

Be Missionary Disciples

UPDATE

Part 1: Evangelization is Still the Focus!

On the Feast of Pentecost in 2015, Archbishop William E. Lori issued his first pastoral letter, in which he gave us his vision for our Church to be “A Light Brightly Visible” to the people of our Archdiocese. He was echoing the sentiments of Pope Francis, challenging us to make evangelization the foundation of our ministry; for us to truly become missionary disciples ourselves, and then to work to bring others to be disciples of Jesus.

Archbishop Lori recognized that in order to do this, we must start with a personal reflection on our own missionary conversion, and then reflect on the missionary impulse that exists within our parishes and the realities of living out our mission in today’s world. He challenged us to consider six questions:

Are we equipped to fulfill the great commission the Lord has given us?

Do we personally have the qualities of mind, heart, and spirit to take up this task?

Are our parishes ready to respond to the challenges of the mission in our times?

What decisions need to be made so that we can marshal the resources the Lord has given us to do the work of the Gospel?

Are there ways we can pull together as a Catholic community to proclaim and bear witness to the Gospel more effectively in the City of Baltimore and the nine counties of Maryland that comprise the Archdiocese of Baltimore?

How can we reach out more dynamically to those who have left and those who are searching?

Evangelization in Pastorate Planning



Over the past 18 months, **nine pilot pastorates** and **eight Phase IA pastorates** have been taking Archbishop Lori’s pastoral letter and Pope Francis’ words to heart, considering what it means to be a pastorate that is “suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation” (EG, 27) and rethinking the “goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities” (EG, 33). Catch up on the work they have been doing and on the way their experiences are shaping pastorate planning at www.BeMissionaryDisciples.org.

Evangelization in Today's Context



The Church is reeling from the latest revelations of clergy sex abuse and its cover up by certain bishops. The deep-seated clericalism that has enabled such a culture to exist demands attention. At the same time, so many other injustices scream out for attention as well: for example, the traumatic legacy of racism in our communities and in the Church, mass incarceration, opioid addiction, the rising tide of intolerance and an inability to engage in civil dialogue. In this environment, the need to go out and make missionary disciples may seem trivial if not irrelevant.



In a November 2018 column titled "Missionary Discipleship in Crisis," Archbishop Lori acknowledged the challenges of evangelizing in this context. He urged us to "recall the mission priorities that we have identified for the Archdiocese: liturgy, welcome, encounter, accompaniment, sending and mission support." And he encouraged us to recommit to this effort because parishes across the Archdiocese demonstrate that intentionally focusing on these priorities does bear evangelizing fruit.



LITURGY



WELCOME



ENCOUNTER



ACCOMPANIMENT



SENDING



MISSION
SUPPORT

Nomination Process for Pastorate Activation

Is your pastorate ready to be activated? Go to www.BeMissionaryDisciples.org to nominate your pastorate for activation in the next cohort (open May 15 - June 15).

In light of our experience with the Pilot and Phase IA pastorates, it is clear that the timing and phasing originally laid out in the Be Missionary Disciples Archdiocesan Plan (May 2017) needs to respond better to the reality of what it means to engage in pastorate planning. The original Phasing and Timing schedule was built around a set of assumptions about when certain pastorates might be ready to be activated, and these assumptions may still be strong factors. But a new nomination process will allow pastorates to assess their own readiness, willingness, and ability to engage in a structured planning process, and request to be activated based on that. It remains the Archbishop's expectation that every pastorate will, at some point, be activated and take up the call to Be Missionary Disciples through the work of pastorate planning.

Office of Pastoral Planning Guidance and Support

*The Office of Pastoral Planning is prepared to guide each cohort of activated pastorates through the planning process with a dedicated facilitator. The facilitator's role is to provide a workable framework for a pastorate to discover its own direction while responding to the call Archbishop Lori issued in *A Light Brightly Visible*. There may be opportunities for pastorates to "self-facilitate" using a staff person or outside facilitator, but these efforts should be correlated with the activation of a pastorate and coordinated with the Office of Pastoral Planning.*