod committee believes that the current crisis in vocations to religious life and ordained ministry is fundamentally connected to a loss of a sense of vocation among the laity of the church from which all future vocations come - lay, religious and ordained. In order to create a culture of religious and ordained vocations, a renewed emphasis must first be placed on the formation of the lay vocation as describe in this report.

- Focus Commission on Vocations and Leadership:

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