

DOCUMENTS OF THE SYNOD OF THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES 2003

GATHERED AND SENT



Cardinal Roger Mahony
and the
People of God of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Solemnity of Our Lady of the Angels
September 4, 2003



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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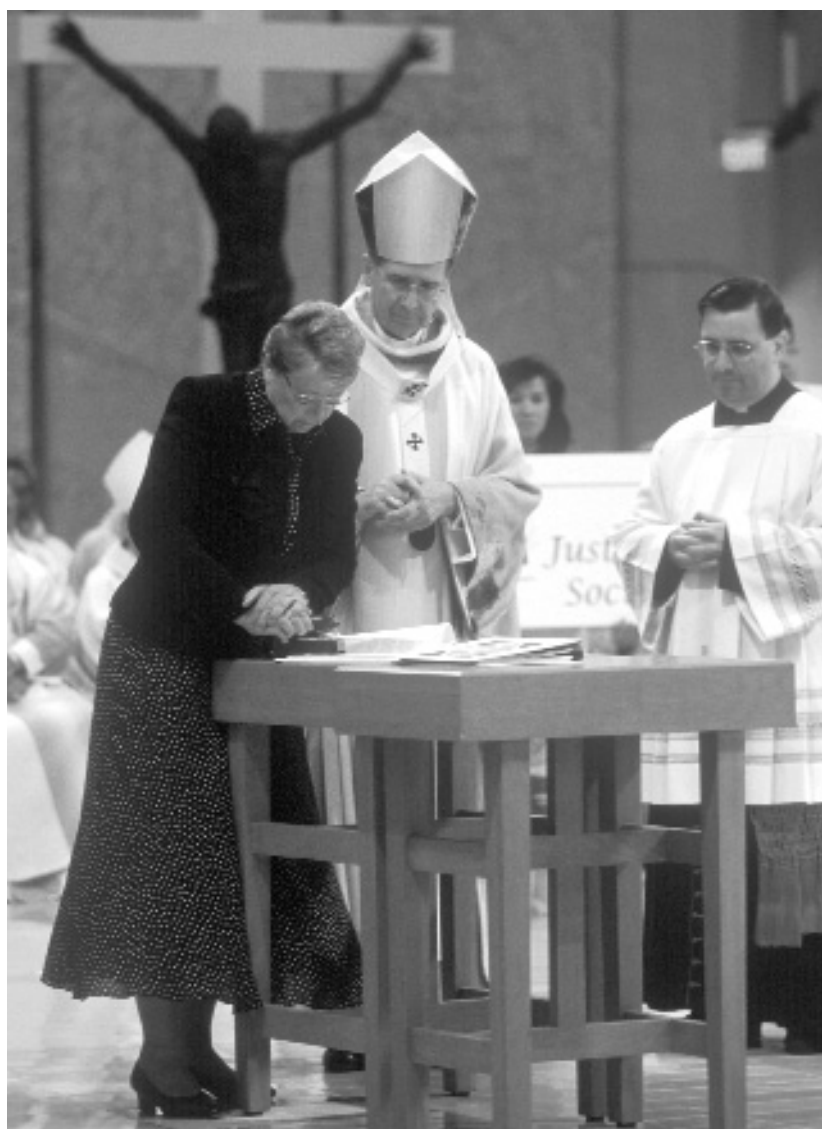
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SYNOD DOCUMENTS
ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES

In this third year of the Third Millennium

In the ninth month of September

In the year of our Lord Jesus Christ, two thousand and three.

Thirty-eight years after the decrees of Vatican Council II.

In the 25th year of the pontificate of John Paul II, Bishop of Rome.

In my 18th year as Archbishop of Los Angeles.

The Synod of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has been concluded.

With Mary, Our Lady of the Angels, we pray

That through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit

All clergy, religious, and laity will be bold in furthering the renewed vision

for our local Church set forth in the Synod Documents.

Let the Synod Decrees direct the Archdiocesan Pastoral agenda


for the next five to ten years, and be effected


through the structures and bodies

that I have authorized to implement the Synod

Praise and glory be to the Divine Trinity. Amen.

201100022648 02/01


Cardinal Roger M. Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles


Sister Mary Elizabeth Galt, B.S.M.
Chancellor

LETTER FROM CARDINAL ROGER MAHONY CONCLUDING THE SYNOD



Supplicatio ad Synodum
Catholicae Ecclesiae de Synodo

Wielki Jubilat i synod w Rzymie

Wielki Jubilat i synod w Rzymie, który rozpoczął się 15 października 2012 roku, jest wieloletnim przedsięwzięciem, które ma na celu odnowienie i umocnienie wiary i nadziei, a także odnowienie i umocnienie życia wspólnoty Kościoła. W tym celu synodowi przekażono wiele sugestii i wniosków, które zostały uwzględnione w dokumentach synodalnych. W tym celu synodowi przekażono wiele sugestii i wniosków, które zostały uwzględnione w dokumentach synodalnych.

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September 4, 2003

Solemnity of Our Lady of the Angels

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Holy Thursday of the great Jubilee Year 2000, the priests of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, together with their Archbishop, published a Pastoral Letter on Ministry, *As I Have Done for You*, which expresses our hope for greater collaboration and mutuality in the exercise of ministry in the Church. At the close of the letter, I convoked a Synod, calling upon the whole People of God to join with me in a process of prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision for the purpose of finding more fruitful ways to live in the communion of the Holy Spirit, responding to the needs of the people in the Archdiocese.

In the many months since April 2000, the whole People of God—laity, clergy, and religious—have given themselves untiringly to the formulation of Pastoral Initiatives, Priorities, and Strategies to help us realize the vision of the Church expressed in *As I Have Done for You*. This vision is fully enlivened by the orientations of the Second Vatican Council, and given specific direction in the pastoral program delineated by our Holy Father Pope

John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (“At the Beginning of the New Millennium”).

The Synod has provided many occasions for listening with the ear of the heart to the many concerns expressed throughout the Archdiocese. Some of these cannot be resolved at the level of the Local Church. But in the same spirit of open and respectful dialogue that has characterized our Synod I shall bring to the attention of those who have authority in these matters, those important concerns that are outside the competence of a Synod.

It is clear that the Holy Spirit has enlivened and enlightened the hearts of the people of the Archdiocese in shaping the direction we will take over the next ten years and more. We will continue to rely on the Spirit of Christ as we move forward now with the implementation of our Pastoral Initiatives, Priorities, and Strategies. May the Spirit guide us in being and becoming more authentic heralds of the Gospel in our own lives and, through our communal witness to the Reign of God, a more effective sign of reconciliation and peace to the world.

It is our sincere hope that the spirit of these Synod Documents, expressed in the words *Gathered and Sent*, will seize and saturate the hearts of all who read them, both in the Church of Los Angeles and beyond.

Together with all the people of the Archdiocese under the protection of Our Lady of the Angels, I entrust to her care all we have done and shall continue to do through the Synod toward the fullness of life in Christ.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

His Eminence
Cardinal Roger M. Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles

PASTORAL INITIATIVES, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES OF THE SYNOD OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES 2003

Introduction

Jesus' mission is first manifested when he, the beloved son of the Father, is baptized in the Jordan and filled with the Holy Spirit. To prepare to begin his mission, the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to fast, pray, and be tested (Matthew 3:16—4:1). Jesus' mission is to announce the time of God's favor, the coming of the Reign of God. Jesus proclaimed the Reign of God as the fulfillment of God's hope, desire, and intention for the world now and to come. In God's Reign, truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace will hold sway forever. Jesus established the Church to continue and further this mission. He entrusted this mission to the Church: to proclaim in word and deed the Good News of God's coming among us in Jesus Christ through the gift of the Spirit. This mission is so central to the word and work of Jesus that the Second Vatican Council affirmed and emphasized that "mission" defines the Church. The Church in every dimension of its life and practice exists for mission: to proclaim in word and deed the Reign of God to people in every culture, time, and place.

On the Solemnity of the Epiphany, January 6, 2001, Pope John Paul II issued an Apostolic Letter that outlined a pastoral program for the Third Millennium: *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, "At the Beginning of the New Millennium." The Pope addressed this Letter to all the faithful: clergy, religious, and laity. In it, the Holy Father affirms that pastoral initiatives are to be developed and adapted to the circumstances of each community. This means that it is in the Local Churches that the specific features of a detailed pastoral plan are to be identified. These will enable the message of Christ to reach people and form communities, so that they may have a deep influence in bringing Gospel values to bear in society and culture. "I therefore

earnestly exhort the Pastors of particular Churches, with the help of all sectors of God's people, confidently to plan the stages of the journey ahead, harmonizing the choices of each diocesan community with those of neighboring Churches and the universal Church" (cf. *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 29). The Synod of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has been undertaken in the spirit of this invitation and challenge: to proclaim in word and deed the mission of Christ and the Spirit.

Where We Stand

Los Angeles is the largest and fastest growing Archdiocese in the United States of America, with an estimated five million Catholics within its borders. Parishes in the Archdiocese report serving two and a quarter million Catholics directly, roughly half of that population. Moreover, parish reports indicate that the average number of Catholics served is almost eight thousand. However, estimates based on ethnicity as reported by the U.S. Census indicate that the average of Catholics per parish is close to nineteen thousand. Parishes are making enormous efforts, and many are quite successful, but the challenge remains even greater. Eighty-seven parishes report serving more than ten thousand people. However, the above Census estimates show that one hundred and ten parishes have a population of more than twenty thousand Catholics. Nonparticipating/inactive Catholics constitute the largest "ex-religious" body in the United States.

This reality alone brings the Church to a crucial juncture with regard to its future and presents Catholics with the challenge and the opportunity to evangelize. In its initial and most concrete form, *to evangelize* means to proclaim in word and action the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who have never heard it before. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to proclaim our experience of him in our own lives, our families, our places of work, and our neighborhoods.

Like the Church in many countries, there are many baptized persons in the Archdiocese who, for a variety of reasons, are not active in the life of their parishes or Local Church. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has therefore called for a “new evangelization.” This form of evangelization entails proclaiming the Word in word and deed to under-catechized, inactive, and alienated Catholics, striving to reanimate the faith of those who have already discovered the presence of Christ in their lives. Such an understanding of evangelization challenges us to allow Christ to touch the unconverted corners of the lives of those who already have faith in Jesus Christ, beginning with ourselves first of all.

The window to evangelize vast numbers of both Catholic immigrants and Catholic young people, as well as to undertake the “new evangelization,” may not remain open forever. The beginning of this new century offers us a unique opportunity to carry out this “new evangelization” in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. How we respond to this challenge now and in the next few years will have enormous consequences for Catholicism in the United States.

On Holy Thursday of the Jubilee Year 2000, Cardinal Roger Mahony and the priests of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles released a Pastoral Letter on Ministry, *As I Have Done for You*. Aware of the many changes taking place in the Archdiocese, the Archbishop and his priests wrote: “Mere adjustment and small shifts in practice will not suffice. What is called for is a major reorientation in our thinking about ministry as well as in our ministerial practice” (38). At the conclusion of the Pastoral Letter, the Cardinal convoked a Synod for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The Synod was an invitation for the People of God to engage in a process of prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision to meet the needs of the people in the Archdiocese at this time.

In our commitment to meet the ever-changing needs of the people of the Archdiocese and to carry out the work of evangelization as described here, we recognize the efforts of our brothers and sisters outside the Church. Many of them, like us, strive to build a world of truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace. It is our

gift and task to walk shoulder to shoulder with all those who seek to advance the Reign of God, regardless of culture, race, language, or creed.

Shifting Ground

THE NEXT GENERATION AND THE NEXT?

In the process of prayer and dialogue so central to the Synod, parents and grandparents across the five Pastoral Regions of the Archdiocese consistently expressed their perception that a very large number of our young people are not practicing their faith. They are anxious about their own inability to pass on the faith to the next generation. Even while there are signs that many young Catholics are enthusiastically involved in the life of faith, it is clear that many more are not. The primary educators in the faith are the parents of children, and so we will need to find ways to assist parents to more effectively fulfill this responsibility.

A THIRD WAVE: GIFT AND CHALLENGE

Called to recognize the all-pervasive challenge posed by youth and young adults, we also find ourselves confronted with another major gift and task. We are living amidst the third great wave of immigration in this country. The first and second waves brought immigrants primarily to the shores of the Eastern seaboard in the first two centuries of this nation. The third wave, growing in strength and numbers since 1970, has brought peoples from Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Far East to the California shores. We count this as an enormous gift, rich in vitality and diversity. But the gift also brings with it huge challenges, not least of which is that of language, as well as that of reaching out to serve diverse cultures, respecting the other, and deeply appreciating, not merely tolerating, difference and uniqueness. With these changes there has also been the pain involved in the changing composition of existing parishes.

Looking back we see that our Archdiocesan parish structures were built to serve an internal migration from the Eastern and Midwestern United States in the aftermath of the Second World War. Parishes were established to serve between fifteen hundred and two thousand households. Several priests were assigned to each parish, and parish schools were staffed by an abundance of sisters from many different religious congregations. Today, especially in those parishes in the Archdiocese where immigrants of the third wave have settled, there can be as many as ten or fifteen thousand potential Catholic households. With fewer priests, religious sisters and brothers, many are left wondering: How are we to serve such a number of parishioners in all their cultural diversity? Recognizing the need for evangelization as well as the “new evangelization” of active and nonparticipating Catholics, can we any longer assume that we will reach them primarily by inviting them to join in our current parish activities and programs?

KEEPING OUR MOORING

Amidst the shifts we have identified we are aware that lay ministries are flourishing in unprecedented numbers. At the same time, vocations to the priesthood and religious life continue to decrease. More deacons are needed to serve the material needs of the Church. We believe that the Church is a communion of Word and Sacrament, but with fewer priests, we run the risk of becoming disconnected from the Eucharist, font and summit of Catholic faith and life.

Anchor of Hope

As the Synod of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles began, the Church throughout the United States began to reel from the crisis brought on by the scandal of sexual abuse. The response of the People of God to the crisis has been a source of the deepest hope as well as the occasion for the most profound apology and plea for forgiveness and reconciliation. We recognize the presence

of sin in the Church but we also believe that the Church is the bearer of God's grace. We came to the Synod with a profound appreciation of the fact that the majority of Catholic people have remained firm in their faith, resolute in hope, ardent in charity, and faithful to the Church. The People of God are living proof of the Second Vatican Council's teaching: We laity, religious, and clergy are the Church.

Evangelization: A New Way of Doing Things

During the Synod process our people have spoken and their voices have been heard. What have they said? Above all they stressed the need for evangelization:

To announce in word and deed the Good News of the Lord,
The time of God's favor,
The transformation of the world,
And the coming of the Reign of God—when truth,
holiness, justice, love, and peace will prevail.

Evangelization is at the heart of the Church's mission; it is everyone's vocation, not only of missionaries, whether ordained, religious, or lay. Evangelization belongs to all those who have been given a share in the Church's mission through their Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and sharing in the Eucharist.

Pope John Paul II defines the "new evangelization" as the proclamation of the Good News not only to those who have never heard the Gospel message, but in a particular way to those who no longer participate in the Church's life. He also includes each and every one of us in this "new evangelization" so that the light of the Gospel may reach the dark corners of our lives as well.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to share the Good News, the person who is Jesus Christ, with many people: our families, youth and young adults, and those who seem to be marginalized from the life of the Church for whatever reason. We are called to share our experience of what it means to have a relationship with

Christ. The Good News of the Reign of God “is not a concept, a doctrine, or a program subject to free interpretation, but is before all else a person with the face and name of Jesus of Nazareth” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 18).

We must admit in all humility that we do not really know how to share the Good News effectively. Cardinal Mahony and the priests of the Archdiocese conclude their Pastoral Letter on Ministry, *As I Have Done for You*, by calling us to recognize that we are on a journey, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, moving toward a future as yet unknown. And so we must learn as we walk together. Here is the question: How can the Synod bring about “a major reorientation in our thinking about ministry as well as in our ministerial practice” so that we can take up the task of evangelization?

We cannot look solely to the past for answers to questions we now face. The Church in the United States grew by leaps and bounds, principally by immigration from Eastern and Western Europe. These immigrants found in the Church a refuge, a source of support and pride in the face of many hostile forces. The catechetical efforts of the Church in the United States have been enormously fruitful. But until now our catechesis has been focused upon those already in the Church. At this time we find it necessary to reach out, to testify in word and deed, not just or even primarily to strangers, but to family, to friends, to our own children. How are we to stand up and face this challenge?

WELLSPRINGS WITHIN

Year by year, season by season, the People of God hear the Word through cycles of Scripture readings proclaimed during the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. Those who participate in the Liturgy every Sunday, and sometimes every day, experience the love of the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit who is present and active in their lives. Because they participate in the Mass every Sunday, their belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the Word, and the community gathered in faith at

the Lord's Table remains firm. Yet many seem to lack confidence in their knowledge of the Christian faith and their ability to articulate their experience of Christ Crucified and Risen. One of the greatest challenges before us, therefore, is how to empower people to speak of their relationship with a loving and saving God through their experiences with the Scriptures, Sacraments, and community, so that they may become bearers of God's love to others. As we embark together on the path of the "new evangelization" we pray that all the baptized will share more fully in the mission of the Church, a mission of the Word and of the Spirit.

The Word is God's love seen, touched, and heard. The Spirit is God's love dwelling in the human heart—a love that is creative, a love that gives life, a love that unites us as children of a loving Father. Everyone in the Church—member for member—has a share in the mission of Word and Spirit, called to make God's love seen, touched, and heard, to live from a never-ending source of love that creates life, binds what is broken, unites each and every one in our families, neighborhoods, communities, parishes: This, in fact, is a new way of doing things.

As the Synod progressed, the words of *As I Have Done for You* (38) echoed: "Mere adjustment and small shifts in practice will not suffice. What is called for is a major reorientation in our thinking about ministry as well as our ministerial practice." The Pastoral Initiatives, Priorities, and Strategies endorsed by the Synod propose a new way of doing things because the fundamental mission of evangelization has been given a new expression for today. The Synod is not celebrated in view of yet more programs. Instead, the Pastoral Initiatives, Priorities, and Strategies were chosen in view of meeting the challenges of our times in the communion of the Spirit, rooted in a fresh encounter with Christ (John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, 3). They are in service of a new way of doing things, imbued by the spirit of the "new evangelization," a whole way of living that is new in its expression, its methods, and its zeal.

Through the implementation of the Synod decisions, we will begin afresh to live as children of God who together form a living sign, an icon, of God's love for the world.

A Blessed Communion

As members of the Body of Christ we are deeply related to one another: parents and children, young adults and grandparents, parishioners and priests, brothers and sisters in community, members of parishes across the Archdiocese, a Local Church related to other Local Churches in the United States and throughout the world. We deepen these relationships when we cultivate and nourish them through generosity and service for the Reign of God now and to come. Thus our relationship, our communion, with God—Father, Son, and Spirit—grows stronger.

As we deepen our communion in the Spirit, we become a living icon of the Trinity. The Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the source of all the other mysteries of Christian faith, the light that enlightens them (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 234). The doctrine of the Trinity reminds us that the divine persons are who and what they are because of their relations: Father, Son, and Spirit. We also know that this God is for us, with us, and in us. This basic insight leads us to a profound understanding of ourselves as a communion of persons.

DIVINE AND HUMAN: PERSONS IN RELATION

The doctrine of the Trinity reveals to us that the Trinitarian persons are both different from, yet altogether equal to, one another. There is difference of persons, but there is no greater or lesser. We are a Body called to holiness and to support the full flourishing of each member. And so we reject any differentiation or ordering in the Church that would make one person or ministry intrinsically less essential or more essential than any other (1 Corinthians 12). The sacrament of Baptism establishes the

ground for this ecclesial communion. It introduces us into a community based on new relationships. As daughters and sons of the God who is life, light, and love, we are sisters and brothers to one another (John 1:12–13). It is within this relationship of the baptized that we share the gifts of faith, hope, and love as well as the responsibility to proclaim in word and deed the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world.

Within the Church, all relationships are to be built on mutuality, reciprocity, and interdependence. The Spirit of God is present and active within the various relations that make up the Church—relationships among bishops, laity, priests, religious, and deacons, between Local Church and Universal Church, as well as among those of other Christian churches. We recognize ourselves as a community called to holiness and defined by a quality of interaction rooted in the relational life of God. But just as God is a God for us, so is the Church for others. The Church, in all its members, is for mission. At the heart of the divine life there is the act of “sending,” of “being sent.” Jesus Christ is the One Sent: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21).

More Than Mere Maintenance: Mission

The Church, in all its members, is for mission. It must be admitted that far too often our energy goes into maintaining structures rather than into fulfilling mission. Our concern for collaboration must be more than preoccupation with working together on joint Church projects. We are called to become more fully the Church, a people sent by the One Sent to be a light to the nations, a beacon of hope and joy to the people, all the people, in our own time and place.

Through prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision at the heart of the Synod, six Pastoral Initiatives emerged above all others. These will give shape to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as we seek to live in the communion of the Spirit, able to

respond to the changing needs of the people in the Archdiocese. Our mission extends to:

- those who are not evangelized and to those Catholics who are inactive or feel alienated from the Church;
- the vast numbers of people who have come to our shores;
- the vast number of those Catholics who no longer claim Church affiliation;
- youth and young adults;
- ourselves, who are still in need of total conversion to the Gospel;
- and the generations that will succeed us.

The response of the Synod delegates to the pastoral challenges of the Archdiocese indicates a deep desire to seek new ways to evangelize that go beyond the present structures. The Pastoral Initiatives, together with Priorities and Strategies for implementation, can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Mission is central to the Church's life—to announce in word and deed the Good News of Christ through the presence and power of the Spirit.
- 2) Where Church structures do not aid in the fulfillment of its mission, they are to be renewed or new ones established.
- 3) For effective participation in the mission of the Church, ongoing formation is needed at every stage of life.
- 4) Trained leaders are needed—lay, consecrated persons, and ordained—so that the Word will be proclaimed and inactive Catholics and non-Catholics, as well as those Catholics who are active, will hear the Good News.
- 5) In the sacramental life of the Church, above all in the Eucharist, the identity and mission of the Body of Christ is expressed and impressed, and the Church comes to full stature in Christ.
- 6) Strengthened by Word and Sacrament(s), the Church becomes a sign of communion and justice in and for the world—its mission.

The Synod chose six Pastoral Initiatives, nine Pastoral Priorities, and fourteen Pastoral Strategies for implementation. As the first Pastoral Initiative, *Evangelization and “The New Evangelization”* is the governing concern—the central focus—of the Archdiocesan Synod and its implementation. This means, quite concretely, that *Evangelization and “The New Evangelization”* is the gauge for all judgments and decisions involved in the other five Pastoral Initiatives.



PASTORAL INITIATIVES
OF THE
SYNOD OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES 2003

- I. *Evangelization and "The New Evangelization."* Proclaiming the presence and power of God in the world.
- II. *Structures for Participation and Accountability.* Toward greater participation in decision making and responsibility for mission.
- III. *Ongoing Education and Formation: Adults; Young Adults; Youth.* Understanding the Catholic tradition, passing it on to the next generation.
- IV. *Ministry and Leadership: Lay; Consecrated Life; Ordained.* Toward deeper commitment to witness, worship, and service.
- V. *Eucharist and Sacramental Living.* Becoming a holy people, rooted in prayer, living by the grace of the Eucharist and sacramental celebration.
- VI. *Social Justice: Living at the Service of God's Reign.* Becoming a People of Communion and Justice for the life of the world.

On Saturday, September 6, 2003, in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, I, Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles, formally ratify the work of the Ninth Synod of Los Angeles and hereby promulgate the decrees and legislation of the Synod.

ARCHDIOCESAN SEAL


+ Cardinal Roger M. Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles


Sister Mary Elizabeth Galt, B.V.M.
Chancellor

PASTORAL INITIATIVE I

Evangelization and “The New Evangelization”



Pastoral Initiative I

Proclaiming the presence and power of God in the world. Every baptized Catholic is called to participate in the mission of Christ and the Spirit, the mission of the Church, proclaiming in word and deed the message at the heart of Jesus' life and ministry: the Reign of God among us here and now, at this time and in this place. The whole life of the Church in all its dimensions is to serve this MISSION: announcing in what we say and do the Good News, the year of God's favor, the transformation of the world, and the coming of the Reign of God, the reign of truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace.

Central to this mission is EVANGELIZATION. There are three levels of evangelization. **First**, evangelization entails allowing one's own heart to be seized and saturated by the Gospel, responding to the call to lifelong conversion to Christ by the gift of the Spirit. **Second**, evangelization requires reaching out to others to proclaim in word and deed the Reign of God. **Third**, evangelization demands that the values of the Reign of God—a reign of truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace—permeate each and every culture, transforming every sphere of life.

Because we are called to holiness of life through the grace of our Baptism, we have a responsibility to proclaim to others the experience of Christ in our lives—to our families, in our places of work, in our neighborhoods, as well as in the public square. Every Catholic should be able to convey a personal knowledge of God's love and salvation in the language of the Scriptures, by way of the experience of the Sacraments and through an appreciation of the tradition of the Church. Further, today there must be a "new evangelization" focused on evangelizing or re-evangelizing under-catechized, inactive, and alienated Catholics, as well as on reanimating those who have already discovered the presence of Christ in their lives. The "new evangelization" also means that those of us who already have faith in Jesus Christ allow Christ to touch the unconverted corners of our lives.

Cf. John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America* (January 22, 1999), 6, 28, and 66: AAS 91 (1999), 737–815; Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (November 10, 1994), 21: AAS 87 (1995), 17; Address at the Opening of the Fourth General Conference of Latin American Bishops (October 12, 1992), 17: AAS 85 (1993), 820; Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (December 7, 1990), 37.4: AAS 83 (1991), 249–340; Post-Synodal Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (December 30, 1988), 34: AAS 81 (1989), 455.

PASTORAL PRIORITY

A specific plan for the “new evangelization” of all Catholics (laity, clergy, and religious) is to be established on the level of the Archdiocese and implemented in each parish.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

On all levels (parish, deanery, pastoral region, and Archdiocese), resources are to be prioritized and allocated to promote evangelization.

A collaborative effort is to be initiated among the pastoral offices of the Archdiocese, pastoral regions, and the parishes in designing new, simple, and effective models for the “new evangelization.”

On all levels, media and electronic technology—in particular, radio, television, and the Internet—are to be utilized in evangelization.

PASTORAL INITIATIVE II

Structures for Participation and Accountability



Pastoral Initiative II

Toward greater participation in decision making and responsibility for mission. *If all the baptized are to share in the Church's mission, then the structures of Church life and governance must be renewed, and some new structures established, to allow for the greatest degree of participation on the part of the greatest number of the baptized.* Participation in the mission of the Church is rooted in Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, and nurtured by regular celebration of the Eucharist. All receive gifts from the Spirit that call them to build the Church and advance the Reign of God. For effectiveness in mission, Catholics must be convinced that they are truly the Church, that they are an integral part of its mission, structure, and governance. To accomplish this, the Church must evaluate and revitalize present structures and devise new ones to provide for increased participation, collaboration, and accountability in mission and ministry. This demands greater inclusion of the enormous diversity of peoples in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the many language and socio-economic groups, the range of ethnic-cultural heritages, both male and female, the spectrum of age, the multiplicity of jobs and professions, persons with disabilities of various kinds, as well as the many who are marginalized in various ways in society and Church. All are called to be attentive to this rich diversity, to encourage active participation of all in the Church according to each one's particular gifts and specific ecclesial calling, just as all are called to greater accountability.

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

The archbishop, regional bishops, and Archdiocesan leadership team are to guarantee the development of structures that provide for appropriate religious and lay participation in decision making and processes of accountability at Archdiocesan, regional, deanery, and parish levels.

Each regional bishop is to be given the authority, oversight, and resources (personnel and finances) to administer his pastoral region effectively.

[Second Level Priority]

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

In view of the declining number of priests available to serve as pastors, a comprehensive study, including consultation with laity, regarding parish consolidation, clustering, the creation of new parishes, and staffing by combinations of clergy and lay ministers appropriate to each parish, is to be undertaken, and a plan developed and implemented.

A regional pastoral council is to be established in each region to address common goals, concerns, challenges, and the sharing of resources.

PASTORAL INITIATIVE III

*Ongoing Education and Formation:
Adults; Young Adults; Youth*



Understanding the Catholic tradition; passing it on to the next generation. *All the baptized are to be “well-formed in faith, enthusiastic, capable of leadership in the Church and in society, filled with compassion and working for justice”* (United States Bishops’ pastoral plan for adult faith formation, *Our Hearts Were Burning within Us*, 1999, 30). In order to be more effective in the Church’s mission, both now and in the decades ahead, clearer focus and more concerted effort must be given to ongoing education and formation throughout each stage of life. Christians who have come to know Jesus the Christ have always sought ways of explaining their experience of him to others and of manifesting this experience through faith-filled action. In doing so, they have endowed us with a rich tradition.

We are now challenged to appreciate this heritage, to pass it on to a new generation, and to make it vital in an ever-changing world. But only those who are first evangelized themselves, those who experience the presence and power of the Spirit of Christ, can truly grasp this tradition and then hand it on to others. What is needed in our own time and place are enthusiastic leaders who can motivate the whole Church, especially youth and young adults, to be and to build the Body of Christ in the world.

PASTORAL PRIORITY

Effective religious education and faith formation programs are to be offered throughout the Archdiocese on all levels: children, youth, young adults, and adults.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

The plan for the ongoing education and formation of adult Catholics is to include scripture study, social justice education, opportunities for theological understanding, and personal appreciation of all the sacraments, respect for diversity, spirituality, and spiritual direction.

Within each pastoral region, a sufficient number of young adult programs are to be established on an inter-parochial basis through the mutual cooperation of parishes, including the sharing of resources and personnel, to provide for the faith formation needs of young adults.

PASTORAL INITIATIVE IV

*Ministry and Leadership:
Lay; Consecrated Life; Ordained*



Toward deeper commitment to witness, worship, and service. *Baptism and Confirmation give each one a share in the Church's witness, worship, and service for the good of its mission—the mission of Christ and of the Spirit—for the transformation of the world.* Through Baptism all share in the witness, worship, and service of the Church. The call to ministry and leadership comes specifically from the grace of Baptism, and so there are many forms of ministry that pertain to the laity and are not restricted to clergy and religious. Indeed, “the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all Christians” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1547).

This “baptismal grace of all” is the context within which all types of leadership in the Church—the vitally important priestly role of bishops and presbyters to build up and lead the Church as visible signs of its unity, the role of deacons ordained specifically for the service of charity, as well as the importance of the consecrated life as prophetic sign of the coming Reign of God, and committed lay leadership—are affirmed. What is called for in all exercises of ministry and leadership is collaboration with one another for the building of the one Body of Christ. With well-trained and deeply committed ordained and lay ministers and leaders in the Church, the Word will be effectively preached to our own faith communities, and inactive Catholics and non-Catholics will hear the Good News proclaimed with vigor and joy. This Word of God “is not a concept, a doctrine, or a program subject to free interpretation, but is before all else a person with the face and name of Jesus of Nazareth” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 18).

PASTORAL PRIORITY

On the Archdiocesan level, processes are to be established to ensure better collaboration and cooperation among the laity, religious, and clergy so that the laity can more effectively assume their baptismal responsibility in the mission of the Church.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

A plan for the joint training of ordained and lay leaders, especially in processes of collaboration and shared decision making, is to be implemented.

A “school of ministry for laity” or its equivalent is to be established in each pastoral region to train parishioners for participation in a variety of parochial ministries.

Women are to be included on an equal basis in all aspects of Church leadership, administration, and ministry not otherwise restricted by Church doctrine.

PASTORAL INITIATIVE V

Eucharist and Sacramental Living



Becoming a holy people, rooted in prayer, living by the grace of the Eucharist and sacramental celebration. *The Church's sacramental life becomes fruitful as the whole People of God integrate the sacramental celebrations of the Paschal Mystery with their efforts to transform the world in and through God's love. The Eucharist makes the gathered community, the assembly, what it is: We become what we receive; we receive the Body of Christ in the Eucharist to become the Body of Christ for the transformation of the world. "No Christian community can be built up unless it has its basis and center in the celebration of the most Holy Eucharist" (John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 33; cf. *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 6). We live by a transforming grace that allows us to recognize and embrace the sacredness of human life and living in its various dimensions. Our whole lives become a living expression of the Paschal Mystery—the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—that we celebrate, primarily in the Eucharist.*

Our participation in the Eucharist expresses our commitment to allow Jesus Christ to enter our lives, to nourish us with the Word, to sustain us with the sacrament of his Body and Blood, building us—member for member—into the Body of Christ. As the experience of the Risen Christ transformed the disciples, so our participation in the Paschal Mystery transforms us as well as the wider world. But this is only possible if we are steeped in the prayer that strengthens our commitment to a life of holiness.

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

Each parish is to give priority to the Sunday celebration of Mass as the primary occasion and opportunity for revitalizing the spiritual life of the community and, accordingly, make appropriate provision for the full, conscious, and active participation of the faithful.

As the availability of priests continues to decline within the Archdiocese, a comprehensive plan is to be developed on the Archdiocesan, regional, and parish levels for providing for the liturgical and sacramental needs of the people.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

Archdiocesan guidelines are to be developed and implemented to guarantee opportunities for Catholics to receive communion, gather for prayer, and celebrate those sacraments and liturgical rites that can be administered in the absence of a priest.

Ordained and lay ministers are to participate in ongoing, formal liturgical and homiletic studies.

PASTORAL INITIATIVE VI

Social Justice: Living at the Service of God's Reign



Becoming a People of Communion and Justice for the life of the world. *Building a world of communion and justice is a foreshadowing of, and participation in, the Reign of God. “Communion”* describes our relationship with God, others, ourselves, and all creation; a relationship rooted in the equality, mutuality, and interdependence at the heart of the divine life. Authentic communion calls for a willingness to share the resources of this Archdiocese across parish, deanery, and regional boundaries. “Justice” is the activity of creating a world in which all may grow—with particular attention given to the poor, the weak, and the wounded. The Gospel reminds us that we come to a deeper knowledge of Jesus Christ through our experience of the poor and all those who are in need (Matthew 25:31–46).

Those who are evangelized, who truly know the presence of Christ in their lives, reach out to the poor, to those who are last, littlest, and least in Church and society, seeking and promoting justice. In striving for justice in society and in the Church we continue a long tradition of ministering to the disadvantaged and striving to transform unjust structures. We live out our baptismal call to service for the greater glory of God by giving witness to the grace of communion not only in the parish assembly but also in our neighborhoods, schools, town halls, and the wider political and economic order.

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

On all levels, active collaboration with civil and religious institutions to improve the quality of life in the local community is to be fostered.

A more equitable distribution of resources (finances and personnel) to assist poorer parishes and schools is to be implemented throughout the Archdiocese.
[Second Level Priority]

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

Parishes are to provide a social justice ministry to raise the consciousness of parishioners by educating and informing them on various issues of social justice.

On the Archdiocesan level, salary structures are to be established that provide for a just living wage and benefits, including health, retirement, and unemployment for both part-time and full-time Church personnel.

SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The task of the Synod was not to develop a comprehensive pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles but to establish pastoral priorities and chart a course of action as together the People of God in this Local Church enter a new century. The pastoral priorities and strategies identified as important by the delegates of the Synod will shape the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan now to be developed.

In order to implement the results of the Synod and direct the formation of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, an Implementation Commission is to be established with the assistance and under the direction of competent personnel from the staff of the Archdiocesan Catholic Center.

Through the Synod process, the delegates were conscious of their responsibility to provide for the proper implementation of Synod priorities. In particular, they repeatedly expressed concerns about resources of funding and personnel, appropriate timelines for the accomplishment of specific strategies, and consistent and effective evaluation of progress.

Realizing that many important tasks regarding assessment, finances, oversight, and the timely implementation of the decisions of the Synod belonged not to the Synod itself, but are to be part of the post-Synodal implementation process, the delegates endorsed the following proposals:

- A post-synodal implementation process to include evaluation components, timelines, and the financial impact of all proposals approved by the Synod, and a biennial report on the implementation of Synod priorities, is to be established.
- Sufficient resources to implement the priorities of the Synod on the Regional level are to be provided by the Archdiocese.



Synod Proclamation
Archdiocese of Los Angeles

In this first year of the Third Millennium

On this 30th day of the ninth month of September

In the year of our Lord Jesus Christ, two thousand and one,

Thirty-six years after the decrees of Vatican Council II,

In the 24th year of the pontificate of John Paul II, Bishop of Rome,

In my 20th year as Archbishop of Los Angeles,

I decree that we, the Catholic Church of Los Angeles,

Will begin preparing for our Archdiocesan Synod.

I invite everyone, clergy, religious, and laity, to prepare for this event

By listening attentively to the Word of God which forms us and challenges us, by

praying for enlightenment and wisdom.

By participating through dialogue and discernment

With Mary, Our Lady of the Angels, we pray

That through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit

We may bring forth a renewed vision of our Local Church.

Rooted in compassion, communion, and justice.

Praise and glory be to the Divine Trinity. Amen.

His Eminence

Cardinal Roger Mahony

Archbishop of Los Angeles

*Prayer for the
Synod of the Archdiocese
of Los Angeles*

Father of Light, Life, and Love
We praise and thank you
for gathering a people from every race, land, and language
to be the Body of Christ in our own time and place.

Washed in the waters of baptism,
summoned and sent by your Word,
strengthened and renewed by the Eucharist,
We share in Christ's mission,
becoming a living sign of reconciliation and peace.

We are called to prepare for the coming of your kingdom,
responding to the changing needs of the people
in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles,
building a world of communion and justice.

By your Spirit enlighten, enliven, and guide us
as we journey together through the Synod
to the fullness of life in Christ.

In the gift of the Spirit, be with us and grant us, we pray:

Firm faith, to walk in the light of Christ
Abundant hope, to move forward in the face of every obstacle
Love's flourishing, so that we might share
in the divine life—even now.

Amen.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS

NINTH SYNOD OF LOS ANGELES 2000–2003

Inception of the Synod

On Holy Thursday, 2000, Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles, and the priests of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles issued their joint Pastoral Letter, *As I Have Done for You*. In this letter, the first Archdiocesan Synod since 1961 was convoked. By the end of the year, the Synod Office was established and in operation under the direction of Sr. Marilyn Vollmer, SSM, and the Synod Steering Body was assembled to give guidance, direction, and assistance to Pre-Synodal planning and implementation. The Steering Body was also to be responsible for assessing the progress of Synod planning, for providing oversight and finalizing decisions, and for ensuring that Synod processes and scheduling received high priority among the many responsibilities of the Archdiocese.

By December 2000, the Synod Director had gathered a range of perceptions about the Local Church from various leaders through meetings held with Regional Bishops and their Deans, with priests at individual Deanery meetings, with the Sisters' Council and Brothers' Council, with the Lay Leadership Committee of the Pastoral Councils Office, with the Deacon Representatives and their wives, with the Executive Committee of the Priests' Council, and with Cardinal Mahony.

In March 2001, the Synod Preparatory Commission was established to provide leadership in generating the content of the Synod and in selecting the representatives for Regional Synod Assemblies and, ultimately, the delegates for the Synod itself.

Participants in the Process

Although the final number of Synod delegates would not exceed 352, wide consultation was involved throughout the process of determining the Synod agenda. Between October 2001 and June 2002 all members of the 287 parishes of the Archdiocese were invited to attend two Parish Consultations or “Speak Up Sessions.” At these sessions they were invited to speak their concerns and hopes for the future of the Church in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. A total of 657 parish consultation sessions were conducted and eleven languages were used. Over 26,000 parishioners spoke up at these sessions.

Parishioners were not the only participants in this initial stage of the Synod process. Similar consultations were also held for department heads and employees of the Archdiocesan Catholic Center, for the Major Superiors of women and men religious, for priests, for sisters, and for deacons in each Pastoral Region, for religious brothers, for students at the Major Seminary in Camarillo, for the members of the Synod Steering Body and the Synod Preparatory Commission, for participants at the annual Young Adult Conference, for college and university students at Catholic campuses and at the Catholic centers of public and private institutions, and for Catholics held in detention. A total of 59 such consultation sessions were held for these groups and involved 2,389 participants.

Between January and February 2002, parishes implemented several available methods for selecting parochial representation for the coming

Participation and Representation

PARISHIONERS

VARIOUS CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES

Regional Synod Assemblies. A designated formula based on parochial population determined the number of representatives each parish would select. A designated number of deacons, religious, and priests were also selected to participate as representatives. The title “representatives” was chosen to designate the participants in the five Regional Assemblies conducted in the fall of 2002 and to distinguish them from the “delegates” who would participate in the Archdiocesan Synod.

SYNOD DELEGATES

In addition to the other tasks accomplished at the Regional Synod Assemblies, these representatives also voted among themselves to nominate Synod delegates to represent their respective Pastoral Regions. Each Regional Bishop, working with a regional committee, selected delegates from among those nominated by the Regional Synod Assembly representatives, including a specific number of alternates from among the laity. Alternates were not chosen for religious, priests, and deacons. Additionally each Bishop named eight priests, six sisters, four deacons, and two brothers from his Pastoral Region. The Bishops met with the Cardinal to review the total list of potential delegates to determine the final list of Synod participants. Those who were selected and in turn accepted the Cardinal’s personal invitation to serve as a delegate were formally commissioned at the Pre-Synodal Gathering held in April 2003 at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks.

Synod delegates were composed of laity, religious, and clergy. The majority of delegates had been representatives at the Regional Synod Assemblies. However, additional delegates were identified by the Cardinal and Regional Bishops to meet canonical requirements (for example, Deans, Major Superiors, and Priests' Council members), or to ensure a broad representation that reflected each Pastoral Region and the entire Archdiocese.

COMPOSITION OF SYNOD
DELEGATES

Demographic diversity was an important consideration throughout the Synodal process, and steps were taken at each stage of the process to ensure proper representation and participation. Considerations for diversity included such categories as ethnicity and culture, age, gender, socioeconomic status, educational background, and ecclesial calling. Delegates ranged in age from seventeen to eighty-plus. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the Synod delegates were laity, twenty-five percent (25%) were priests, six percent (6%) deacons, and twelve percent (12%) religious. Fifty-eight percent (58%) were men, and forty-two percent (42%) were women. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the delegates self-identified as of European decent, twenty-nine percent (29%) Hispanic, nine percent (9%) Asian, 5.8% African American, and 0.2% Native American.

REPRESENTATION IN
TERMS OF DIVERSITY

At both sessions of the Synod (May 16–17, 2003, and June 27–28, 2003), ecumenical and interfaith observers were present from a variety of faiths—Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Sikh—and from several Christian denominations—Episcopalian, Armenian Orthodox, Methodist,

INTERFAITH OBSERVERS

Presbyterian, and Evangelical Lutheran. Although they did not vote, as observers they participated in the discussion among themselves, with delegates, and with other observers.

*Process from
First Suggestion
to Final Priority*

PARISH SPEAK UP
SESSIONS: ISSUES ARE
RAISED BY PARISHIONERS
FROM THROUGHOUT THE
ARCHDIOCESE

*The Synod Agenda — Parish Consultations,
Regional Assemblies, and Synod Sessions*

From the very outset of the Synod process, every Catholic in the Archdiocese was offered the opportunity to participate in formulating the Synod agenda. Parish consultations were conducted in two time periods, the first in October and November 2001. This first parish consultation focused on the question: “As we look ahead, what are the areas that are most important for the Church to be concerned about?”

DISCERNMENT DAY: ISSUES
ARE CATEGORIZED AND
THEMES PROPOSED

The information gathered from the first parish consultation or “Speak Up Session” was at first organized under five general themes through a process of prayer and discernment conducted in February 2002 at a “Discernment Day” held at the Claretian Center in Los Angeles. Among the participants were members of the Synod Steering Body, the Synod Preparatory Commission, and others invited for their pastoral wisdom and experience. The five identified themes were formulated as “calls” or “challenges” to the Church of Los Angeles under the headings: Call to Formation in Discipleship, Call to Holiness, Call to Leadership in the Church, Call to Stewardship, and Call to Witness to Christ in the World.

The Second Parish Consultation, held between March and June 2002, asked the question: “What should be done to address the calls and challenges identified through the First Parish Consultation?” Although not presented in the form of proposals, the results of this consultation process were gathered together into 769 specific suggestions, organized under 27 categories or topics. Forty-five (45) of the 769 suggestions were identified as “most frequently reported.” These topics or suggestions became the agenda for the five Regional Synod Assemblies.

SECOND PARISH
CONSULTATION:
STRATEGIES ARE PROPOSED
BY PARISHIONERS FROM
THROUGHOUT THE
ARCHDIOCESE

The Regional Synod Assemblies were conducted in two sessions during October and November 2002 in each of the five Pastoral Regions of the Archdiocese. In addition to nominating lay delegates to the Synod, the representatives worked with the comprehensive report generated from the Second Parish Consultation. From the content of this report they were asked to identify major themes, later to be designated as “Pastoral Initiatives,” and to develop formal proposals for the Synod to consider.

REGIONAL SYNOD
ASSEMBLIES: THEMES
ARE PRIORITIZED AND
PROPOSALS FORMULATED

From the eight (8) themes and 230 proposals generated by the five Regional Synod Assemblies, the Preparatory Commission narrowed the field to six Pastoral Initiatives and accepted all 230 proposals.

SYNOD PREPARATORY
COMMISSION: SIX
PASTORAL INITIATIVES
ARE SELECTED AND 230
PROPOSALS ACCEPTED

In December 2002 the Writing Commission and the Editing Committee were established to develop texts for the Synod based on the six Pastoral Initiatives and the 230 proposals that emerged from the five Regional Synod Assemblies. The

WRITING COMMISSION
AND EDITING COMMITTEE:
FIRST DRAFT OF SYNOD
DOCUMENT IS CREATED

task of the Writing Commission was to develop theological statements to explain and support each of the six Pastoral Initiatives and to draft a general introduction that would place the Synod within the social, religious, and ecclesial context of the moment. The responsibility of the Editing Committee was to properly combine and edit the 230 proposals, many of which duplicated similar ideas, so that their substance and intent would be clearly and distinctly understood. In addition, within each proposal, distinctions were to be made between goals and strategies for achieving them. At the same time, the Cardinal and the Regional Bishops were asked to identify under the six Pastoral Initiatives any areas of concern important to the Archdiocese that had not been addressed by the proposals that had come from the representatives of the five Regional Synod Assemblies. The texts developed by the Writing Commission and the Editing Committee were reviewed and approved by the Synod Steering Body and the Synod Preparatory Commission prior to being distributed to the representatives who had attended the Regional Synod Assemblies.

PRE-SYNODAL GATHERING:
CRITIQUE OF FIRST
DRAFT IS OFFERED AND
REVISIONS RECOMMENDED

In April 2003, a Pre-Synodal Gathering was held at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks, attended by the representatives who had attended the five Regional Synod Assemblies. At this Pre-Synodal Gathering, the representatives were invited to review the current draft of the Synod document produced by the Writing Commission and the Editing Committee and to offer suggestions and raise questions related to the clarity and presentation of the proposals. Four hundred fifty-five (455) written suggestions were offered.

These 455 suggestions were entrusted to a new Editorial Commission, replacing the former Editing Committee, and to the Writing Commission for further revision of the draft document. Together the two Commissions' work produced the second draft of the Synod document, comprised of six (6) Pastoral Initiatives, forty-three (43) goals and ninety-seven (97) strategies. This second draft was sent to all Synod delegates in preparation for the first session of the Synod.

WRITING AND EDITORIAL
COMMISSIONS: SECOND
DRAFT OF SYNOD
DOCUMENT IS CREATED

The Ninth Synod of Los Angeles was convened on Friday, May 16, 2003, with an Opening Liturgy celebrated by Cardinal Mahony in the new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. Following a keynote address by Fr. Robert Schreiter, CPPS, professor at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and at the University of Nijmegen, the Synod delegates began their first table discussions of the 43 goals of the Synod document and 97 strategies enumerated in the latest draft of the Synod document. On the following day, Saturday, May 17, the delegates submitted written interventions for revision of the text and participated in a first ballot to determine whether the delegates wished to accept, not accept, or modify the individual goals and strategies as presented. Where a delegate wished to modify an individual goal or strategy, the delegate was asked to submit a written intervention stating the delegate's concern.

FIRST SYNOD SESSION:
DELEGATES BEGIN TO
PRIORITIZE GOALS AND
STRATEGIES AND OFFER
CRITIQUE OF SECOND
DRAFT OF SYNOD
DOCUMENT

Four hundred fifty-eight (458) written interventions were presented to the Editorial and Writing Commissions for consideration in producing the third draft of the Synod document. Each written

EDITORIAL AND WRITING
COMMISSIONS: THIRD
DRAFT OF SYNOD
DOCUMENT IS CREATED

intervention was carefully considered for inclusion into the revised draft according to a set of eleven criteria. The third draft was organized according to the six Pastoral Initiatives and consolidated the content into nineteen (19) goals and one hundred five (105) strategies. Goals and strategies that were already in place or in the process of implementation in the Archdiocese were eliminated from the revised draft, and those which were deemed outside the competency of the Synod were withdrawn into a separate section of the document.

SECOND SYNOD SESSION:
SIX PASTORAL
INITIATIVES, NINE
PASTORAL PRIORITIES,
AND FOURTEEN PASTORAL
STRATEGIES ARE SELECTED
AND APPROVED; FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
FORWARDED TO
CARDINAL MAHONY

The Second Session of the Synod was conducted on June 27 and 28, 2003, in the new Cathedral Conference Center. This Session, which began Friday evening with a Prayer Service, involved individual discussion of each of the 19 goals and a process of voting to narrow the number of strategies (from 105 to 51) that would be brought forward for balloting the following day. On Saturday, June 28, the Synod Director explained the procedures for voting, including use of the electronic audience response system. This system allowed all those present at the Session to see immediately the voting results and to work rapidly toward the final selection of goals and strategies as prioritized by the Synod delegates. For passage by the delegates of the Synod, a proposal, whether it be a goal or a strategy, required 67% of the votes cast. When a procedural vote was called for, 51% of the votes cast was required for passage. At the conclusion of the Synod, six Pastoral Initiatives, nine Pastoral Priorities (formerly designated as “goals”), including two second

level Priorities, and fourteen Pastoral Strategies were formally approved by the Synod delegates and forwarded to Cardinal Mahony for his action.

Conclusion of the Synod

Upon receipt of the decisions and recommendations of the Synod, the Cardinal appointed the members of the Synod Final Documents Commission, chaired by himself. By the end of July the Commission compiled the final draft of the Synod document and formally submitted it to the Cardinal for his consideration.

SYNOD FINAL DOCUMENTS
COMMISSION: SYNOD
DOCUMENTS ARE
FINALIZED AND SUBMITTED
TO CARDINAL MAHONY

On Saturday, September 6, 2003, in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Cardinal Roger M. Mahony ratified the work of the Ninth Synod of Los Angeles and, with his signature, promulgated the decrees and legislation of the Synod.

CARDINAL MAHONY
PROMULGATES SYNOD
DOCUMENTS

SYNOD CHRONOLOGY

2000

April

Synod 2000–2003 convoked by Cardinal Mahony in
As I Have Done for You, A Pastoral Letter on Ministry

November

Synod Office Established, Sr. Marilyn Vollmer, ssm, Director

December

Steering Body established

Results of meetings with select groups within the Archdiocese
reported to the Steering Body by Synod Director

2001

January

Prayer for the Synod, composed by Dr. Michael Downey,
approved by Cardinal Mahony

Synod goals and planning guidelines approved

March

Synod Preparatory Commission established

April

Steering Body approved purchase of translation equipment to
facilitate participation of non-English-speaking delegates

June

Preparatory Commission organized into five working committees
with assigned tasks

Liturgy/Prayer: Fr. Kevin McCracken, CM/Oscar Pratt

Representation Design: Dan Schwala/Mike Lynch

Education/Formation: Jan Galla/Frank Ponnet

Reaching Out Beyond the Pews:

Paul Catipon/Liliana Hsueh-Gutiérrez

Technology Committee: Eric Stoltz/Charles Aikins

Guidelines finalized for guest listeners at Parish Consultations

September

Training sessions conducted for facilitators and scribes for the
First Parish Consultation

Letters received from the Apostolic Nuncio and the

Vatican Secretary of State acknowledging the

Archdiocesan Synod of Los Angeles

Synod Sunday (September 30) conducted in all parishes
announcing the formal inception of the Synod

October–November

First Parish Consultation conducted throughout the Archdiocese

2002

January–February

Representatives to Regional Synod Assemblies selected

February

Issues raised through the First Parish Consultation published
Discernment Day (February 23) to select the general themes of
the Synod, held at the Claretian Center, Los Angeles

March

Orientation/Training for parish representatives in preparation
for the Second Parish Consultation

March–June

Second Parish Consultation conducted throughout the
Archdiocese

June

Mini-retreat conducted for all Archdiocesan employees,
using method of the Second Parish Consultation process

October–November

Five Regional Assemblies conducted

December

Writing Commission established, chaired
by Dr. Michael Downey
Editing Committee established, chaired by
Fr. Albert Bahhuth and Deacon David Estrada

December 2002–January 2003

Synod Delegates selected

2003

February

Editorial Commission established,
chaired by Bishop Edward Wm. Clark

March

Process finalized for Pre-Synodal Gathering

April

Pre-Synodal Gathering (April 5) held at
Notre Dame High School, Sherman Oaks

Invitations sent to representative interfaith observers

May

Synod Session I (May 16–17) conducted at
Cathedral Conference Center

June

Synod Session II (June 27–28) conducted at
Cathedral Conference Center

July

Synod Final Document Commission established,
chaired by Cardinal Mahony

September

Synod Session III (September 6), concluding Mass, and
promulgation of Synod Documents at Cathedral

BEING AND BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST: THE SYNOD

February 2003

My Sisters and Brothers in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles:

No one needs to be reminded that these are difficult, painful, and challenging times for the Church of Los Angeles—and for the entire Catholic Church in the United States.

I know that some, perhaps many, of the faithful of our Archdiocese are disheartened and even angry. Unprecedented scandals regarding priests involved in sexual misconduct and abuse, seemingly unfathomable decisions on the part of Bishops and Church leaders, and a host of related issues that beg for attention and action have discouraged many of you, my sisters and brothers.

While we remain one Body in Christ, there are tensions among us that are real; there are wounds that are deep. Because of these tensions and wounds, some members of the Church of Los Angeles, no doubt, view the approaching Synod with a certain skepticism, even with cynicism. Some have judged that I have already set the agenda for the Synod and am directing both the process and its results. While this is not the truth, I nonetheless believe that I understand such attitudes and feelings.

Over the past year, all of us in the Church have been challenged to face the human condition, our human limitations, and the limitations of the Church itself. Perhaps this is the grace that has been offered amidst the unprecedented distress of the past year. We know now, perhaps more clearly than ever before, of our ability to wound rather than heal, to criticize rather than encourage, to be defensive rather than open to authentic listening and true communication, to divide rather than to unite.

With faith and in hope we have continued with our listening sessions and Regional Synod Assemblies throughout the past year. This has been a bold step on our part. Many have judged it silly and frivolous to engage in this process at a time of crisis. But we have sensed all along that these difficult, painful times are nonetheless rich with promise. Our most pressing challenge, I propose, is to actualize our God-given potential to be and to build the Body of Christ, the Church, at this particular moment in our history. It is this challenge that prompts me to write to you—the people, priests, and religious of the Archdiocese—first as your brother Christian as well as your Archbishop.

Unless we understand more clearly what it means to be equal members of the Church, to respect our common dignity as disciples of Jesus the Christ through our one Baptism, we will resist the Spirit's call to move beyond our personal concerns and personal pain in order to address the urgent challenges that confront us today. Without such understanding, without a mutual respect for our common mission as disciples of Jesus

Christ through the gift of the Spirit, the promise of a renewed and vibrant Church will lie fallow.

After considerable reflection and prayer, let me tell you what I believe is necessary for us to be more fully the one Body of Christ here and now. What I am about to say is said with an awareness of our shared love for the Church of Los Angeles and of our common commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In spite of some painful differences and real tensions we are, nonetheless, one people, a communion of faith grounded in God's abiding goodness and in the mercy revealed in Jesus Christ through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. We are a people of enduring hope, even and especially when circumstances lead some to judge our confidence in the future to be absurd. And we are a people struggling, with God's grace, to love, even our enemies, and especially those who have betrayed us—just as Jesus did. We do not need to be reminded over and over again that our faith, hope, and love have fallen short of the mark. We know well our limitations. This realization calls us to put forth our very best efforts to be and build the Body of Christ, even if we do not manage to do so perfectly.

It is clear to me, your brother in Christ, that God's Spirit is calling us to a new spirit of mutual trust and candor if we are to move ahead into this new century, so clearly a time both of danger and of great promise—with wisdom, courage, integrity, and commitment.

Especially since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has acknowledged that the wisdom of God is to be discovered in the hearts, the lives, of ordinary faithful people, the people who are God's own: the People of God, the Body of Christ. We believe this, we teach this, but I am not sure that we have always acted on this belief. We Church leaders, for example, have not always listened carefully enough to the experience of parishioners struggling to lead lives of faith in a violent, competitive, and materialistic society; to parents struggling to raise children in a culture that trivializes the importance of education and shows little respect for human life; to youth and young adults for whom the truths of our faith raise more questions than they answer; to our own priests and religious whose pastoral experience deserves to be taken far more seriously.

Being and building the Body of Christ requires that we respect one another because of our equality rooted in the one Baptism. It demands that we take each other with utmost seriousness, that we deepen the honesty and openness of our conversations about our ongoing struggles to live the Gospel here and now. The Church itself—member for member—is to be a “holy communion.” And where there is communion in Christ there should be a corresponding “holy communication.” By this I mean that we need to have a profound respect, indeed reverence, for one another, to really trust each other—especially when we speak and listen, when we challenge and affirm, when we bring our insights rooted in our pastoral experience to the

various assemblies of our Local Church. Without such reverence and trust, without real openness and honesty, our Synod will be a big disappointment. Recalling that the Synod is principally an opportunity for *prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision*, let us take stock of several crucial factors as we approach the vitally important synodal events in the year 2003, seeking to more effectively be and build the Body of Christ.

I. SPEAKING HONESTLY

Brothers and sisters, in our listening sessions and in our speak-up sessions you have spoken openly of your concerns and anxieties, your needs and fears, your gifts and strengths, your hopes and dreams. Through this process, you have come to a better knowledge of how other Catholics throughout the whole Archdiocese feel about the present state of our Local Church and about its future. Of course, whenever we speak from our hearts, we become vulnerable. Some will misunderstand our efforts to be faithful to the Gospel. Others will misjudge us—criticizing us for what they consider to be disloyalty to the institution of the Church. Still others will dismiss what we say because it appears to threaten their spiritual security, their sense of Church. In spite of the risks, we stand at a juncture in our history that requires both honest and humble speech, and open, respectful listening as we help chart our future together, as we begin to develop our pastoral priorities and to establish new structures of participation, accountability, and governance in our Archdiocese.

This kind of communication, we all know, requires considerable energy and demands plenty of courage. No doubt there is some disillusionment, some discouragement in our Local Church from Catholics who have tried to speak honestly and openly in the past and who believe they have not been listened to carefully or taken seriously. I urge one and all to not lose heart. I invite you to gather the courage to speak again in trust, to listen again in hope, and to have the confidence that your voice will be heard.

Here it is crucial to recognize that not all that we would like to do for the good of the Church is possible at this time. Several crucial questions have been raised, such as the admission of women to holy orders, the possibility of restoring to active ministry those priests who have married, and dispensing with the discipline of clerical celibacy. While I believe that these are important issues facing the Church today, they cannot be resolved at the level of the Local Church. However, we do have some problems and challenges that can be discussed honestly and resolved at the level of the Local Church. We need to explore the new possibilities for serving the Gospel at the local level, even as we work for constructive change at the level of the wider, universal Church.

Moreover, some of you may believe that you know what your Archbishop wants to hear and what he does not want to hear. And some of you believe that you know what your pastor wants to hear and what he does not want to hear. Wherever such convictions hold sway, only the courageous heart dares to speak.

Deference is, when all is said and done, a disservice to the health and vitality of the Church. We have had this kind of deferential mentality in many quarters of the Church for far too long. It often creates a false tranquillity and leads to an equally false sense of unity. Wherever blocks to authentic communication exist, whether in personal conversations or in Parish Assemblies or in the processes of the Archdiocesan Synod, the very life of the Church, as well as the integrity of its members, is compromised. I urge you, therefore, to speak to me, to your pastor, and to each other honestly, openly, and without fear. Anything less is simply not in keeping with our Christian dignity. And anything less will subvert the final phases of the Archdiocesan Synod.

II. LISTENING WITH THE EAR OF THE HEART

If we take human experience seriously, we will find traces of God's presence and the very wisdom of God's Spirit in the joys and sorrows, the successes and failures of our lives. The present moment, then, is not only a time for honest and courageous speech. It is also a time for open and respectful listening. As your chief pastor and teacher, I may not always have taken your experiences of the Christian life as seriously as I should have. No doubt, some of your pastors may have failed to take your experience as disciples of Christ as seriously as they should have. Indeed, we ministers and teachers in the Church have not always taken our own pastoral experience seriously enough in responding to the growing and ever-changing needs of our people.

We may have been too quick to respond to pressing contemporary questions with well-worn, but no longer satisfactory, answers. Parishioners, too, may not have listened carefully enough to the sometimes disturbing stories of faith and doubt, of hope and disappointment that fellow parishioners and pastoral ministers have shared. Where this has been true, we beg the forgiveness of one another and count on the mercy of God who, every day, gives us an opportunity to begin again. And again.

In the next phases of the Synod process in the months ahead, a new kind of listening will be required, not merely desirable. At the heart of this listening is a profound respect for the one who speaks as well as the humble conviction that each of us can learn from one another, that each of us may be an instrument of God's Spirit. We will be creating together new structures of participation, accountability, and governance across the Archdiocese, so that we can more effectively achieve the pastoral priorities now emerging from your input in the synodal processes. The necessary testing and sifting of what we hear, through continual prayerful discernment, leading to clear and theologically sound pastoral decisions, is of critical importance. But before arriving at such decisions we must first listen respectfully and patiently to the concerns and anxieties, the hopes and dreams of our sisters and brothers in faith, with hope, through love.

III. RECOGNIZING THE POWER OF OUR WORDS

Some, if not many of you, are wary of words. At times I, too, am wary of words. But words have the power to bring about change. We need, however, fresh words, holy words precisely at this time of challenge and promise. We need to hear words spoken courageously and humbly from the heart. We need to hear words that have been given shape in quiet prayer and reflection. We need to hear words that are spoken without arrogance and with a degree of modesty, with a measure of tentativeness. No one of us has the definitive answer. Our words, after all, may be off the mark or may not be in harmony with the Gospel. Words that harmonize with the language and the logic the Gospel will lift our spirits and help us give shape to a new vision for our Local Church. Together we will recognize these honest and holy words. And the assembly of God's people will say, "Amen!"

Fresh, honest, and inspired words need to fall upon open, trusting ears. As with our spoken words, our listening needs to be rooted in quiet prayer and a genuine openness to the experiences and vision of those who speak to us. Words that have been spoken over and over again may suddenly be heard as if for the first time, ringing with a truth we have long missed. If we listen from our hearts as well as with our heads, I am convinced we will come to see a new horizon, a new direction along the path God invites us to follow.

IV. MOVING FORWARD WITH COURAGE

The final phases of the Synod will be upon us in a relatively short time. How we prepare for the Synod, spiritually and practically, is of vital importance. If we do not engage in these final phases in a spirit of *prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision*, we may give in to discouragement, and the whole Local Church will suffer as a result. In embarking on the synodal processes we have undertaken a noble task worthy of our best efforts. Discouragement will only undermine the good will and faithful commitment that has been so evident in the work already accomplished in anticipation of the Synod. May our faith in Christ and our trust in the fundamental goodness of one another cast out all discouragement from our hearts.

Brothers and sisters, we have nothing to fear. Christ has promised us the wisdom and strength of the Spirit until the very end. This is the hope to which we cling. This is our firm conviction. As we speak candidly to each other and listen without prejudice to each other in the months ahead, we must invoke the Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart of each one. Without the most basic listening and speaking at the heart of prayer, what we say to each other, and hear from the mouths of one another, will divide rather than unite us.

* * *

Let us together seize this time of promise and expectation. Yes, there are great risks with the kind of openness and trust I am calling for here. But there are much greater risks in carrying on

as usual because of lack of courage, lethargy, or lack of interest. I urge you, therefore, to prayerfully reflect upon your experience as a member of the Body of Christ in this Local Church of Los Angeles. Let us together listen lovingly to our sisters and brothers, then courageously and humbly speak the truth in love for the love of Christ in his Church. Will you trust together with me—without blinking—in the presence and the power of the Spirit of Christ, the Love given to each one of us for the life of the world?

Cardinal Roger M. Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles

OTHER PASTORAL PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES CONSIDERED BY THE SYNOD

The Synod of Los Angeles engaged a process of identification, refinement, and selection, resulting in the realization of six Pastoral Initiatives, nine Pastoral Priorities (seven of first priority rank and two of second priority rank), and fourteen Pastoral Strategies of the highest importance for the entire Archdiocese of Los Angeles. This process, consistent with every stage of the Synod's development, involved prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision.

In the final working session of the Synod, delegates were asked to narrow the selection of Pastoral Priorities and Pastoral Strategies that comprise the end result of the Synod process. The selection was made from a ballot of nineteen priorities and fifty-one strategies that had been identified and refined through all the earlier stages of the Synod proceedings.

It was the will of the delegates that the priorities and strategies that were not adopted as part of the final work of the Synod should not be lost. None were voted out, since they had reached the floor of the Synod from among hundreds of possibilities initially presented and then carefully reworked through a lengthy process of selection and refinement. Rather, from the total ballot, those of the highest importance were voted in as the final work of the Synod.

The following are the Pastoral Priorities and Pastoral Strategies that were not chosen in the final selection process. Nonetheless, they are considered to be not only a valuable reflection of the concerns of the people of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, but also a deposit of valuable ideas worthy of future consideration by individual parishes, deaneries, and pastoral regions.

Evangelization and “The New Evangelization”

PASTORAL PRIORITY

Within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, evangelization, including the “new evangelization,” is the central focus of all Church ministry.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- A training program in every Pastoral Region, to aid parishes in evangelization efforts, is to be developed.
- In the development of parish evangelization programs, the celebration of Sunday Mass is to be recognized as the primary source of evangelization and catechesis for revitalizing the spiritual life of the community.
- A Regional Evangelization Committee in each Pastoral Region is to be developed to guide parishes in their evangelization efforts.
- Parishes are to educate and assist parents to undertake their primary responsibility for the religious, moral formation and training of their children, providing them with resources such as basic prayers and Gospel stories.
- In the development of parish “new evangelization” programs, all significant parish groups, such as the parish school, religious education programs, youth and young adults, are to be involved.
- Small home-based communities, including the development of “Basic Christian Communities,” where faith sharing can take place, are to be developed on the parish level.
- Each parish is to establish a hospitality ministry that welcomes visitors, newcomers, the unchurched, and the marginalized.

Structures for Participation and Accountability

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

To better serve the needs of Catholics in local communities, the Archbishop is asked to initiate a process to reconfigure parishes and parish administrative structures.

Each parish is to develop, implement, and strengthen structures for participation of laity in all areas of parish life.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- An accountability structure for clergy in their ministerial responsibilities is to be developed and implemented.
- A well-functioning parish council, set up according to Archdiocesan Guidelines, is to be implemented in each parish.
- Parishes are to provide resources for the ongoing spiritual and theological training of their lay ministers.
- Processes are to be established on the regional level to assist parishes undergoing transitions in governance, organization, pastoring, staffing, and ministry.
- Appropriate structures are to be developed that provide for clerical, religious, and lay participation in consultation and decision making on the deanery level.
- Each parish is required to compose a mission statement and to submit a pastoral plan to be evaluated and renewed on a periodic basis according to Archdiocesan guidelines.
- An Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, representative of all pertinent Archdiocesan demographics, is to be formed.

- Each pastor or Parish Director is to include representative lay parishioners in ongoing consultation, collaboration, and shared decision-making processes that can be reviewed and assessed.

Ongoing Education and Formation

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

On the Archdiocesan level, following broad consultation, a plan for the ongoing education and formation of adult Catholics is to be developed and implemented.

An effective program for young adult ministry is to be established throughout the Archdiocese, with appropriate attention to the spiritual needs of young adults, and supported financially.

Effective programs for youth ministry are to be established with appropriate attention to the spiritual needs of youth and supported financially in each parish or parish cluster.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- Appropriate certification, allowing provision for demonstrated knowledge and experience, is to be required for all who teach religion in any of the institutions or programs of the Archdiocese.
- Archdiocesan, parochial, and private Catholic schools, which maintain and foster a strong Catholic identity, are to be supported and retained.
- Centers for adult education and spiritual renewal are to be identified in each Pastoral Region.

- Parish youth programs are to provide a specific outreach to youth after they have been confirmed.
- The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) is to be implemented fully and consistently throughout the Archdiocese.
- Parishes are to provide opportunities for youth to be more fully involved in parish life.
- On the parish level, young adults are to be encouraged to become active participants in a broad spectrum of parish ministries.
- A Youth Ministry Advisory Board is to be established in each Pastoral Region.

Ministry and Leadership

PASTORAL PRIORITIES

At all levels of the Archdiocese, recognition is to be given to diversity in leadership, especially gender, ethnicity, and ecclesial vocation.

On the Archdiocesan level, the Permanent Diaconate Program is to be strengthened to meet the needs of the Local Church.

At all levels of the Archdiocese, the urgent issue of the shortage of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, in terms of recruitment, discernment, and formation, is to be actively addressed to meet the specific needs of the Local Church.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- Representatives from ethnic and cultural groups are to be included in all aspects of Church leadership, administration, and ministry.
- Through the development of deanery level vocation programs, future priests and religious are to be identified and invited.
- The number of qualified candidates accepted into the Permanent Diaconate Program is to be increased.
- The authority, roles, responsibilities, and accountability of lay ministers are to be clearly defined.

Eucharist and Sacramental Living

N.B.: Both Pastoral Priorities presented under this Pastoral Initiative were adopted by the Synod delegates.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- A plan is to be developed and implemented in each Pastoral Region for the distribution of priests and the scheduling of Masses to guarantee the opportunity for Catholics to participate in Sunday Mass.
- Adequate time and resources are to be budgeted by each parish for the planning and implementation of effective liturgies on the parish level.
- Local assemblies are to be provided with renewed education on the Mass in light of the Archdiocesan guidelines for effective celebration of the Eucharist.

- Based on appropriate guidelines provided by the Archdiocese, a plan is to be developed and implemented within each deanery to provide for the daily celebration of Mass and other Eucharistic services to meet the reasonable expectations of the faithful.
- A liturgy committee is to be established in each parish according to the guidelines established by the Archdiocese.

Social Justice

PASTORAL PRIORITY

Social justice efforts are to be mobilized on all levels of the Archdiocese.

PASTORAL STRATEGIES

- Each parish is to be guaranteed minimum funds for operating expenses (that is, “core amount”).
- Outreach efforts to achieve established priorities of social justice are to be coordinated among the parishes of each Pastoral Region.
- Community organizing is to be recognized as an integral aspect of parish ministry.
- Parishes are to establish an outreach ministry that cares for parishioners and others with particular needs by caring for them directly or referring them to appropriate social services.
- Resources and a minimal standard for plant development, refurbishment, and maintenance are to be provided to assist poorer parishes.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW PARTICULAR CHURCHES

From the outset of the Synod process for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, beginning with the first series of Parish Consultations in October and November 2001, a question of particular interest to a number of Catholics in the Santa Barbara Pastoral Region was the possible establishment of a new particular church, specifically a diocese, in the northern sector of the current Archdiocese.

This issue remained a constant topic throughout the entire Synod process and resulted in a specific proposal that was considered at the final session of the Synod, namely, “The Archbishop is asked to petition Rome to include the Santa Barbara Pastoral Region in the creation of a new diocese.”

This proposal was understood to be primarily a regional concern of Catholics in the northern sector of the Archdiocese. Yet, to allow it the serious consideration it deserves, the decision was made to withdraw the proposal from Synod voting and to refer it directly to the Archbishop for his consideration and action in accord with the established canonical procedures.

The Code of Canon Law legislates with regard to particular churches in canons 368–374. Canon 368 describes various types of particular churches, canon 369 defines a diocese, and canon 373 legislates the competent authority to establish particular church: “It is within the sole competence of the supreme authority of the Church to erect particular churches.”

Although the request itself is appropriate to the work of the Synod, further discussion or study of this issue remains beyond the scope and competence of both the Archdiocesan Synod and the Archbishop of Los Angeles and pertains specifically to the Holy See. The Archbishop has agreed to refer this question to those within the Holy See who have competence in this matter.

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Sr. Rita Callanan, IHM
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Rafael Vega
Dennis Young

STATEMENT OF SYNOD INTERFAITH OBSERVERS

When you are the largest single Faith Community by far in one of the most diverse metropolitan regions in the United States, it would be tempting and indeed easy to go your own way, without any consideration for the other children of God. We are thankful, first, for the leadership of His Eminence, Cardinal Roger Mahony. Clearly and assuredly Roman Catholic in faith and practice, nevertheless he leads his archdiocese and this whole community through word and action so that we of other Christian traditions and those of other non-Christian traditions know that he and his flock minister with openness to understanding, respect for common humanity, and partnership in practice where appropriate and possible. We are appreciative of such inclusiveness.

Second, the priests and religious and laity act similarly. We have experienced this in the Synod; we appreciated being asked to participate at the heart of a process that is so potentially influential to the future programs of the Catholic Church in this area. It became for us a unique form of interreligious dialogue with the Church. It was stimulating to see the delegates participate eagerly in the life of the Archdiocese and to witness their sincere desire to take an even more active part in the mission and ministry of the Church.

Third, the Christian observers strongly affirm your ministry in the name of Jesus Christ, revised for and adaptable to a new age of Catholics, whose deep faith conviction clearly indicates a desire to respond to God's Word made Flesh with intensity, conviction, coherence, and integrity. So be it.

We found that there were several elements of the content presented at the Synod with which we resonated, in particular, the role of the ordained ministry in a Church of the Baptized, an issue with which we struggle as well. Questions concerning demographics and evangelistic outreach that is not fundamentalist

are questions we, too, ask. The topics discussed constitute today's agenda for all of us, Christians of any denomination, if we want to keep the Christian Faith alive in a world of multiple relativisms.

Fourth, the Synod concept seems like a good mechanism for dialogue among all the Baptized, rather than simply the clergy or Bishops. Within many of our Christian traditions we have institutionalized the participation of the laity in decisions that affect the life of the Church on both the national and local levels.

Some of us, however, wonder about the varying degrees of relatedness between ecumenical and interfaith observers. We were all seated together at the opening Eucharist: Liturgically, is there a way to nuance how far ecumenical unity has advanced without offending non-Christian observers?

Fifth, many of us non-Christian observers were interested in the voting. For example, the Catholic delegates definitely had a different sense of priorities than most Hindus would have. For Hindus, any transformation would start from within the individual and radiate out first through one's own institutions—family, temples, and religious schools. We were struck that the delegates voted for a strong program of social justice in the community, while many poorer parishes themselves struggle to find the financial means to basically run their parishes. We found ourselves both respecting the delegates' wider sense of responsibility, while noting the interreligious difference.

Sixth, we appreciated the opportunity to have our non-Christian concerns heard and actually reflected upon by the Synod delegates. We are particularly grateful for the clarification of the term "evangelization." This was both educational and reassuring and greatly contributes to a mutual understanding of the new Catholic programs for the whole religious community of Los Angeles.

Seventh, again, we are grateful to God and to all involved, not only for the privilege of sharing in the Synod of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, but also for the warm reception we received. We pray that God will bless its impact and influence now and for years to come.

SYNOD INTERFAITH OBSERVERS

Armenian Apostolic Church

Archbishop Vatche Hovsepien

Rev. Arschag Khatchadourian

Episcopal Church

Bishop Chester Talton

Bishop Sergio Carranza

Canon Mark Kowalewski

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Bishop Dean Nelson

Pastor Carol Nolte

Pastor William Hampton

Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

Dr. John Langfitt

United Methodist Church

Rev. Richard Cain

Buddhist Faith

Venerable Walpola Piyananda

Hindu Faith

Swami Sarvedevananda

Pravrajika Saradeshaprana

Brother Jnana

Muslim Faith

Dr. Mahmoud Abdel-Baset

Sherrel Johnson

Sikh Faith

Kirtian-Singh Khalsa

Simran Kaur Khalsa

GLOSSARY

As I Have Done for You: a pastoral letter on ministry issued by Cardinal Roger Mahony and the priests of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on Holy Thursday of 2000 that emphasizes the importance of ordained ministry while also affirming the significance of lay ministry rooted in the common priesthood of the baptized. The Cardinal concludes the letter by convoking the Ninth Synod of Los Angeles.

Baptismal responsibility: living in Christ through the gift of the Spirit to the glory of the Father through witness, worship, and service. Through Baptism, each member of the Church is called to active participation in the Church and in the world, building up the Church and advancing the Kingdom of God through the particular gifts and charisms given to each individual according to his or her state of life and place in the community.

Catechesis, catechetical: the name given to the totality of the Church's efforts to make disciples, to enable men and women to believe in the person and message of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, through catechesis the Christian story and tradition are transmitted with a view to maturing initial faith and inviting hearers into the fullness of the Christian life so that they may appropriate, profess, and live it. "The specific character of catechesis . . . has the twofold objective of maturing the initial faith and of educating the true disciple of Christ by means of deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and message of the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 19).

Communion: In addition to Holy Communion, or Eucharist, the term applies to the bonds of faith, hope, and love joining believers in unity and charity throughout the world. Called into communion with one another and with their bishops, believers form the community of faith.

Consecrated life: consecration to God by a "new and special title" effected through the profession of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, usually by vow within a Religious Congregation or a Secular Institute. Other persons may also be consecrated in appropriate ecclesial forms or ceremonies of consecration.

Core amount: the minimal amount of financing assured to a parish to meet its operational needs and to fulfill its particular mission and program. The amount is to be determined by a formula approved by the Archdiocese and authorized following an established financial audit and parish evaluation.

Culture, cultural diversity: Culture refers to the web of symbols, rituals, values, and meanings in which the life of a people is rooted and around which their experience, way of living, and sense of destiny are ordered. Cultural diversity indicates the harmonious interrelationship of individuals from differing cultural backgrounds respecting, appreciating, and living in cooperation with one another.

Deanery, dean: designated group of parishes within a specific area or region of a diocese. Each deanery is headed by a Dean or Vicar Forane (VF), a priest (usually a pastor) who coordinates the cooperation of clergy and parishes within a Deanery.

Discernment: the art of prayerfully distinguishing the wisdom of the heart, wherein the Holy Spirit dwells, from other influences and forces. In mature Christian living, discernment plays an essential role in making decisions, enabling us to discover God's call (will) in concrete situations, and to live in accord with the movements of the Spirit.

Evangelization: allowing one's own heart to be seized and saturated by the Good News of Jesus Christ, responding to the call to lifelong conversion by the gift of the Spirit. Evangelization also requires reaching out to others to proclaim in word and deed the Reign of God, the intention of God for the world now and to come. Evangelization demands that the values of the Reign of God—the reign of truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace—permeate each and every culture, transforming every sphere of life.

Formation, ongoing formation: In the context of the Christian community, persons are invited into a process of developing mature faith. Informed by the Christian story and tradition and shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they are led to integrate faith and life, to

appropriate and to live Gospel values for mission. “Ongoing formation” refers to the process of continuing to explore and deepen the Christian faith through reflection, sharing, prayer, study, discernment, and integration of faith and life for mission.

Governance, Church: This term refers both to the power entrusted to the pope and bishops to rule, guide, and preside over the Catholic Church, and to the exercise of authority shared by the pope and bishops with members of the clergy, religious, and laity according to their established offices and recognized charisms. The term also refers to the established structures of authority and leadership by which the Church functions.

Holiness: the fullness of life in Christ through the Spirit. In the spirit of Vatican Council II, all who are baptized are called to a life of holiness, which lies in the perfection of charity.

Lay, laity: This term refers to those members of the Church who are fully incorporated into the People of God by faith and Baptism but who are not ordained.

Lay ministry, lay ecclesial ministry: the wide range of services rendered in Christ’s name by the lay faithful and properly recognized by the Church community. Lay ministry may be exercised for the good of the Church or for the wider human community. “Lay ecclesial minister” refers to professionally trained or otherwise properly prepared women and men, including vowed religious, who are in positions of service and leadership in the Church and who are called to service *in the name of the Church*. “Lay ecclesial ministry” refers to the ministries of committed persons, women and men, married or single, which are exercised in and through the Church in a stable, public, recognized, and authorized way.

Local Church: This term refers to all the members of the Roman Catholic Church gathered in communion with their bishop in each diocese throughout the world. All the local churches together make up the universal church.

Ministry: service in Christ's name arising from the gift of the Spirit and properly recognized by the Church community. In the Church there are ordained and lay ministries.

Mission: the purpose for which the Church exists and the task that the Church is called to engage. Central to its life, the mission of the Church is Christ's own mission—to announce in word and deed the coming Reign of God, the final victory of truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace.

New evangelization: a term used frequently by Pope John Paul II to describe evangelizing or re-evangelizing under-catechized, inactive, and alienated Catholics, as well as reanimating the faith and life of those who have already come to know the presence of Christ. The “new evangelization” requires those who already have faith in Jesus Christ to allow Christ to touch the unconverted corners of their lives.

Pastoral Initiatives: significant areas of pastoral concern targeted through the Synod process as the primary agenda items to be addressed at all levels of the Archdiocese. These initiatives will give direction for charting the future course of the Archdiocese and for developing a comprehensive Archdiocesan pastoral agenda. Decisions at all levels of administration and ministry within the Archdiocese are to be made in light of addressing these Pastoral Initiatives.

Pastoral Priorities: Under each of the Pastoral Initiatives targeted by the Synod, Pastoral Priorities refer to selected duties and functions identified through the Synod process to which the Archdiocese is to give principal and focused attention in developing its comprehensive pastoral agenda.

Pastoral Strategies: specific tasks identified through the Synod process that are to be accomplished in addressing the Pastoral Initiatives and realizing the Pastoral Priorities of the Archdiocese.

Pastoral Council: in accord with canons 228 and 536, a standing commission of qualified laypersons, clerics, and religious, representative of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction within which they function, gathered

to assist and counsel the pastors of the Church as experts or advisors. Pastoral councils may be established on the levels of the parish, deanery, vicariate (region), and diocese.

Pastoral Region: sometimes known as a vicariate, one of the geographical entities within a diocese, each under the leadership and guidance of a regional bishop or episcopal vicar. In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles there are five Pastoral Regions: Santa Barbara, San Pedro, San Fernando, San Gabriel, and Our Lady of the Angels.

RCIA (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*): a journey of faith and Christian experience by which those who seek to become members of the Roman Catholic Church are gradually and purposefully introduced into the full life of faith. The RCIA, one of sacramental rites restored by Vatican Council II, was promulgated in 1974.

Regional Bishop: in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, an auxiliary bishop who guides and pastors one of the five pastoral regions under the authority of the archbishop.

Regional Pastoral Council: in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, a standing commission of qualified laypersons, clerics, and religious, representative of the pastoral region, gathered to assist and counsel the Regional Bishop in implementing the Pastoral Initiatives, Priorities, and Strategies identified through the Synod process. A separate Council is to be established in each of the five Pastoral Regions.

Reign of God (Kingdom of God): the central message in the preaching of Jesus Christ. By preaching the Reign of God, Jesus expressed God's intention for the world now and to come, a world in which truth, holiness, justice, love, and peace will prevail.

Social justice: the activity of creating a world in which all may achieve the fullness of life intended for humankind by God. This activity cannot be relegated to the realm of the purely personal but is to affect every sphere of life, including the social, the economic, and the political. A Christian view of justice gives pride of place to those who are the last, littlest, and least in the Church and in society.

Synod, diocesan: a special gathering of selected clergy, laity, and religious of an individual diocese who are called together at a specific time and place by the diocesan bishop to offer the bishop assistance and counsel through a process of prayer, dialogue, discernment, and decision for the good of the entire diocesan community according to the norms of canons 460–468 of Church law.

Vocation: the response to the gifts of the Spirit bestowed at Baptism and Confirmation by means of which an individual is called to a particular state of life in service of the Church and the human community. The Christian vocations include the single, the married, the vowed, and the ordained.

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