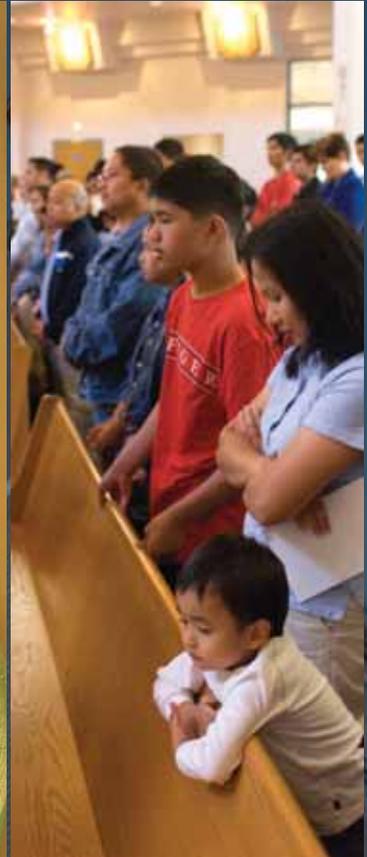
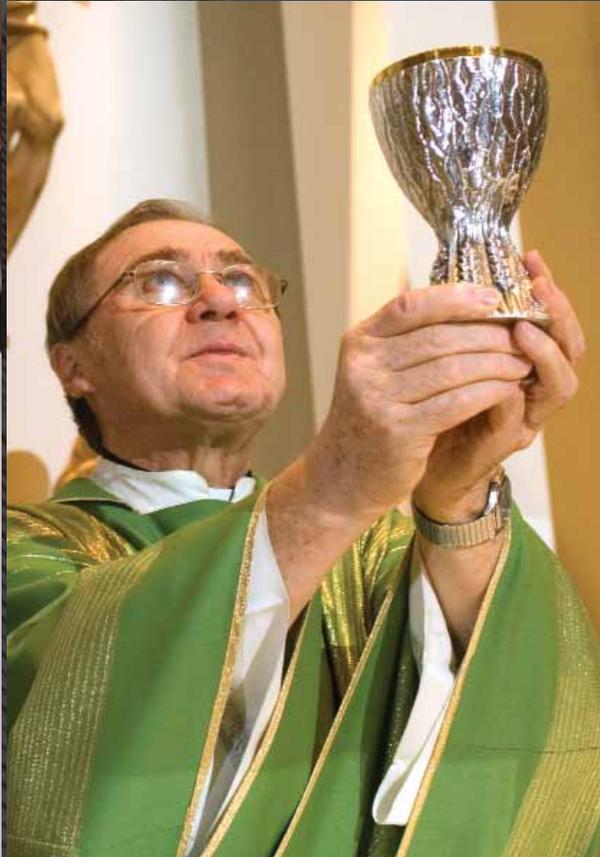


# LET US ACT!



Declaration on the Archdiocesan Synod  
Most Reverend Raymond Roussin, SM  
Archbishop of Vancouver

December 3, 2006

## SUMMARY

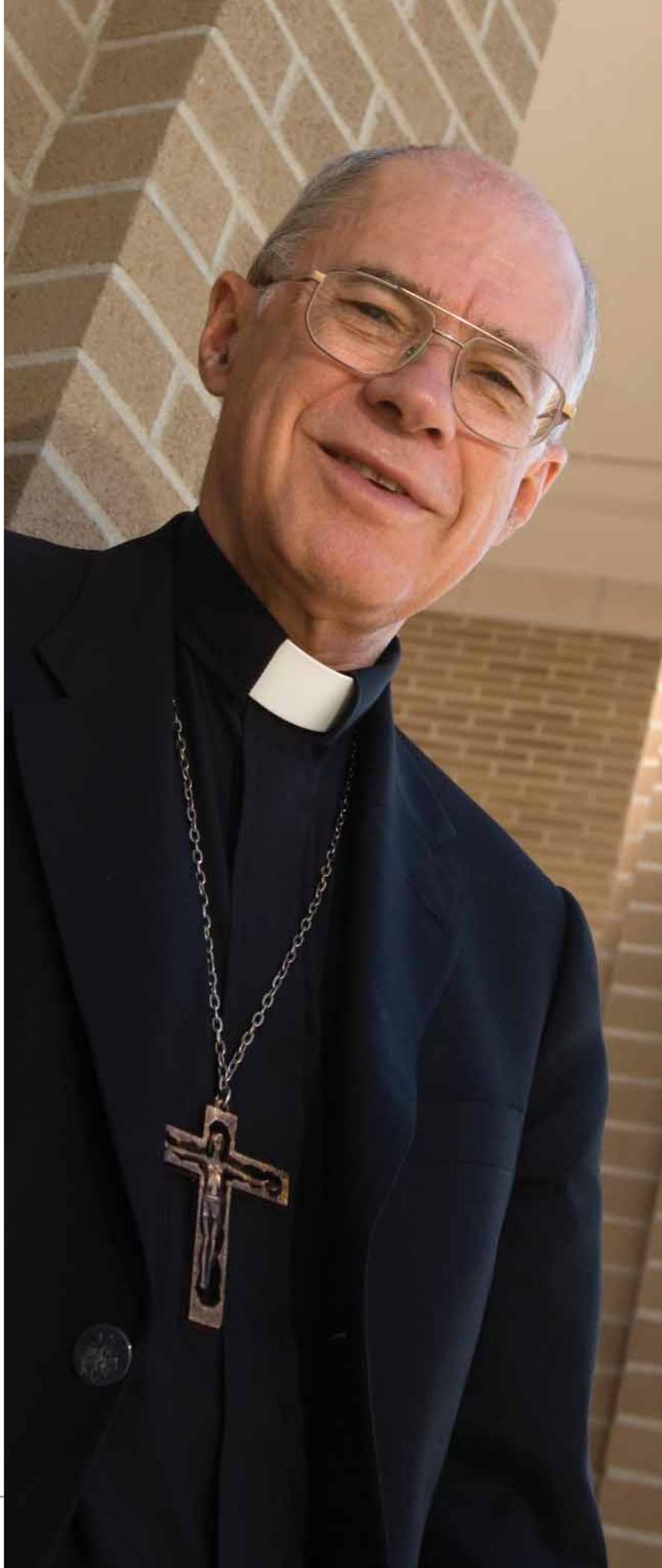
- ⊗ Key Synod propositions have been judged worthy and appropriate.
- ⊗ Not all 50 propositions can be acted upon immediately.
- ⊗ Archdiocese to implement the 20 top-ranked propositions by January 1, 2007.
- ⊗ New archdiocesan offices for Evangelization, Liturgy, and Service and Justice.
- ⊗ New archdiocesan strategy for Adult Faith Formation.
- ⊗ Remaining propositions requiring archdiocesan action to be studied annually by central offices and incorporated into long-term planning.
- ⊗ Propositions dealing with parish life to be studied as part of a pastoral planning process in each parish.
- ⊗ Each parish to have a pastoral plan in place by September 2007.

# LET US ACT!



Declaration on the Fourth Synod  
of the Archdiocese of Vancouver

“WHEN I PLACE  
BEFORE YOU A  
VISION TO BE  
MORE THAN  
EVER A  
REFLECTION OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
IN ALL WE ARE,  
DO, AND SAY,  
IT IS SIMPLY A  
CALL TO  
HOLINESS OF LIFE!”



# DECLARATION ON THE ARCHDIOCESAN SYNOD

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

Soon after I arrived in Vancouver, I was told that the Archdiocese had just finished a diocesan Synod. At first I felt somewhat apprehensive, not having taken part in its proceedings. But once I read and reflected on the Synod's work, my apprehension disappeared and I felt only enthusiasm.

The Synod's propositions, particularly those it deemed most significant, offer a clear vision. I see them as calls—calls to make our parishes true centres of holiness and union, calls to look more carefully at the challenges we face regarding the growing number of poor, both in our midst and elsewhere.

The Synod was shaped by these words: "Our vision is to promote a new springtime of faith and Christian living." Our challenge is to continue listening to the Holy Spirit and to follow His guidance. That vision I now make my own with you, the clergy, religious, and lay faithful of our Archdiocese.

## THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE SYNOD

Since it has been quite some time since our Synod was called, I would like to remind you of what a diocesan Synod is. In brief, it is a gathering of priests and other members of Christ's faithful which, for the good of the whole diocesan community, assists the bishop in his ministry. It is an extraordinary event in the life of the local Church and takes place only when the bishop, after careful consultation, judges that the time is right. The only limit placed on our Synod's

activity was the need to respect its natural boundaries—to deal only with matters capable of being decided or altered at the diocesan level.

The members of the Synod truly represented our diverse and multicultural community, which has been enriched by a wave of immigration. All sectors of our Archdiocese participated—high school students, seniors, women, men, laity, religious, and clergy. Parishes chose 78 of the members along with 56 non-voting

alternate members, while 120 were appointed by the Archbishop (24 clergy; 96 lay) and 18 were members by virtue of the offices they held, as provided in canon law. The nearly 300 members participated in a series of preliminary gatherings at which they reflected on five key areas of Church life—Prayer, Mass and Sacraments, Community and Fellowship, Evangelization and Mission, and Teaching the Faith—and then in 10 plenary assemblies from October 2002 until May 2003. During this time they debated and then voted upon recommendations, also called propositions.

At the final meeting, the members voted on 50 propositions that summarized the measures recommended at earlier sessions. All the members were later surveyed and asked to rank those 50 propositions in order of priority. You will find the complete list in this document, as well as a brief history of the Synod.

## THE BISHOP'S ROLE IN A SYNOD

In a diocesan Synod, all the members exercise their baptismal calling to build up the Church by sharing in the sacred functions of teaching, shepherding, and

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sanctifying Christ's flock. These tasks, however, are entrusted in a special way to the diocesan bishop, whom canon law calls the sole "legislator" in the Synod: he must review its decisions before they are implemented under his authority. The bishop must listen carefully to the "voice" of the Synod, trusting that the Holy Spirit has guided its deliberations in response to the prayers of the whole diocesan community. At the same time, the bishop must recognize that the final decisions are an act of his episcopal ministry.

My first duty, therefore, was to make sure that everything decided was in accordance with Catholic faith and with the discipline and law of the Church. Secondly, I needed to consider what is possible, given the present circumstances and resources of the diocese. Finally, I evaluated the timeliness of specific measures, since it is obviously not possible to do everything at once.

## THE SYNOD'S PROPOSITIONS ARE APPROVED

The soundness and fidelity of the propositions passed by this Archdiocesan Synod are an indication of the Holy Spirit's presence, a mark of the spiritual health of the Archdiocese, and a credit to the wisdom of the Synod members.

The 50 final propositions are a well-balanced set of goals. Even the few propositions that seem beyond our present resources can be pursued as longer-term objectives. I congratulate the Synod members for their prudent and realistic choices. They wisely ask the Archdiocese to *support* some of the more challenging goals—such as the establishment of a Catholic teachers' college—recognizing that some things can best be *accomplished* by motivated lay leaders.

With respect to the timeliness of the 50 key propositions, I believe that almost all of the 20



top-ranked propositions (as chosen by the members when surveyed) can be implemented immediately, because they recommend that the Archdiocese act directly.

#### PARISHES TO IMPLEMENT BY PASTORAL PLANNING

A number of other propositions call on parishes to act. Since our parishes differ in many ways, including history, size, and resources, it is appropriate that each parish should study these propositions in light of its own circumstances. By this letter, I ask each parish community to begin formal pastoral planning in order to identify the measures that it can adopt immediately, and to incorporate others into a longer-term pastoral plan. By next September, each parish, large or small, should have a pastoral plan, guided particularly by the propositions dealing with parish life.

One of the most important principles for decision-making in the Church is the principle of subsidiarity, which states that what needs to be done should be carried out as close as possible to where the need occurs. Only when this level is unable to act should a more senior level take charge. This means that responsibility belongs to the parish whenever possible and, when appropriate, parishes working together in their deanery. The Archdiocese's central offices should offer help, but the local community should provide ministry and services directly when it can.

#### IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION BY THE ARCHDIOCESE

It is appropriate, however, for the Archdiocese to take the lead in implementing the propositions that deal with existing diocesan services or strategies, or where the actions require resources (such as skills, time, or money) beyond what most parishes possess. I have therefore decided to issue Synodal decrees putting into action almost all of these 20 recommendations (one or two were already underway), effective January 1, 2007.

At the same time, the Archdiocese's central

resources are limited, and good stewardship requires they be carefully used. I therefore believe we should make use of present personnel and budgets wherever possible. By careful restructuring according to the Synod's proposals, we can shift our priorities without abandoning present good works or incurring major increases in spending.

I found worthy recommendations for the Archdiocese in the remaining 30 propositions as well, but it is obvious we cannot do everything at once. I will keep them on the agenda during our longer-term pastoral planning and refer them to appropriate diocesan offices for continuing study.

Here is a summary of the decisions taken at the level of the Archdiocese and its central offices, as specified in the Synodal decrees:

#### EVANGELIZATION: KEY TO A NEW SPRINGTIME

The Synod began with an initial survey of the Archdiocese, conducted in 1998 by the Angus Reid polling organization. The survey showed a lack of understanding and enthusiasm for evangelization, which many respondents seemed to identify with a particular approach to sharing the faith.

In the face of the concerns identified by the survey, the Synod paid special attention to evangelization, seeing it as the heart of the Church's mission. It recognized that a "mission-driven" Church must be an evangelizing Church.

Accordingly, we will establish an Office of Evangelization. It will not be mandated to evangelize, but to help us become an evangelizing Archdiocese. To this end, its mandate will include promoting awareness of each Christian's responsibility to share the Gospel. It will encourage both parishes and individual Catholics in this sacred duty and will offer suitable training and resources.

The new office will also implement a very practical proposition of the Synod: it will provide training in the kind of evangelization methods that are specially suited to proclaiming the Good News in our multicultural society.

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for evangelization can be caught and taught. A revived sense of our common mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ may well be the Synod's greatest legacy.

#### CATECHESIS: FORMATION OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN

The Synod recommended that the Office of Religious Education develop an adult faith formation strategy for parishes. During the debates, it became clear that teaching the faith to adults is a task that we are neglecting—and that there is a hunger for such formation. If the faith of our parishioners is to be truly vibrant, the Church must offer them appropriate help and put in place the parish and diocesan structures that promote growth in faith at both community and individual levels.

To provide this necessary help, the Office of Religious Education will develop a comprehensive strategy for adult faith formation. This will provide vision, methods, and resources for this important work. The Office of Religious Education will be asked to work closely with the Superintendent's Office to support faith formation for teachers in our Catholic schools, and with parishes to help them assist parents in their role as primary educators.

As proposed at the Synod, this office will develop guidelines and instructions for parents and sponsors relating to the sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation. In this and other aspects of its work, the office will promote the virtue-based perspective in moral education recommended by the Synod. This approach is crucial at a time when in common language, "values," which are subjective and personal, have replaced "virtues," which are firm and unchanging.

#### CATECHESIS: FORMATION OF YOUTH

The office will help parishes find ways to extend their Parish Religious Education Programs, in accord with the Synod's recommendation that the students of public high schools receive appropriate religious education until they graduate.

The mandate of the Office of Evangelization will include promotion of what is often called "the new evangelization." This embraces the evangelization of culture by bringing Christian values to the workplace, the classroom, political life, and elsewhere.

I have heard that the small group discussions and plenary sessions of the Synod showed how enthusiasm

The Office of Religious Education will not have sole responsibility for achieving these goals. In the first place, it exists primarily to provide resources for parish and school-based programs. In the second place, some of the tasks will involve effort by other diocesan offices, particularly the Office of Youth Ministry, which will also be charged with implementing propositions relating to their work.

One proposition will be implemented mainly by high schools as part of existing campus ministry programs: encouraging students in parish ministries such as lectors and catechists, and helping them obtain the necessary skills so that they will be more active in their home parishes. The Office of Religious Education and the Superintendent's Office will identify or develop resources to promote such involvement.

## CATECHESIS: FORMATION OF MARRIED COUPLES

The Synod also proposed a marriage enrichment program for couples married one to three years. This will surely help many couples, including those facing difficulties early in their married lives, to reaffirm the blessings of God present in the sacrament they share.

STANDING UP FOR  
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CHRIST-CENTRED  
PERSPECTIVE.

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: TOWARDS A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Another education-related proposition, encouraging and supporting the establishment of a Catholic university, is something the Archdiocese has already been working on for a number of years. We will continue to offer such encouragement alongside our often-expressed support of our Catholic colleges.



## SHOWING CHRIST'S FACE: SERVICE AND RECONCILIATION

Evangelization is not accomplished with words alone; action is needed. During the Synod sessions, Archbishop Adam Exner echoed St. Francis more than once by saying “Preach constantly, and if necessary, use words.”

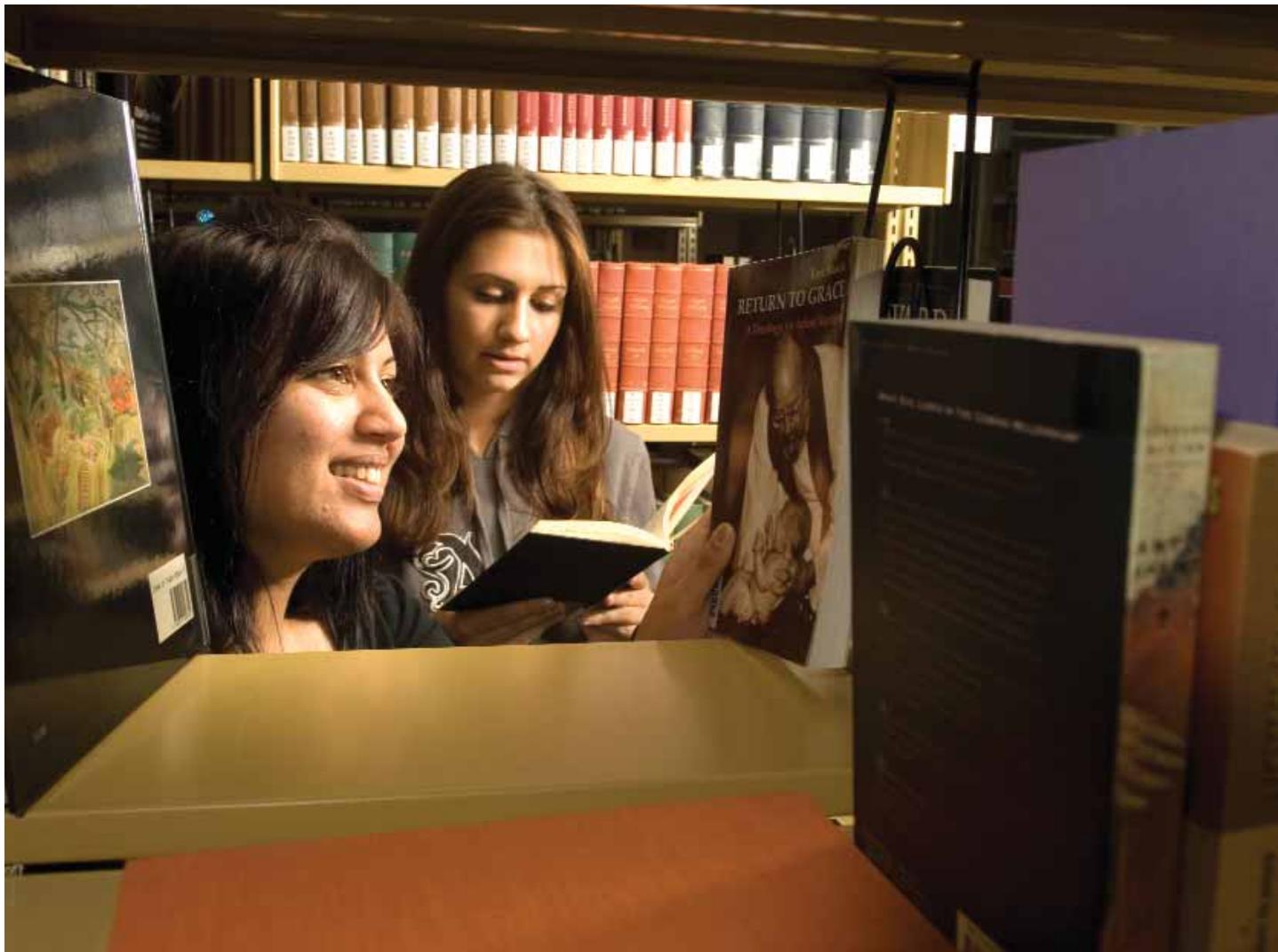
One of the most powerful ways we share our faith is through serving our brothers and sisters. In the four decades since our last Synod, much has changed in Canada. Government has taken over many of the social services once provided by the Church in the fields of health care, poverty relief, and family services. How do we show the face of Christ under these new circumstances?

The Synod's answer? We need to expand the scope of our charitable efforts to embrace the entire social apostolate—including social justice issues and human

rights advocacy with the traditional corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Standing up for justice and rights is essential, but must be done within a sound, Christ-centred perspective.

To accomplish this important work of service, and to promote a greater understanding of the Christian's obligations towards the poor and disadvantaged, we will establish an Office of Service and Justice. It will fulfill the Synod's recommendations concerning the social apostolate, taking over most of the functions presently entrusted to Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

The Synod showed its concern for the Church's witness to Christ's compassion in its proposal that the Catholic presence in health care facilities and other institutions be preserved and expanded, specifically as an opportunity for evangelization. In response, I recommit the Archdiocese to support Catholic health care, particularly in the face of threats to its



core value: respect for life from conception to its natural end.

Due to the social and political conditions today, increasing the number of Catholic acute care facilities is unlikely, but we will do everything possible to defend existing institutions, while encouraging growth in those areas—such as care for the elderly—where an expanded Catholic presence is possible. As part of the evangelization of culture, we will continue to support dedicated lay people working in the health care professions.

The Synod recognized that the tragedy of abortion is not only the destruction of an innocent human life, but that it also has severe effects on the women and men involved. It therefore called on the Archdiocese to continue its support of women who have had abortions, through programs like “Project Rachel.” We will do so, relying on the capable assistance of Catholic Family Services. We will continue the efforts to defend life that the Archdiocese has developed and sustained over many years. To this end, and as part of the restructuring of our educational apostolates, the Office of Life and Family will return to its original specific mandate and again be known as the Respect Life Office.

The Synod paid special attention to the need for healing and reconciliation with First Nations Catholics. It called on the Archdiocese to continue promoting such programs as “Return to the Spirit,” which has proven to be the source of much grace for First Nations peoples and those whose ministry touches their lives. Faithful to our mission and the example of Christ Himself, we will not cease to promote reconciliation at every opportunity. I will look to the First Nations Council to continue its work between those communities and the Church.

## THE LITURGY: MAKING IT THE “SOURCE AND SUMMIT”

In the words of the Second Vatican Council, the Eucharist is both the source and summit of the Christian life. It is therefore not surprising that the Synod turned its attention to liturgical matters, calling for more liturgical formation in

parishes and recommending an expanded Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission that would include appropriate expertise.

I find this recommendation particularly timely, given the recent changes to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and the pending new translation of the Missal. To ensure that the proposition is implemented effectively, we will appoint a part-time archdiocesan Director of Liturgy.

With the assistance of the director, the Liturgy Commission will meet regularly to consider everything recommended by the Synod in the area of Mass and Sacraments. It will continue to be made up of both clergy and lay faithful, but an expanded membership will ensure that a wider variety of parish experience is shared at the meetings.

We will, of course, continue the fervent promotion of the Sacrament of Penance, grateful that it has been celebrated consistently and properly by our priests and

people. It is surely one of the sources of the spiritual stability that the Archdiocese has experienced even in turbulent times. Our whole faith community draws inspiration and encouragement from the words of Pope Benedict to the Western bishops during their recent visit to Rome: “A new-found appreciation of this sacrament will confirm that time spent in the confessional draws good from evil, restores life from death, and reveals anew the merciful face of the Father.”

## PRIESTLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

Priestly issues and concerns were not a primary focus of the Synod; the Presbyteral Council (a representative group of priests, already established according to canon law) is the usual place for such discussions. Yet the Synod members chose to express their concern for priests in two propositions that they ranked among the first 20. In fact, the single proposition with the highest level of support is the recommendation that pastors be encouraged to delegate more of their administrative duties to the laity, in order to allow priests a greater opportunity to be spiritual leaders and teachers.

AS WE BECOME MORE  
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I fully support this proposal, which is consistent with both the special role of the laity in the temporal order and the principal elements of the priestly calling. The laity who shoulder administrative duties in the parish perform a significant act of faith and love.

The proposition speaks of “encouraging” this shift. I would like to see the Archdiocese do more: we must assist pastors in concrete ways—assist them in identifying the core of their spiritual mission and offer prac-

tical help in delegating those tasks that can properly be shared with others. I will ask the Presbyteral Council to study the various aspects of the question and to recommend to me suitable ways of implementing this proposition.

Another proposition recommends a support group for priests. This is something that has been discussed for some time. I will ask the members of the Presbyteral Council to recommend ways of finding opportunities for mutual support and fraternity among the clergy.

## MINISTRY TO YOUNG ADULTS

The Synod proposed that a “visioning committee” of young adults, clergy, and religious assess strategies for ministry to young adults. This proposition shows concern for ministry to an age group that is sometimes overlooked. I will direct the Office of Evangelization to organize such a committee as soon as practical.

## IMPLEMENTING PROPOSITIONS 21-50

I saw clearly the diversity of the Synod’s concerns as I considered the first 20 propositions: seven of them deal with teaching the faith, four with healing ministries and social service, two with evangelization, two with liturgy, two with youth and young adult ministry, two with priestly life and ministry, and one with spiritual formation.

These first 20 propositions are chiefly directed to the Archdiocese—although they certainly will require committed effort at the parish level to achieve their objectives. But what of those propositions which are directed to individual parishes? Here we see the next area where action is needed in order to effectively implement the Synod: decisions by the parish community.

Among the propositions that can best be implemented by parishes and deaneries are those that call for providing more natural family planning teachers

(#24), deanery-based devotions (#25), evangelization events (#26), penitential services (#29), perpetual adoration (#30), Liturgy of the Hours (#31), Bible study (#35), attention to those with special needs (#36), collaboration with the Catholic Health Association of B.C. and other health care organizations (#38), parish spiritual life committees (#43), and financial support for Parish Religious Education Programs (#40). As well, proposals to reinstitute the parish census (#42), and to mail parishioners a copy of a Church document on evangelization (#50) are also best handled at a local level.

I am asking every parish to study and evaluate the 13 propositions listed above, along with the relevant propositions directed mainly to the Archdiocese, to decide how they can be put into action in the present circumstances of the parish.

The result of this process should be a written parish pastoral plan that indicates concrete actions that will be accomplished in a specific period of time. Specific and measurable goals will ensure that the Synod leaves its mark where it counts—on the mission of the parish, and on the life of each member of the parish community.

Several propositions among numbers 21-50 are directed to the Archdiocese. While these will not be implemented immediately, I will direct the appropri-

ate diocesan offices or agencies to assess them annually for three years, so that they might be incorporated into our regular planning. At least one other proposition—adopting a “time, talent, and treasure” stewardship program—is being addressed with the appointment of a Stewardship Commission.

The establishment of a Communications Task Force and Synod Implementation Committee will complete the new archdiocesan focus.

## CONCLUSION

As I studied the Synod’s work, I sensed the Holy Spirit present to all its participants. It is my hope that what Archbishop Exner wrote in his *Pastoral Letter on the Synod* will now truly be fulfilled, that “the Synod will give new direction, orientation, life, and energy to our diocesan Church, helping us to become a more mission-driven Church...”

As we first and foremost seek to become more Christ-like as members of His body, the Church, we must not forget that we are all called to be “mission driven.” As we become more Christ-like, we must seek to make Christ and His saving life and death known to others. They may be our own children, relatives, or friends.

To quote Pope Benedict, from *Deus Caritas Est*,



“Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love.”

Being a Roman Catholic does not consist only of Sunday Mass and some prayers and sacrifices! Being baptized in Christ Jesus means becoming like Him in all things. For some of us it might mean being more attentive and joyful in our daily work, being a little more prayerful, reaching out to and for the poor in our midst or far away, or giving our lives over to being visibly Christ’s workers.

When I place before you a vision to be more than ever a reflection of Jesus Christ in all we are, do, and say, it is simply a call to holiness of life!

As your Archbishop, I will seek to live this call with you. We are Christ’s body, due to our Baptism. My ministry in your midst will be particularly that of a shepherd among his flock.

All this will take much prayerful discernment, along with diligent effort in every parish and creative work by archdiocesan personnel. We must continue to be attentive to the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit

was certainly there during the Synod sessions, all the more will this same Spirit be with us now as we work to implement the Synod’s vision.

In closing, I want to thank each and every member of the Archdiocesan Synod for the important service they have given, recognizing the sacrifice of weekends and evenings that it demanded of them and their family members. I am grateful also to the staff of the Synod Office, and to the members of the Preparatory Commission and the Organizing Committee, who did so much to ensure a fruitful celebration of this important event in the history of the Archdiocese.

Now it is time. Let us act!

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,



Most Reverend Raymond Roussin, SM  
Archbishop of Vancouver



# SYNOD TIMELINE

When Archbishop Adam Exner released his pastoral letter *Toward a New Springtime* on **May 4, 1997**, he set the Archdiocese of Vancouver on a nine-year journey.

It will appear to culminate with the Final Synod Assembly and Declaration on the Synod by Archbishop Raymond Roussin on **Dec. 3, 2006**.

But this will not be an ending in any true sense. As Archbishop Roussin makes clear in his declaration, the recommendations of the Synod will continue to shape the life of the Archdiocese for many years to come.

“There are three stages to any Synod—the ‘see’ phase, the ‘judge’ phase, and the ‘act’ phase,” the Archbishop says. “I’m very grateful to all who worked so hard during the first two phases. But now comes the real test. Ultimately, of course, we are judged by our actions.”

Only three previous Synods have occurred in the Archdiocese. The last one concluded in 1959, under the Most Rev. William Mark Duke.

To launch the Fourth Synod, a preparatory commission of 12 dedicated individuals began laying the foundation in **December 1997**. They worked closely with Archbishop Exner to develop a plan. A key part of this was the synodal directory—the rules for the Synod based on canon law and recent guidelines from the Holy See.

In **February 1998**, commission members took part in a workshop by noted canon lawyer the late Fr. James Provost of Helena, Mont.—a specialist in the work of synods.

On **Oct. 7, 1998**, the Archbishop issued a decree and the Synod was officially underway. In a Mass held that same day, on the feast of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, he asked the Holy Spirit to guide the Synod “to discern the mission of our local Church in communion with the Church Universal.”

**Later that same year**, the Archdiocese started drawing up plans for a professional public opinion survey—to find out exactly what was in the hearts and minds of the faithful. The Angus Reid Group

began with a series of special interviews (called focus groups), then conducted a written survey in a number of languages, including Chinese and Korean, followed by a telephone survey.

“We wanted the results of the survey to be credible,” says Barbara Dowding, Vice-Chancellor of the Archdiocese and Synod Coordinator. “The Archbishop asked us to measure ourselves against the early Church. Are we looking after each other? Are we teaching each other? What are we doing well, and what do we need to improve?”

A synod prayer was written and published **near the end of 1998**. “Send Your Spirit to enlighten, guide, and empower us to become mission-driven, vibrant, and fully alive,” said the prayer. “Stimulate us to participate prayerfully, actively, and generously in the work of the Synod, so that its fruits may represent all that Your Spirit has inspired and the gifts given to each, be they great or small.”

The Angus Reid surveys—a time-consuming but essential exercise—continued **throughout 1999 and in September of that year**, Archbishop Exner approved the terms of reference for five preliminary commissions:

- Prayer
- Mass and Sacraments
- Community and Fellowship
- Evangelization and Mission
- Teaching the Faith

At the same time, he appointed 10 individuals to each commission and gave them the crucial job of interpreting the results of the surveys and writing working papers on what they discerned.

**Between 2000 and 2001**, the preliminary commissions published their findings. Parishes throughout the Archdiocese held meetings to consider these papers. As well, the clergy took part in a two-day study session in **February 2001**.

When the last Synod was held, some 47 years ago, only priests were members, as provided by the canon

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law of the day. This time, however, laity were an integral part of the proceedings, reflecting the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the current law.

A delegate selection process took several months, culminating in parish elections on **Sept. 30, 2001**. These resulted in one representative and an alternate, being selected from almost every one of the 78 parishes in the Archdiocese. Clergy elected representatives from their deaneries as did the religious sisters and brothers in the diocese. Some were appointed by virtue of their position in the Church and a number of non-Catholic Church officials were invited to attend as Observers.

For Cecil Sanchez, who represented Saint Patrick's Parish and was chair of the Community and Fellowship Commission, the Synod offered the once-in-a-lifetime chance to get involved in a profound way. "The process brought together a lot of people and taught us about what parish life could be," he says. "It was a real eye-opener about developing a more enriched Archdiocese, both spiritually and practically."

The nearly 300 Synod members gathered at the official Opening Session of the Synod on **Jan. 25, 2002**, at Holy Rosary Cathedral and **a month later**, the first speaker of the Assembly was Sr. Josephine Carney, SSA.

**Throughout 2002 and much of 2003**, prayer, talk, and debate consumed the Synod members as they worked faithfully to carry out their mission. They published their first propositions—on Prayer—in **December 2002**. And they published their concluding ones—on Mass and Sacraments—on **June 10, 2003**.

On **Oct. 7, 2003**, Archbishop Exner presided at the Synod's closing Mass, calling on the Archdiocese to evangelize. Still, the Synod's work was not done. The members continued to review their propositions so they could assign priorities to them. *The B.C. Catholic* published their fully ranked propositions in **December 2003**.

Work was interrupted in **January 2004** when Archbishop Exner retired and the Synod had to be suspended, but it resumed in **April 2004** with the appointment of Archbishop Roussin.

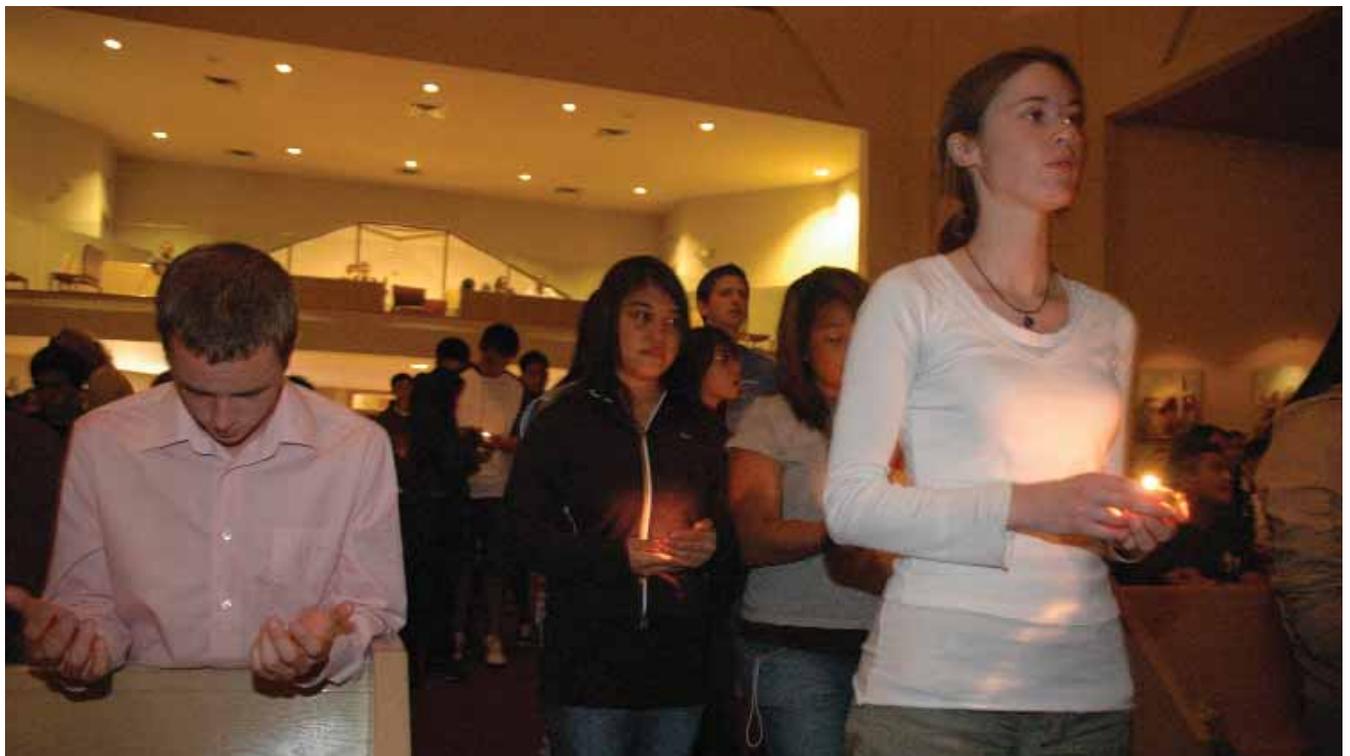
The Final Synod Assembly will be held on **Dec. 3, 2006**. That will be the moment when the entire diocesan community takes up where the Synod left off. The discernment of this nine-year endeavour can now be acted upon. And in the words of Archbishop Roussin, "Let us act!"



# THE 50 PROPOSITIONS

- 1 Encourage pastors to delegate more of their administrative duties to the laity to allow priests a greater opportunity to be spiritual leaders and teachers.
- 2 Promote the ongoing spiritual formation and education of our teachers in Catholic faith and culture.
- 3 Mandate the Office of Religious Education to develop an adult faith formation strategy for parishes that provides vision, methods, program resources, and options.
- 4 Assist parents in their role as the primary educators of their children by providing parenting guidelines consistent with the archdiocesan curriculum model of teaching the Faith, with instruction for parents and sponsors at the time of Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion, and Confirmation.
- 5 Encourage Catholic high schools to introduce and develop parish ministry skills and encourage their students to participate in these ministries in their home parishes.
- 6 Extend the Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) to Grade 12.
- 7 Make liturgical formation of parish communities a priority, training leaders in liturgy and catechesis.
- 8 Preserve and expand Catholic presence in health care facilities and other institutions as an opportunity for evangelization.
- 9 Renew the Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission, expanding it to include clergy, religious, laity, and youth. Ensure participation and consultation with persons having liturgical expertise.
- 10 Encourage and support the establishment and development of a Catholic university.
- 11 Institute a support group for priests.
- 12 Establish a visioning committee of young adults, clergy, and religious representing the various regions of the Archdiocese to assess strategies for young adult ministry.
- 13 Initiate a marriage enrichment program for couples married one to three years.
- 14 Develop a formation program to train lay spiritual leaders to lead Scripture studies, workshops on prayer, and peer spiritual direction.
- 15 Expand the scope of Catholic Charities to include the entire social apostolate (e.g., social justice issues, human rights advocacy, and corporal and spiritual works of mercy).
- 16 Provide funding and training to assist women who have had abortions through programs like “Project Rachel” and “Rachel’s Vineyard.”
- 17 Teach methods and practical skills for evangelization projects, recognizing cultural and social diversity.
- 18 Establish an Office and Vicar for Evangelization.
- 19 Promote the virtue-based perspective in moral education.
- 20 Use programs such as “Return to the Spirit” to promote forgiveness and healing for those wounded by family and/or Church personnel.
- 21 Develop an archdiocesan plan to help Catholic schools meet budgetary challenges, such as a Catholic foundation to raise and disburse funds.
- 22 Utilize resources in our schools that represent Catholic history and Catholic culture.
- 23 Develop in the Office of Religious Education an effective means of assessing religious education programs, also providing for feedback from parents.
- 24 Recruit natural family planning teachers in each parish to counsel couples before and after marriage in managing their fertility in accordance with *Humanae Vitae* through natural family planning methods.
- 25 Promote and coordinate deanery-based devotions, spiritual events, and activities (e.g., speakers, days of recollection, perpetual adoration, public processions, candlelight walks, cultural celebrations.)
- 26 Sponsor evangelization events in different deaneries in order to promote and publicize Catholic values.
- 27 Ensure regular catechesis about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.
- 28 Support efforts to establish a Catholic teachers’ college.
- 29 Celebrate communal penitential services followed by individual confessions more frequently at the deanery and parish level.
- 30 Encourage all parishes to establish perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

- 31 Incorporate the Liturgy of the Hours into parish life.
- 32 Support Catholic public school teachers by establishing an archdiocesan association.
- 33 Initiate a richer dialogue and sharing with First Nations people at the parish, deanery, and archdiocesan level, in cooperation with the First Nations Council of the Archdiocese.
- 34 Adopt a “time, talent, and treasure” stewardship program.
- 35 Provide Bible study at parish level with babysitting service available.
- 36 Develop a parish pastoral plan that includes all special needs groups. Appoint a coordinator or a coordinating committee in each parish with the mandate to build community by connecting with and addressing the needs of specific groups.
- 37 Implement the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese.
- 38 Encourage collaboration and partnerships between parishes, the Catholic Health Association of B.C. and other healthcare organizations.
- 39 Establish an archdiocesan body to promote, sustain, and offer resources for prayer.
- 40 Increase financial support in parishes to the Parish Religious Education Program (PREP), with a salaried PREP Coordinator.
- 41 Begin each of the archdiocesan Marriage Preparation sessions with a scriptural prayer service.
- 42 Establish an archdiocesan Media Relations Office distinct from *The B.C. Catholic*.
- 43 Establish parish spiritual life committees.
- 44 Provide an archdiocesan parish registration form that is simple, brief, and respectful of privacy. The form should request information about special interests and talents.
- 45 Promote discussion by deaneries and the Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission to develop further guidelines for the practice of Baptism in parishes.
- 46 Develop diocesan media outreach similar to EWTN radio, television, and Internet.
- 47 Distribute a booklet from the Archbishop to the newly confirmed calling them to evangelize.
- 48 Establish a working group of Catholics and interested parties in other Christian communities to discuss the encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*.
- 49 Reinstitute the parish census.
- 50 Every Easter for five years, mail all registered parishioners a copy of a magisterial document on evangelization, along with a letter from the Archbishop urging all the faithful to actively evangelize.



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