NORM 8

**Norm Description:** To foster religious vocations, the Diocese is to establish a task force to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and to propose new ones at the parish and diocesan levels.

**Department or Office with Primary Responsibility:** Department of Clergy & Religious Personnel (formerly Department of Personnel in Ministry)

**Departments or Offices with Secondary Responsibility:** Office of Vocations, Office of Religious

**Person Submitting Plan:** Rev. Randall J. Vashon

**Goal:** To foster *priesthood and religious* vocations, the Diocese is to establish a task force to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and to propose new ones at the parish and diocesan levels.

**Note:** In the Fall of 2004, Bishop Bootkoski established an ad hoc committee of priests to do precisely what this synod norm proposes. The committee met regularly for more than two years and was comprised of approximately 20 priests representing previous vocations directors, newly ordained, and seasoned priests. This committee made numerous suggestions which resulted in the following:

1. Establishment of a full-time Director of Vocations;
2. Establishment of St. John Vianney House of Discernment;
3. Updated marketing materials (posters, prayer cards, promotional handouts, etc.);
4. Initiated regular “Dinners with the Bishop” for discerners and annual vocations picnic;
5. Fishers of Men Awareness Conference for priests in our Diocese;
6. Diocesan Year of Prayer for Vocations using monstrances blessed by Pope Benedict XVI;
7. Chaplains for Vocations for our high schools.
Objectives:

1. Identify potential members of a task force who are willing and able commit to the strategic plan (Summer, 2009).

2. Review parish programs (Serra International, hybrid models, etc). that are being utilized in some areas of our Diocese and attempt to renew interest in maintaining these programs (since over time many of these have waned) or determine other programs better suited for parishes in our Diocese to consider.
   
   a. Establish a sub-committee to look into what is available and methods to re-invigorate programs at a parish level (December, 2009).
   
   b. Update existing diocesan *Parish Resources for Vocations* booklet (Summer, 2010).

3. Evaluate current diocesan vocations programs for viability; research other dioceses’ programs for ideas that might be implemented in our Diocese. This should be an ongoing process but some changes should begin as soon as the Fall of 2009. Once changes are identified a prioritized list with necessary resources should be established.

4. Review how we might best utilize our existing seminarians in vocational initiatives. While their primary function is their own personal growth towards priesthood, we need to evaluate and consider summer and holiday assignments that involve their participation.