

# SANTA ROSA DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD

To: DPC Executive Board Members & Deanery Chairs  
From: Bob Leet, Chair, DPC Executive Board  
Re: ROUND TABLE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2008, 9AM -12N, Chancery, 985 Airway Court, Santa Rosa 95403. Please participate in a special meeting of the DPC Executive Board. Guests are most welcome. **WE WILL BRAINSTORM A NEW DIRECTION FOR THE DPC.** Continental breakfast.  
*Rsvp: [yymf@sonic.net](mailto:yymf@sonic.net) or (707) 564-9666 by Wed., October 2<sup>nd</sup>*

Since its Plenary Session last spring the DPC has been unable to launch a follow-up activity addressing evangelization, as requested by Bishop Walsh; the subject does not easily lend itself to our diocesan demographics and geography. Meanwhile some Parish Councils/Assemblies on their own are making good progress in their evangelization programs. Thus the DPC's potential may be better invested in a more defined project—one in which the DPC can reach out to the People-in-the-Pews for their active assistance.

On September 6th in a homily at St Eugene Cathedral, Bishop Walsh outlined how critical the Priest shortage has become in our Diocese. Yvette Fallandy, Executive Secretary, and I, believe that the Laity, under DPC auspices, can and should participate actively in mitigating this crisis. Envisioned elements of a possible long-range agenda for how the DPC might undertake such a project are:

## **Premises for the Project**

1. The crisis in supply of priests may be generally unknown to the laity.
2. Direct actions by the Laity, individually and collectively, can be significant in meeting the crisis through recruiting potential seminarians and attracting potential candidates for the priesthood.
3. The Holy Spirit works through human agency/actions. Prayer is manifest in human actions. By itself, prayer, without human, tangible action to make it viable, is insufficient.
4. Our responsibility as Laity is not only to pray, but also to engage in tangible, practical activities that affect life both in the world and in the Church.
5. This is a long-range, and indeed time-consuming, project.

## **The Project**

The Laity, through the DPC, in a long-range project, will organize and facilitate the following:

1. Create People-in-the-Pews awareness of the crisis in detail and the implications thereof.
  - a. This phase require the assistance if the Bishop and perhaps the Director of Vocations.
  - b. DPC assists the Bishop at his direction.
2. Create a portrait of the Priesthood and the men in it, in concrete, tangible ways show/demonstrate—using media—how Priests are directly engaged in the community and lives of others, esp. when these are most in need. How Priests make a difference. A look at what can be done, how it is done, what kinds of people are doing it, and what are their satisfactions-- emphasis on service and ministering to the needs of the community. Some of things Priests do: various media designed to reach the potential candidates for the priesthood.
  - a. Personal statements from Priests themselves; what their life is like; concrete examples of what they do and what satisfactions they find --- "here is my life; here are some examples of how I have touched the lives of others – the difference I made..."
  - b. Portraits by individual laity – present a positive, critical incident in dealing with a Priest. Something concrete – " What happened and how I felt and why it was a good thing. Here's the difference he made."
3. Actions by Laity to "recruit" individuals to consider actively the vocation. Raise up from the Laity, potential candidates: "I think you have some of the makings (the stuff) to be a good priest; have you considered it? Will you...?"
4. Tracking these individuals and engaging in a discernment process –working with a spiritual director (Fr. Tom Diaz, Director of Vocations).
5. Engaging youth outreach agencies of the diocese in developing and maintaining practical means of making the vocation known to those within and outside of the parochial milieu.
6. DPC at Parish, Deanery and diocesan-wide levels recruit laity to do this work, monitor progress and give periodic feedback on accomplishment(s) to the laity as a whole.

