

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAITAMA

BASIC PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITY ISSUES FOR PASTORAL EVANGELIZATION 2011-2020

In the decade since the year 2000, Saitama Diocese has developed in accordance with the Mission Statement: “To live the Gospel together with all people, especially those who have been marginalized.” The Diocese, wanting to build on the progress that had been made during the past decade; wanting to further deepen ongoing interactions among the many cultures present in the Diocese; and wanting to become even more of a living sign of the presence of Christ, has decided that, along with undertaking the formulation and proclamation of the Basic Principles and Priority Issues for the next decade (2011-2020), it will call upon – the parishes, the area blocks and the different language groups – all of the various communities of the Diocese, to take up and implement either one of the Diocesan Priority Issues, or in accord with the Basic Principles of the Diocese, to make a Priority Issue of their own that they can undertake together.

MISSION STATEMENT: “WHILE DEEPENING OUR OWN FAITH, LET US LIVE AND PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL, WITH ALL PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE MARGINALIZED.”
 ~LET US BECOME ONE IN CHRIST!~

I. BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. We aim to have a community that; while actively encountering Christ in the midst of our contemporary society; also learns the teachings of Christ together in community: praying together, living the Gospel with many other people, and having enough vitality to share the Gospel with others.
2. We aim to have the laity and pastoral ministers gather around the same table, so that after discussing and sharing the graces of the Lord with one another, they may grow even more as brothers and sisters by collaborating together to do team ministry.
3. We aim for a community that prays together and is in solidarity with one another; a community that acts together to ensure that every person is able to live a dignified human life.

II. PRIORITY ISSUES OF THE DIOCESE

PRIORITY 1: LEARN, LIVE, AND SPREAD THE WORD OF GOD

- Through Bible studies etc., to familiarize ourselves with the Holy Bible and be able to hold gatherings to share the Word of God together
- Put our energy into providing faith formation for children and young people
- Place an importance in our life on family prayer and on celebrations of the Liturgy of Thanksgiving (Mass)
- Build a community of faith that will witness to the love of Christ

PRIORITY 2: DEEPEN AND WIDEN INTERACTION AMONG CULTURES IN OUR CHURCH

- Live as a multicultural Church
- Deepen the interaction between cultures; learning to experience the joy that comes from having been called to the same faith amidst a rich variety of languages and cultures
- Deepen the bonds among the laity by celebrating International Masses, charity events and festivals

PRIORITY 3: LIVE TOGETHER WITH THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MARGINALIZED

- Put a priority on interaction with those who are in a weak position in society and mutually support one another.
- Commit ourselves to actively tackling social issues such as bullying and discrimination etc.

PRIORITY 4: ACTIVATE “TEAM MINISTRY FOR PASTORAL EVANGELIZATION”

- Live the spirit of “Team Ministry for Pastoral Evangelization” that enhances the talent of each pastoral minister; by having the laity, religious, deacons and priests, minister collaboratively as a team. In so doing all will get a chance to practice brotherly and sisterly love for one another
- Make even greater efforts in the formation of lay ministers

PRIORITY 5: LIVE A SIMPLE LIFE

- Deepen our understanding of Gospel Simplicity and pursue a way of life that is in harmony with nature and the environment
- Put a priority on seeking to live in such a way that our hearts become enriched (spiritual poverty) rather than placing emphasis on gaining more material possessions

PRIORITY 6: SEEK AND PRAY FOR PEACE

- Learn about, pray for, and act together for peace
- Strengthen ties with the leaders of other religions by holding events such as the TEN DAYS FOR PEACE, thus strongly reaffirming our desire for peace

PRIORITY 7: STRENGTHEN THE BONDS OF SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY WITH THE PEOPLE OF ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

- Through pilgrimages and by sending Youth Ambassadors to deliver contributions given for the TABLE OF THE LORD FUND to various countries etc. will provide opportunities for cultural exchanges on a grass roots level. Interaction with people who have different histories and cultures, offers a chance to learn more about the many different ways of living in the world

PRIORITY 8: WORK FOR RECONSTRUCTION FROM THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

- In offering aid and support for people living in temporary housing etc., — person to person encounters will be emphasized as a vital part of reconstruction assistance

III. PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE PARISHES, THE BLOCK AREAS AND THE LANGUAGE GROUPS

Please take up a Priority Issue for your parish, block area or language group after considering the following points:

- 1) Choose from among the Diocesan Priorities; or in accord with the Basic Principles of the Diocese, make a priority issue of your own for your community.
- 2) Create a concrete plan, which can be achieved in 3 to 5 years, which will actualize this priority.
- 3) Carry out interim self-evaluations and make whatever changes in your plan that may be necessary.

COMMENTARY CONCERNING THE BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR PASTORAL EVANGELIZATION

After the Commentary on the Basic Principles, Bible verses and references have been provided. Please utilize these whenever it would be helpful for your community to deepen its understanding of the Basic Principles.

BASIC PRINCIPLE 1

In order for us to encounter Christ in the midst of our contemporary society, it is important for us as individuals and as a community to deepen our knowledge of the teachings of Christ; and we need to give witness to these teachings by learning, praying, and sharing as a community. We believe that by living the Gospel with many other people, “together,” our community thereby gains the strength to also become life-giving.

- **“And you too, in him, are being built up into a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:22)**
- The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, LUMEN GENTIUM 4 (On the Holy Spirit which sanctifies the Church)
- The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, LUMEN GENTIUM 5 (On the Kingdom of God)

BASIC PRINCIPLE 2

In the midst of a complicated society, Saitama Diocese has given life to Team Ministry for Pastoral Evangelization as a new way to do Pastoral Ministry. We aim to have the laity, lay missionaries, religious, deacons, priests and the bishop gather around the same table. After freely discussing issues and sharing in the graces of the Lord, they can minister together, and grow as brothers and sisters in Christ.

- **“In brotherly love let your feelings of deep affection for one another come to expression and regard others as more important than yourself.” (Rom. 12:10)**
- **“These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.” (Acts 2.42)**
- The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, LUMEN GENTIUM 39-42 (Chapter V, THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS IN THE CHURCH)
- Acts 6.1-7
- Preface “Saints”

BASIC PRINCIPLE 3

In order for every individual to have their human dignity respected, we aim to pray constantly, to work for peace, to be concerned for the environment, to offer disaster relief, and to commit ourselves to deal with social issues. We believe that our steps will be illuminated by living together with people who have been marginalized. We aim for a community that reaches beyond boundaries, nationalities or differences in religion; praying together, living in solidarity, and acting together as one.

- **“Rejoice with others when they rejoice, and be sad with those in sorrow.” (Rom 12:15)**
- The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, LUMEN GENTIUM 4 (Chapter I, THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH)
- Acts 9:36-42, 13:44-52 (46, 47)