PASTOR’S CORNER

January 23, 2022

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;   
there are different forms of service but the same Lord;  
there are different workings but the same God  
who produces all of them in everyone.*

*To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit  
is given for the common good.*

This was the beginning of the second reading last Sunday from 2 Corinthians. As with all the scriptures, throughout our two thousand year history the Church has been trying to put this passage into practice. That is the focus of what you may have heard as the “Synod on synodality” that is being taking place around the world. The question is simply, “Since we all share the gifts of the Holy Spirit, how are we to incorporate all the gifts into shaping and animating the Church of the future?”

It is fortuitous that the work of the Synod coincides with “Beacons of Light”. It is easy to consider Beacons as simply grouping more parishes together because of the shortage of priests, decreased Mass attendance, and demographic shifts. If that is a far as it goes, we are “arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic”. If we ingnore St. Paul’s encouragement, this effort will be doomed to be one more in a series.

There are a number of things that makes this effort at *pastoral planning* different. One is that the Archdiocese is giving the families of parishes six “principles” or goals to work on. Each family of parishes will be held accountable to incorporate the goals in a pastoral plan that will be reviewed each year. The “principles” are:

* Eucharist
* Church
* Leadership
* Stewardship
* Evangelization
* Love in Action

During the next five years, beginning July 1, each family will be given various kinds of help to make this successful. But it all begins with each one of us opening our hearts, minds, and imagination to St. Paul’s words: *To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

For more information: <https://pathway/catholicaoc.org>