



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — January 25, 2023

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From the Bishop

What's next in the Strategic Visioning process?

This is a transcript from a video message.

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. Lately, everywhere I go in the diocese, whether it's a Sunday visitation, or gathering over a special service, or meetings that I attend – almost every gathering I have been to in the diocese recently, I'm bound to be asked by someone, and sometimes it's several people: What is happening with the visioning process? Is something going to come from those meetings that we were in? And what they're referring to is the listening sessions that have happened with the Visioning team, where they went into many of our parishes, and also online for people who couldn't go to a meeting at a parish, asking questions about what they thought they needed in order to do their ministry. What did they think they were called to? Who are we called to be as diocese? And one of the things that I hear across the board from everyone who has participated in this is, there were some really great ideas that came up, and I want to make sure those aren't lost. What happens to all of those ideas?

Well, it's a good question to be asking. And while we have laid it out there in the communications that come across in our newsletter, sometimes we have to come across things again and again and again, before they actually sink in. It's a process, it was not a one-time event, that was the first step in the process. That Visioning team has now taken all of that information, collected it, put it into batches,

in essence matching up responses that seemed similar, and come up with some areas that it seems like the diocese thinks are very important. At Convention, which is happening the first weekend in February, at Convention, the Visioning team is going to make a presentation to Convention and tell them about what has come up in those areas. And then also make recommendations about which of those areas we distilled down even further so that we can focus our energy.

You know, as my mother used to say, you can do anything you want to do – it's just that you can't do everything. So you have to look at everything that you're interested in doing, and decide where are you going to put your energy. So our next step is exactly those two things, kind of split apart. We're going to look at everything that we thought was important in those sessions, and then we're going to take some time to decide which ones are those we're going to spend our time focusing on. And then the process will go on from there. It'll be a matter of deciding, let's put a plan in place to do those things. We don't want to just say, Hey, this is where our attention needs to go. Okay, we all know, we actually want to say, this is where our attention needs to go – let's come up with a plan so that in two or three years, we can check these things off our list. We're not just carrying them with us. And I expect in two or three years, we're gonna have to ask these questions all over again. It's a fast changing world that we're in.

This is an exciting process. It's wonderful to hear from so many places, and so many people in so many parishes, how they feel called to be church now. And for all of us to gather together and

coalesce around the things that we think are the most important. That is the work of a diocese. That is the work of 93 congregations, a camp and a convent to ask that question, to answer it together, and then to start planning on how we get there. You are welcome to be a part of this process as much as you want to be. We need every single one of us to be a part of it so that we can live into who God is calling us to be as the Diocese of Newark.

Diocesan Announcements

January update from the Strategic Visioning Team

As the new year progresses, the Strategic Visioning team has been sorting through the notes from the many Listening Sessions in 2022 and early 2023. We are hearing a lot of the same thoughts, concerns and ideas from folks across the diocese, and the team is considering how the Holy Spirit might be moving us into the future.

At the Diocesan Convention next month, we will be sharing what we have learned and announce the priority areas for the diocese's new vision. We ask that people of the diocese consider joining us on the working teams to be formed in February that will explore each priority and develop goals and initiatives for us to implement in the next three years. We will continue to update everyone on our work throughout the year.