



My Dear Friends in Christ,

On these pages of our website you will find the information I promised you when we held our town hall meetings on June 12 and June 14. I apologize for the timing in getting this information together. We received more questions than I expected and compiling and answering them took me far longer than I had anticipated.

What you see on these pages is the full presentation I should have given. I was constrained though both by time and a misplaced focus. Intentionally, I did not give the full presentation to both communities as I thought each would be more focused on its own needs. More than that, though, I focused the presentation not on the heart of the matter, the “why” of the pastorate but on the “what” and the “how” that flowed from it.

The focus of the pastorate is not about parish buildings, finances, or administration. It is not about combining communities or closing parishes. At its heart, the pastorate process is about planning and determining how we can be present to Christ, to one another and to the community around us. It is about communities helping one another. We will be focusing on this in the coming year, starting immediately as I return in August from vacation.

Still the information provided and the questions asked and answered will, I hope, be a help in communicating information establishing transparency, and clearing up much confusion. I apologize that this is complete only as I leave for vacation. This was not an attempt to avoid any response from you but, as I explained above, due to poor planning on my part.

Please note that neither these answers nor the notes and presentation are intended to portray exactly what I said at the Town Hall. These are the presentation, remarks and answers that I SHOULD have given. This is not intended to be deceptive or self-serving. But, I learned and revised the presentation for the second meeting and as I mentioned I did get more than a little testy and defensive at parts. For that I apologize. More, though, I am sorry that the message was obscured by the delivery. I have much work to do in sharing the heart of the message as listed above.

Please, please, please take the time to read and digest the information. I ask that you start with the presentation note and power point. It provides a better overview than individual questions. I grouped the questions submitted before or after the town hall meetings along with the ones that were asked at the meetings themselves. To avoid redundancy, I have not repeated questions. Also, because there were so many I tried to group similar questions together and list them roughly corresponding to the outline of the presentation.

More than that, though, I would ask each of you to visit the website from the Archdiocese about the pastorate process, www.BeMissionaryDisciples.org. Read (or re-read) the pastoral letter from the Archbishop that gives the background and the overview of what he looks to accomplish. Read the different updates and review the graphs, charts and images so that you are familiar with what we will be doing. Read also, **The Joy of the Gospel** by Pope Francis that helps to ground everything in the heart of Jesus Christ.

In all of this, I ask you to pray for our pastorate and parish communities in this time of change and transition. Change is never easy but with prayer and support of one another, we can weather any storm and come out the stronger for it. Please also pray for me as your pastor. The pastorate process calls me to a new way of serving in priestly ministry. I trust in the God who has called me but I still struggle to understand and to discern how to lead. Know of my thoughts and prayers for you as well.

Peace,

Fu. J. J.